

## MEASUREMENTS OF ASYLUM CHILDREN.

DR. ALES HRDLICKA has recently published a paper containing a series of very interesting 'Anthropological Investigations on One Thousand White and Colored Children of Both Sexes,' inmates of the New York Juvenile Asylum. The principal aim of these investigations was to learn as much as possible about the physical state of the children who are being admitted and kept in juvenile asylums, while it was also intended to add to our knowledge of the normal child and of several classes of abnormal children. It is well known that a large proportion of the children admitted to juvenile asylums are sent there on account of the poverty of their parents, while another large contingent are committed as incorrigible or even criminal. As both these classes are, from a sociological point of view, abnormal, it is important to learn how far their physical characteristics conform to their moral character, in order to justly decide whether or not they are materially handicapped in their struggle for life, since their treatment and prospects would depend largely on the answers to this question. Dr. Hrdlicka's observations and measurements have a direct bearing on this point, while they are also of value to the anthropologist and zoologist.

While the asylum children are of somewhat smaller stature and smaller weight than were the outside children available for comparison, these deficiencies are probably due to lack of nutrition caused by poverty; measurements of the heads show no great departure from what is considered normal. Criminal and vicious children are not, *as a class*, characterized by any considerable physical inferiority, while the mental ability of at least 85 *per cent.* was equal to the average ability of children outside the institution. Dr. Hrdlicka, therefore, concluded that this class of children make a favorable showing and, with proper treatment, give great hopes as to their future. It is considered of great importance that such children should remain sufficiently long in the asylum to enable them to acquire and retain good habits.

It is found, while the variety of abnormalities existing among the inmates of the asylum is very great, that there is no one ab-

normality nor set of abnormalities characteristic of the children as a class, and that the characters are usually so slight as not to interfere with any progress the children might otherwise be capable of.

The fact that certain pretty constant differences exist between the colored and white children is of considerable interest, the more that, zoologically speaking, these differences are such as to indicate that the negro is more generalized than the white. Thus the negro children exhibit more uniformity in their physical characters and less tendency to congenital variation, although more susceptible to acquired abnormalities, chiefly the results of rachitic conditions. The ears of many show an almost specific character in having the helix bent on itself and compressed at the highest fourth of the ear; the arms are slightly longer, and in general the bodies of the negro children show less adipose tissue and more muscular development.

All in all, the report deserves to be read with care.

F. A. L.

## SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS.

YALE University has conferred the degree of LL.D. on Professor Charles Sedgwick Minot, of Harvard Medical School, and on Dr. Emory McClintock, of New York, lately President of the American Mathematical Society.

HARVARD University has conferred the degree of LL.D. on Professor Arthur T. Hadley, President-elect of Yale University.

HOBART College has conferred the degree of LL.D. on Professor W. K. Brooks, of the Johns Hopkins University.

PROFESSOR NEWCOMB attended the meeting of the Paris Academy of Sciences, of which he is the only American honorary member, on June 12th.

FRANK SCHLESINGER, PH.D. (Columbia), has been appointed an observer in the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey, and will be stationed at Ukiah, Cal., where he will take part in the international plan for the determination of the variation of latitude.

M. HENRI MOISSAN was elected an honorary member of the German Electro-chemical Society at its recent meeting at Göttingen.

DR. P. F. RAYMOND, the successor of Charcot in the chair of nervous diseases at the Saltpêtrière, has been elected a member of the Paris Academy of Medicine.

THE University of Michigan has conferred the degree of S.M. on Dr. Charles F. Brush, of Cleveland, and Professor W. W. Campbell, of Lick Observatory. They are both graduates of the University of Michigan.

PROFESSOR H. A. PILSBRY, of the Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences, has received the degree of Doctor of Science from the University of Iowa.

WE learn with regret of the death of W. W. Norman, professor of biology at the University of Texas, from typhoid fever at Boston.

At the approaching meeting of the French Association for the Advancement of Science at Boulogne a monument of Duchenne, known for his contributions to electro-therapeutics will be unveiled. The Association will for the first time have a Sub-section of Electro-physiology.

THE Maryland Geological Survey has established a laboratory for the physical analysis of soils, and Mr. C. W. Dorsey, of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, has been detailed to superintend the work. A full outfit of apparatus similar to that used by Professor Whitney in the physical determination of soils has been installed, and work will be continued during the coming year upon the soils of Maryland, in conjunction with the geological surveying of the same area. The Survey has further recently had constructed by Mr. Henry J. Williams, of Boston, a very elaborate calorimeter for the determination of the calorific power of coal, preparatory to the investigations of the coal formations of Maryland, which will afford the subject for an exhaustive report at an early date.

