

like the temperance question, depending more upon public sentiment than upon law, since laws are inoperative without public approval to enforce them. So long as fashion demands feathers and there are birds to supply them, so long will feathers be worn, and it is to be doubted if laws directed against the wearing of feathers would be held constitutional. Attention was justly called to the collecting fad which possesses so many of our younger ornithologists, and which in its worst phases is not a whit better than the collecting of postage stamps, only to see how many may be obtained. The mere possession of any number of bird skins and bird eggs no more makes an ornithologist than the owning of paints and brushes constitutes an artist, yet it is evident from the abundant catalogues of dealers in bird skins and eggs that there is far greater demand for these than the needs of ornithology warrant. From a scientific standpoint Dr. Jonathan Dwight's observations on the moulting of birds and Mr. William Palmer's on the early stages of feathers were the most important presented, dealing as they did with subjects concerning which we have much to learn, and which have important bearings on the phylogeny and classification of birds. While these subjects have both been worked at in a more or less desultory way, we need a large number of carefully accumulated facts on both points. Mr. Palmer presented a genealogical tree and scheme of classification based on the condition of the neossophtes, or first feathers, but this is to be regarded as purely tentative. While birds must be classified by the resultant of a number of characters, and not by any one or two, yet Dr. Gadow has pointed out the value of taxonomic arrangements based on a single character, since each will contribute something good; therefore, it is to be hoped that Mr. Palmer will continue his work.

F. A. L.

#### CURRENT NOTES ON ANTHROPOLOGY.

##### ORIGIN OF NEOLITHIC ART IN FRANCE.

M. GABRIEL CARRIÈRE has an article in *L' Anthropologie*, August, 1898, on the palæthnology of southern France, in the course of which he makes some important general statements. The same population, ethnically, continued after the neolithic period through the bronze age. The introduction of metal was not accompanied by conquest and a change of physical type. The constructors of the dolmens and other megalithic monuments developed their own culture, and their remains have not yielded a single object to which one should attribute an oriental origin, or class with the art products of Hissarlik, Mycenæ or Egypt.

This conclusion is fully in the line of many recent researches in western Europe, which dispel the old notion that its primitive culture was introduced by Phœnician, Greek or Egyptian navigators.

##### PALÆOLITHIC STATIONS IN RUSSIA.

DEPOSITS which can be referred to the Palæolithic period are excessively rare in Russia; indeed, some archæologists deny that any have been found. One rather promising site is on the right bank of the river Dnieper, close to the city of Kiew. In a gravel deposit there, directly overlying the tertiary clay, and at a depth of 19 meters below the surface, M. Chvojka unearthed bones of the mammoth and cave bear, along with flint chips, charcoal and dressed stones of rude form. While the finder believed the deposit of inter-glacial origin, Professor Armachevsky, of the University of Kiew, places it post-glacial; and the types of stone implements, according to M. Volkov, who reports the facts, are not extremely ancient, but point rather to the period of transition from the palæolithic to the neolithic, of which latter period well-marked remains exist in the same locality. This station, therefore, is not certainly very

ancient (Bull. de la Soc. d'Anthropologie de Paris, 1898, Fasc. 2).

#### THE STIGMATA OF DEGENERATION.

THIS is the title of an article of thirty-five pages by Dr. W. C. Krauss in the *American Journal of Insanity*, July, 1897, of great merit. There is no question in anthropology of more actual interest than that of Degeneration, what it is, what it means, what are its signs. In one sense, every step of progress involves degeneration, while in another sense, degeneration is the antithesis of progress. There is no such thing as 'the normal type,' the perfect man, and never was. What some writers assert is the acme of perfectibility—complete adaptation to environment—is, in fact, typical degeneration and a pathological condition.

Dr. Krauss treats very fully the stigmata of degeneration, first the physical, and next the mental or psychical and moral, and concludes with an attempt to answer the question: Is the human race degenerating? He replies with a negative, and adds the pleasing information that, 'as compared with foreigners, Americans exhibit the fewest signs of degeneracy, and the most marked degenerate types found here are imported individuals.'

D. G. BRINTON.

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA.

#### SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS.

##### THE 'HUMANE' SOCIETY.

THE current issue of the *Philadelphia Medical Journal* contains an interesting article by Dr. D. E. Salmon, Chief of the Bureau of Animal Industry, on diseases and abuses of animals in the United States, describing what has been done by the federal government towards their alleviation and prevention, and what the Humane Societies of the country may do to assist in these efforts. This address was prepared at the request of the officers of the American Humane Society to be read at their present meet-

ing in Washington. But the Washington Humane Society protested that if Dr. Salmon's name were not removed from the program they would lose all interest in the meeting, and the paper was omitted. The Chairman of the Sub-executive Committee wrote to Dr. Salmon that he was deeply humiliated by the action of the Society, and to this letter Dr. Salmon replied as follows:

Your favor of the 21st instant is received, and I assure you there is no cause for you to feel embarrassment on my account. It is remarkable, however, that the Washington Humane Society should so greatly fear the reading of a paper before your body, upon such a practical subject as I was to present, that it would lose all interest in the meeting in case that part of the program were carried out. If the cause which they are advocating would be so seriously endangered by one man and one paper, with a convention predisposed in their favor, should not this confession of the fact prove embarrassing to them rather than to any one else?

The Washington Humane Society is making a great effort to secure legislation to stop experimentation upon animals even for the advancement of medical science. In this I sincerely hope they will never succeed; but they are alienating from cooperation with the humane societies the great humane forces of the country, viz., the medical and veterinary professions, the biologists, the universities and the Agricultural Department of the Government. In the meantime the value of such experimentation is becoming more and more apparent, and we are slowly learning, by means of it, how to control the destructive diseases affecting mankind and the lower animals. This Bureau has distributed, upon request of the owners of cattle, 500,000 doses of blackleg vaccine during the past year, reducing the loss from about 15 per cent. to 1 per cent. This year we have demonstrated that Texas fever can be prevented without serious restriction to the traffic in Southern cattle, and this discovery will save millions of dollars annually to the people of the Southern and Southwestern States and Territories. We are also introducing a serum treatment for hog cholera which saves 80 per cent. of the animals in diseased herds. These discoveries, made by experimenting upon animals, mean not only many millions of dollars to the country, but they mean the cheapening of the food supply, which is always equivalent to saving human suffering and prolonging human life, and they also mean the prevention of infinite suffering among the species of animals affected by these diseases.

Under these circumstances is it not time for the