

may hope that experiments on these and similar points may throw some light on the properties of that medium which is universal, which plays so large a part in our explanation of physical phenomena, and of which we know so little.

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#### CURRENT NOTES ON ANTHROPOLOGY.

##### PATHOLOGY IN ANTHROPOLOGY.

IN a note in *SCIENCE*, May 1st, I vindicated the importance of the study, in anthropology, of pathological traits and processes. In the *Revue Mensuelle de l'Ecole d'Anthropologie* for July 15th is an excellent article on the same theme from Prof. Capitan. He sets forth with brevity and precision the many applications of pathology in anthropologic investigations. For instance, the diseased conditions of bones throw much light on prehistoric society; the disturbances of nutrition and reproduction solve many a problem in ethnic biology; defects in the organs of the senses explain the traits of various tribes; endemic, epidemic and hereditary diseases control the development of nations; migrations and dispersions are governed by similar causes; mental maladies are fruitful of extraordinary results in ethnic history, and so on.

But he takes a step further, a bold one, and, one must say, not a false one. "The generally received notion that humanity at large is in a healthy condition, normal and physiological, is an utter error. There is not a single individual, still less a large number, who are thoroughly sound; we always study them in a more or less diseased condition." There is no doubt this is so, and its consequences deserve far more attention than they have received.

##### THE CROWD AS AN ANTHROPIC UNIT.

ETHNOGRAPHERS have been accustomed to deal with the 'race,' the 'tribe' and the

'nation' as social or anthropic units; but of late it has become evident that the 'crowd,' any crowd, anywhere, anytime, is just as specialized, has as many individual traits, and is quite as active in its influence, as either of those mentioned. The 'crowd' may be in the salon of a lady of fashion, on a corner in the slums, or at a meeting of a scientific association; it will have the same peculiarities and move according to the same laws. It will act on impulse and not on reason; its intelligence is that of its most inferior members; but its powers are prompt and far-reaching. Mental suggestion and mental contagion are its favorite stimuli. It loves catch-words, symbols, colors and costumes. It prizes a badge far above a syllogism, and can be captured by the former when the latter would fall powerless.

The study of this many-headed beast has very properly come into the scope of anthropology, and the little book of Dr. Gustave Le Bon, '*Psychologie des foules*' (Alcan, Paris), as well as the lectures of Prof. Bernheim, of Nancy, on '*Suggestion collective*,' enable the reader to appreciate how singularly the folly of the mass obscures the wisdom of the individual.

##### RECENT CRANIOLOGICAL STUDIES.

DR. RUDOLF MARTIN, already familiar to Americanists by his somatologic writings on the natives of Tierra del Fuego, has lately published in the quarterly journal of the *Naturforschende Gesellschaft*, of Zürich, an article on 'Old Patagonian Skulls.' The crania, twelve in number, were obtained from the left bank of the Rio Negro, about fifty kilometers above its mouth. He subjects them to a searching scrutiny and an analysis of their dimensions. They do not seem to show marked traits of degeneration. In form they are brachycephalic and prognathic, with prominent cheek bones. Two full-plate illustrations

and several in the text accompany the paper.

In the proceedings of the Berlin Anthropological Society for January last, Dr. Felix von Luschan has a contribution in which he describes three trepanned skulls from Tenerife, and refers to seven other examples from the same locality. The operation seems to have been generally successful. Some others present cicatrices, which appear to have been from wounds intentionally inflicted for ceremonial purposes. He also gives examples of defective tympanic bones in artificially deformed skulls from Peru.

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#### SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS.

##### THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION.

THE British Association for the Advancement of Science, whose preeminence is borne witness to by the fact that it is always called simply 'The British Association' by British newspapers and the general public, is meeting at Liverpool during the present week. Since its first meeting in 1831, the Association has been an important factor in the progress of science in Great Britain and has set an example which has been followed by the nations showing the greatest scientific activity. It has to a considerable extent fulfilled its objects: "To give a stronger impulse and a more systematic direction to scientific inquiry, to promote the intercourse of those who cultivate science in different parts of the British Empire, with one another and with foreign philosophers, to obtain a more general attention to the objects of science, and a removal of any disadvantages of a public kind which impede its progress."

The Liverpool meeting, presided over by Sir Joseph Lister, also president of the Royal Society and by common consent one of the greatest men of science now living, with men such as Prof. J. J. Thomson to preside over its sections, with a strong local committee, in a city offering many attractions, is sure to promote the objects of the Association and surpass in impor-

tance the similar meetings in other countries. Yet it is probable that the meeting will be less influential than that held in the same place 26 years ago, when, with an attendance of 2,878, Huxley as president gave his remarkable address on 'Biogenesis,' and the presidents of the sections included Clerk-Maxwell, Sir Henry Roscoe, Rollerson, Murchison and Jevons.

The British Association does not escape the criticism usual in such cases; it has been said that it has no further *raison d'être*, and even that it is only being kept alive long enough to make presidents of certain men who want this honor. Yet it is probable that such an association has never been more useful or more needed. The men active twenty-six years ago have since become more famous and are mostly no longer living. But new men have come and new problems. The advance of science has never before been so steady and so widespread. There has never been a time when it was more advantageous for men of science to meet together, and use their collective influence for the common good.

##### THE PASTEUR MEMORIAL.

WE have on several occasions called attention to the monument in memory of Pasteur, to be erected in Paris. There is a strong committee, consisting of a number of the leading men of science in France and having as honorary members the President of the Republic and his cabinet, together with about one hundred and sixty of the most prominent officials, scientists and other distinguished citizens of France. It has been wisely decided to make the memorial international and a committee for the United States has been organized, consisting of Dr. D. E. Salmon, Chairman, Dr. E. A. de Schweinitz, Secretary, Dr. Geo. M. Sternberg, Dr. J. Rufus Tryon, Dr. Walter Wyman, Prof. S. F. Emmons, Prof. Lester F. Ward, Dr. Wm. B. French, Hon. Gardiner G. Hubbard, Mr. C. L. Marlatt, and Dr. Ch. Wardell Stiles. Dr. G. Brown Goode, active in so many useful works, was treasurer of the committee.

The committee has devoted much attention to the subject and has corresponded with many societies and individuals. It prefers to have