WE learn from the *American Geologist* that the Minnesota Academy of Natural Sciences will send to the Greater American Exhibition at Omaha a collection illustrating the natural history of the Philippine Islands. The collection will comprise nearly 1,000 birds, a large number of vertebrates, including huge bats and snakes, a collection of shells and corals, and an elaborate ethnographical display.

THE observations at the Magnetic Observatory at Vienna have had to be discontinued on account of the electric tramways and electric light wires. *Terrestrial Magnetism* states that the Director of the Observatory, Professor Pernter, has submitted a plan to the Austrian government for a new Observatory, to be situated some distance from Vienna, and to be provided with instruments of the latest construction.

WE learn from the *National Geographic Magazine* that Col. W. S. Brackett, of Peoria, Ill., has organized and equipped an expedition to determine the geological and mineralogical features of the almost unknown region lying between Buffalo Hump, in Idaho county, Idaho, and the Nez Perce Pass, in the Bitter Root range. The party numbers twelve men, all experienced mountaineers, some of whom have been in that country since 1862.

THE U. S. Fish Commission steamer *Fish Hawk* has arrived at Woods Holl and will be used for biological work throughout the summer.

IN compliance with a request of Governor Roosevelt, the Hon. Andrew H. Green, President of the Society for the Preservation of Scenic Historic Places and Objects, has appointed a committee to confer with the New Jersey commission in regard to the preservation of the Palisades. The committee consists of Edward D. Adams, Abram G. Mills, George F. Kunz, Fred. S. Lamb and Edward Payson Cone, all of New York City.

SURGEON J. C. BOYD, of the Navy, one of the United States delegates to the recent Tuberculosis Congress in Berlin, has returned to Washington, and is preparing a report for the Department on the work of the Congress. Dr. Boyd thinks that the results of the Congress are important.

At a meeting of the American Fisheries Society, held at Niagara Falls June 28th and 29th, it was voted to hold the next annual meeting at the Station of the U. S. Fish Commission, Woods Holl, Mass.

UNDER the auspices of the Royal Horticultural Society of London an International Conference will be held this month on the hybridization of plants. The U. S. Department of Agriculture will be represented by Mr. H. J. Webber.

INVITATIONS have been sent for the Fourth International Congress of Psychology, which will be held at Paris from the 20th to the 25th of August, 1900. The organization is left to the French members, the following being the officers: President, Th. Ribot, professor of experimental and comparative psychology in the Collège de France; Vice-President, Charles Richet, professor of physiology in the Paris Faculty of Medicine; General Secretary, Pierre Janet, Director of the Laboratory of Psychology in the Collège de France. The seven Sections and the Presidents are as follows: (1) Psychology in its relations to physiology and anatomy, Professor Matthias Duval; (2) Introspective psychology and its relations to philosophy, Professor G. Séailles; (3) Experimental psychology and psycho-physics, M. A. Binet; (4) Pathological psychology and psychiatrie, Dr. Magnan; (5) Psychology of hypnotism and related questions, Dr. Bernheim; (6) Social and criminal psychology, M. Tarde; (7) Comparative psychology and anthropology, Professor Ives Delage. Those wishing to attend the Congress should apply to the Secretary, and those wishing to present papers should forward abstracts not later than January 1st, next.

THE Eighteenth Congress of the British Sanitary Institute will be held at Southampton from August 29th to September 2d, under the presidency of Sir William H. Preece. There will be three sections meeting for two days each, dealing with: (1) Sanitary Science and Preventive Medicine, presided over by Sir Joseph Ewart, M.D., F.R.C.P.; (2) Engineering and Architecture, presided over by Mr. James Lemon, M.Inst.C.E., F.R.I.B.A.; (3) Physics, Chemistry and Biology, presided over by Professor Percy F. Frankland, F.R.S. There will also be special conferences of municipal representatives, port sanitary authorities, medical officers of health, medical officers of schools, engineers and surveyors to county and other sanitary authorities, veterinary inspectors and sanitary inspectors, and a conference on domestic hygiene.

*Nature*, quoting from the Allahabad *Pioneer Mail*, states that some important changes are being made in the meteorological department

of the government of India. These comprise the abolition of a number of observing stations which have not proved worth keeping up, and the substitution for them of others in more favorable localities. Of the latter, most important are stations which are to be established at Cherapunji and one or two other places in Assam, which will enable a more careful watch to be kept over the meteorology of the tea districts, also regarding the periodical rise and fall of the rivers which are so important for the jute trade. Arrangements are also being made, but are not yet concluded, for the establishment of an observatory on Dodabatta Peak, the highest point in the Nilgiris, which is likely to be valuable in connection with the warnings of the monsoon.

