

length of time during which it has been in operation.

I have delayed submitting this note in the expectation that others would be as ready to convey information regarding air in water as they have been concerning water in air!

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September 18, 1911

THE INFLUENCE OF HEREDITY AND OF ENVIRONMENT IN DETERMINING THE COAT COLORS  
IN MICE

PROFESSOR T. H. MORGAN,<sup>1</sup> in an interesting paper, has lately published the results of his breeding experiments with mice. Among other questions he considers certain curious coat patterns on black animals resulting from a black  $\times$  chocolate (brown) cross.

Such coat patterns, which appear to consist of well-defined regions of light and dark hair, he considers due to heterozygosis between the black and brown coat colors.

That such patterns are not due to heterozygosis of black and brown is, I believe, shown by the following three facts which I have been able to record:

1. That in mice, brown (chocolate) animals may possess these coat patterns while changing coats. These animals are by experiment proved to be free of all black pigment.

2. That in rabbits, black animals may show these coat patterns with extraordinary clearness. There is no brown (chocolate) rabbit recorded.

3. That the common gray squirrel frequently shows distinct coat patterns of this nature, when changing coats. This wild species is undoubtedly homozygous for its color pattern.

Morgan further suggests that these coat patterns in mice may be due to heterozygosis of intensity and dilution of coat pigmentation. This, I think, is disproved by the fact that I have obtained clearly defined patterns on the coats of dilute pink-eyed brown (chocolate) mice. These animals are the lowest recessives in the series of colored mice. They have been

<sup>1</sup>*Annals N. Y. Acad. of Science*, 1911, Vol. XXI., pp. 87-117.

found, by experiments, to lack the ability to produce black pigment, intensity of coat pigmentation and dark eyes.

It would seem then that the coat patterns recorded by Morgan as well as those mentioned above are the result of physiological conditions of the animals incidental to the coat-changing period, and that they can not be considered of any value as indicating the gametic composition of the animal on which they appear.

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QUOTATIONS

CONGRESS OF THE UNIVERSITIES OF THE BRITISH  
EMPIRE

A FURTHER meeting of the vice-chancellors of the home universities who constitute the Home Committee to make arrangements for the Congress of the Universities of the Empire, which is to be held in London next year on July 2, 3, 4 and 5, was held recently at the University of London under the chairmanship of Sir William Collins, vice-chancellor of that university. The meeting was also attended by Sir Charles Lucas, head of the Dominions Department of the Colonial Office; Sir Theodore Morison, a member of the Council of India; and Dr. Heath, of the Board of Education. In November last year an invitation was extended to the fifty-one universities in the British Empire to send representatives to the congress, accompanied by an intimation that the topics to be considered would fall under the following heads, but inviting suggestions: (1) University organization; (2) universities in their relation to teachers and undergraduate students; (3) universities in their relation to post-graduate and research work; and (4) universities in their relation to schools and to agencies for higher education. At the recent meeting the suggestions received from oversea universities were considered, and Dr. R. D. Roberts, secretary to the congress, made a report upon a preliminary conference of representatives of the Canadian universities, held at Montreal

last summer, which he had attended. The congress, which was summoned by the Principals of McGill University and the University of Toronto, was attended by representatives of fifteen of the nineteen universities in the Dominion. The representatives of the universities of Alberta and Manitoba were prevented from attending at the last moment, and only two of the smallest universities failed to accept the invitation. Dr. Roberts reported that in addressing the Canadian conference he had instanced, as a few of the questions which seemed to be demanding attention, the following: The first was whether any common understanding was possible among the universities of the empire as to the extent to which they could recognize each other's entrance examinations; another was the desirability of increased facilities for post-graduate study; a third, the possibility of some plan for interchange of professors; a fourth, what could be done by universities in regard to the after-careers of their students. There was, further, the whole question of the financial support given from public sources to universities in the British Empire, as compared with the provision for university education made in other countries. There was finally the suggestion, made by Principal Peterson and others, that a central bureau should be formed to furnish information to the universities of the empire upon these and other questions. The principal of Toronto University reported that it had appointed a committee which was carefully considering the list of subjects which should be brought before the congress, and the conference finally decided to appoint three committees, one for the western provinces, another for the maritime, and a third for the central provinces. In conclusion Dr. Roberts stated that from conversations with the heads and professors of universities in the eastern parts of Canada, which alone he had leisure to visit, he had formed the impression that the question of enlarged facilities for post-graduate study was regarded as of prime importance from the Canadian point of view. The University of Sydney has appointed Earl Beauchamp, formerly visitor of the univer-

sity; Professor Anderson Stuart, dean of the faculty of medicine; Professor Warren, dean of the faculty of engineering, and Mr. H. E. Bartff, registrar, as delegates to represent it at the congress next year. The Home Committee has appointed a subcommittee to draw up a detailed program for the consideration of a meeting of the full committee on November 4. Inquiries with regard to the congress should be addressed to Dr. R. D. Roberts, at the Congress Office, University of London, South Kensington, London, S. W.—*British Medical Journal*.

#### TECHNICAL JUDGES

JUDGES continue to protest against the absurdity of their being called upon to pass upon highly technical and scientific questions. Thus Judge Hand, in the course of an opinion which he rendered in a case involving patents in the manufacture of chemicals, took occasion to remark:

"I can not stop without calling attention to the extraordinary condition of the law which makes it possible for a man without any knowledge of even the rudiments of chemistry to pass upon such questions as these. . . . In Germany they do quite differently. There the courts summon technical judges to whom technical questions are submitted and who can independently pass upon the issues without blindly groping among testimony wholly out of their ken. How long we shall continue to blunder along without the aid of unpartisan and authoritative scientific assistance in the administration of justice, no one knows, but all fair persons not conventionalized by provincial legal habits of mind ought, I should think, to unite to effect some such advances."

The need of such a reform as Judge Hand here urges has often been argued. We should not forget, however, that it is possible to meet the difficulty, in part at least, by extra-judicial means. In point is the plan favored by the New York Chamber of Commerce for settling commercial disputes by arbitrators selected from an official list. This plan provides for the disposal of technical questions arising in business by men peculiarly qualified by rea-