

press immediately before his last illness. His principal work lay, however, in the field of cellular biology, and a brief but important paper by him on the fertilization of the egg in *Thalassema*, published in the Transactions of the New York Academy of Sciences for 1895-6, had attracted considerable attention, both in this country and abroad. A more extended paper along the same lines, bringing forward new and important evidence on the nature of fertilization, the history of the centrosome, the phenomena of chromatin-reduction and other vexed problems of cytology was practically ready for the printer at the time of his death and will be hereafter printed. He was a man of singularly pure character. His high ideals of life, his rare and single-hearted devotion to his chosen life-work, will not be forgotten by those who had felt the stimulus of his example.

E. B. W.

#### CURRENT NOTES ON METEOROLOGY.

##### THIRST IN THE DESERT.

No more graphic account has ever been written of the physiological effects of the dry air of the desert than that by McGee in the *Atlantic Monthly* for April. The regions to which particular reference is made are those of Death Valley, farther Papagueria (the desert borderland of Arizona and Sonora), and other portions of our western arid country, where "daily for months the air is 120° F. or more in the shade, and dry, so dry that a basin of water evaporates in an hour, so dry that no drop of sweat is shed by hard-pushed horse or toiling pedestrian. \* \* \* \* Even the Indians gathered in the moister spots have a shrunk and withered mien, half mummied before death, as they are wholly after. Here thirst abides." The article is gruesome reading, portraying, as it does in the most vivid manner, the five successive stages of thirst in the desert, from the first, in which

the symptoms are beginning, to the final stage, in which "there is no alleviation, no relief, until the too persistent heart or lungs show mercy, or kindly coyotes close in to the final feast."

##### WEATHER CYCLES IN INDIA.

A PAPER by Dallas, in the *Monthly Weather Review* for December, 1897, entitled 'A Preliminary Discussion of Certain Cyclical Changes in India' makes it appear that there are two cycles, both traceable in pressure and rainfall, which affect the weather over the Indian region. One of these cycles runs through a period of 11 years, and the other through a period of 9 years. Both are more distinctly traceable in the records of southern India (Madras) than in the records of the whole of India. It does not, however, appear possible to make use of these facts in predicting, with any certainty, the probable amount of rain in any season with a view to the taking of precautionary measures against impending droughts.

##### ELECTRICAL STORMS IN CALIFORNIA.

IN the same number of the *Monthly Weather Review* Mr. James A. Barwick, Observer of the Weather Bureau at Sacramento, Cal., discusses 'The Electric Storms of California.' The impression is quite widespread that thunder and lightning are almost unknown in California, but the present paper shows that thunderstorms are by no means infrequent, and that they occur pretty well all over the State. The greatest number come in the hot months of June, July and August, and the storms of these months are confined mostly to the counties of the Coast Range and the Sierra Nevada. The hotter the weather in the summer in California, the greater is the number of thunderstorms, as is found to be the case elsewhere.

##### BLUE HILL OBSERVATORY BULLETINS.

THE Blue Hill Observatory has begun, with the present year, the issue of a series

of Bulletins, each one containing a brief discussion of some meteorological data of particular interest. So far three Bulletins have been issued, the successive subjects being as follows: No. 1, *The Highest Kite Ascensions in 1897*; No. 2, *Examples of the Diurnal and Cyclonic Changes in Temperature and Relative Humidity at Different Heights in the Free Air*; No. 3, *The Storm of January 31-February 1, 1898*. Each Bulletin is of 4to size, consists of 4 pages, and is illustrated by means of temperature, pressure and other curves.

#### RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

*Anales de la Oficina Meteorologica Argentina.*  
Buenos Aires, 1897. 4to. Pp. 502.

Contains full meteorological tables for the Isla de los Estados (Staten Island), a most interesting station between Lats. 54° and 55° S., off the southeastern extremity of South America.

*Weather Forecasting and Weather Types on the North Pacific Slope.* B. S. PAGUE and S. M. BLANDFORD. Portland, Ore., 1897. 8vo. Pp. 29. Charts 5.

An excellent pamphlet, along lines which might profitably be followed by other local forecast officials in different parts of the country. We need more study and more illustration of the living weather types that go to make up climate, and rather less time spent on the tabulation of climatic data.

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#### CURRENT NOTES ON ANTHROPOLOGY.

##### THE HUMAN CRANIAL NORM.

IN the *Correspondenz-blatt* of the German Anthropological Society for December last the distinguished anthropologist, Professor Ranke, has a suggestive article on the individual variations of the skull form, in which he maintains several striking theses.

Thus he argues that the highest cranial form, that of man, is the universal embry-

onic norm from which the skulls of all the mammalia develop. Again, in following the variations of each individual skull, we find that they represent in turn the cranial forms which have been held characteristic of all the various races of man. Further, every skull at the time of birth is orthognathic, and each has a tendency to become more and more prognathic. This is observable in the highest as well as the lowest races, though in the former it is more frequently checked by anatomical correlations.

##### KOREAN ETHNOGRAPHY.

Now that the affairs of Korea are served up daily almost in our newspapers, the manners and customs of that country deserve to interest us. One of the most pleasant and yet completest accounts of them was written about a year ago by Professor Edward S. Morse and published in *Appleton's Popular Science Monthly* for May, 1897 (and reprint), under the title 'Korean Interviews.'

In the space of sixteen pages he describes the family relations, education, marriage, customs, religions, burials, usages, festivals, arts, games, etc. The conclusion at which one arrives is that the sooner the present government, laws, customs and religions are wiped out of existence the better it will be for the Korean people, whether this is accomplished by the Russians or the Japanese.

##### TRIBES ENCOUNTERED BY CORTES.

THE location of the first battlefield of Cortes in the New World, that called 'Cintla,' and the ethnic affinities of the tribes he then encountered, have been subjects of varied opinion by M. Charnay, Orozco y Berra and other writers. In an article in the *American Antiquarian* for September, 1896, I attempted to define with precision the geographical spot and the tribe he there encountered. More recently and without a knowledge of my investigations