ACCORDING to *The Medical Record*, a young man of Newport, Vt., a student of the University of Vermont, has brought suit against the professor of mathematics in the University for damages for the sum of \$10,000. He says that he sustained an injury of the leg as the result of the taking of ten X-ray photographs of his leg soon after the bone had been fractured and while it was healing.

THE French naval authorities, acting in conjunction with Signor Marconi, on June 17th conducted some successful experiments with wireless telegraphy between a ship and the shore in the English Channel. We learn from the *London Times* that the French storeship *Vienne* was used for the purpose. One of Signor Marconi's installations was fitted up on board, and the inventor was present. Wimereaux, near Boulogne, and the South Foreland lighthouse, on the Kentish coast, were used as the land stations. Up to June 17th the distance between the South Foreland and Boulogne, about 28 miles, was the greatest space through which the messages have been transmitted. On June 17th messages were sent between the vessel and the English coast from off Boulogne, and afterwards at intervals, until the vessel was 12 or 14 miles away from that port. The greatest distance through which the messages were telegraphed were 42 miles. The increased distance appeared to have no effect, the messages being recorded at the receiving

station at the South Foreland with unvarying distinctness. The experiments began at 8 a. m., and were continued throughout the day. In the afternoon the Channel was enveloped in a dense fog, but this did not in any way interfere with the transmission of the messages. The vessel was fitted up with a wire passing up the masthead, and messages were exchanged while the vessel was travelling at various conditions of speed with the same result. An interesting feature in the experiments was the facility with which Signor Marconi's latest development for cutting out a station was applied. The messages were sent at will either to Wimereaux or to South Foreland, without the other station being able to intercept them. The results of the experiments are to be reported to the French government.

CONSUL SKINNER, of Marseilles, under date of May 4, 1899, writes to the Department of State that reports from Algeria indicate that standing crops will be seriously damaged and in some cases destroyed by the clouds of grasshoppers now moving in a northerly direction. Ten thousand francs have already been placed at the disposal of the general of the division for the first expenses incurred in fighting against the invasion, and steps have been taken to secure \$38,600 additional for the same purpose. Near Biskra 3,200 camels are being employed in the transportation of inflammable material which is being burned where deposits of eggs are found. In all parts of the colony men are at work plowing up eggs and destroying them. It is hoped that the energetic measures being taken will prevent a now menaced catastrophe. The Algerian wheat crop of 1898 was estimated at 24,118,000 bushels. The exports of cereals from the colony during 1897 were as follows, in tons: Wheat, 54,178; corn, 971; barley, 33,492; oats, 32,781; flour, 2,826.

#### UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL NEWS.

WE regret to learn that a decision, handed down by Judge Lacombe, reopens the Fayerweather will by which some five million dollars was bequeathed to educational institutions.

THE Board of Visitors appointed to inspect

the U. S. Naval Academy has handed in a report recommending the expenditure of \$461,000 on buildings and land.

£10,000, half given by an anonymous benefactor and half appropriated from university funds, will be used for the erection of a pathological laboratory at Oxford.

YALE University, at its recent commencement, conferred 599 degrees as follows: B.A., 294; Ph.B., 136; C.D.S., 22; B.F.A., 2; LL.B., 65; M.D., 7; M.A., 34; D.C.L., 3; C.E., 1; M.E., 3; M.S., 2; Ph.D., 30.

THE Rev. George Harris, D.D., professor of theology at the Andover Theological Seminary, has been elected President of Amherst College.

CHANCELLOR MACLEAN, of the University of Nebraska, has been offered the presidency of the University of Iowa.

DR. E. BENJAMIN ANDREWS has been re-elected Superintendent of the Chicago public schools.

DR. JAMES EWING has been appointed professor of pathology in the Cornell University Medical College, and in the University assistant professors have been appointed as follows: Dr. John Gifford in forestry, Dr. B. F. Kingsbury in histology and embryology, and M. V. Slingerland in entomology.

THE following appointments and promotions have also been made: Charles W. Wardner, Ph.D. (Johns Hopkins), to be professor of physics in Williams College; H. G. Byers, Ph.D. (Johns Hopkins), to be professor of chemistry in the State University of Washington; Alfred H. Seal, Ph.D. (Pennsylvania), to be professor of chemistry in Girard College, Philadelphia; J. F. Collins, now curator of the herbarium in Brown University, to be instructor in botany; Howard Opdike, now instructor, to be assistant professor of mathematics at Union College; S. Alfred Mitchell, Ph.D. (Johns Hopkins), to be tutor in astronomy in Columbia University; Dr. Oliver L. Fassig, to be instructor in climatology in Johns Hopkins University, and Miss Robinson, of the University of Michigan, to be instructor in biology in Vassar College.