ing the non-Mendelian inheritance of albinism be published. To this she has replied that this data "in no way affects the transmission of cancer." I can only add that when one investigator suggests a revolutionary hypothesis which is contrary to the experimental results obtained by a large number of investigators in the same field, it is customary to present with the hypothesis the data on which it depends for its support.

Dr. Slye is right when she says in speaking of heredity,

> Exceptions to what was the canon have become so numerous as to be part of the rule.

One of the few points, however, on which all Mendelians, rabid or only semi-rabid, are agreed is that a homozygote forms one type of gamete in respect to the pair of factors for which it is homozygous. This is the principle which by diagrams and text Dr. Slye denies. Is it not fair to those who have not observed the type of inheritance mentioned by Slye to once more request the publication of the complete data on which this type of inheritance rests?

C. C. LITTLE

HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL,
September 7, 1915

THE HEREDITY OF STATURE

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: The undersigned is making a study of the heredity of the elements of stature and desires the cooperation of those who are in a position to give it.

The first requirement is a household with both parents and at least two children above the age of 16 years; the more children above this age the better. If one or more grandparents, uncles and aunts are available they should be included in the study. The second requirement is a tape, if possible, 6 feet long, but a yard tape will do.

The procedure is to rule columns on ordinary writing paper, one column each for father, mother, each child and also each grandparent or uncle or aunt who may be available. The first horizontal line will be for sex; the second for age and the following four for the four measures. Then measure and record for each person: 1, total stature (without shoes); 2, sitting height; 3, height of top of fibula above sole of foot and, 4, vertical distance from vertex of head to depression at upper end of sternum (between the collar bones). The only suggestions are: (1) The stature may be taken standing against a door frame; the subject looking straight forward, a book is placed, binding downward, against the top of the head and square with the wall; mark the level of the book on the door frame and measure down to the floor. (2) Place the chair by the door frame; place subject sitting upright in chair, his back against door frame; indicate level of vertex in same fashion as in standing height and measure from mark to the level of the seat of the chair. (3) The top of the fibula is easily felt on *outside* of knee as a bony prominence from which a tendon runs to the thigh. (4) The head-and-neck measurement is to be strictly vertical. Place the 0 end of tape in the book; close the book so that the 0 mark is flush with the binding. The subject standing by wall, place book square against wall; then measure down along side of the nose to the sternum. All measurements should be recorded in $\frac{1}{2}$ (or $\frac{1}{4}$) inches or in centimeters. Full names are desired for reference in case further correspondence is necessary but no names will be published.

It will be found interesting to preserve a copy of the record but please send one copy to me. If desired I will send ruled paper and a tape for the measurements.

C. B. DAVENPORT

STATION FOR EXPERIMENTAL EVOLUTION,
COLD SPRING HARBOR, N. Y.

THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

IN SCIENCE of July 30, Professor Richards has made public a letter addressed by him to the secretary of the National Academy. In this letter he volunteers advice to that learned body. He appears to think that it should cease to exist, because it covers too wide a field. Astronomers, biologists, chemists, physicists, zoologists, etc., should not be provided with any opportunity to mix even if they desire to do so. A man who has been giving his entire attention to the abdominal parasites of the white ant, should present his results to a society covering that ground only.

I have listened to papers presented to the Mathematical Society, which were wholly unintelligible to me, and I learned on inquiry on one occasion that two of the foremost mathematicians in the country, who were present, were equally in the dark. Such exhibits are often presented by men who are ambitious to say something, and who have nothing of any importance to say. It is difficult to give advice to them, it is a somewhat delicate matter, but they need advice. Many technical details which are not only proper, but necessary in a published paper, may be omitted in the oral presentation of that paper. Any person of ordinary good sense should know how to adapt an oral presentation to an audience.

There is a growing tendency among a certain class of scientific men, to lose all interest in everything outside of their own narrow horizons. This is much to be regretted. But such men have their remedy in their own hands. No one can object to the formation of physical or chemical societies, but it is to be hoped that we are not all so limited in our horizons that we shall advise academies of science to cease to exist.

Francis E. Nipher

A PROPOSED ECOLOGICAL SOCIETY

At the Philadelphia meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science about twenty men interested in ecology met informally on the evening of December 30, 1914, to consider the advisability of organizing an American Ecological Society. The immediate occasion for the conference was an expression of feeling on the part of Professor R. H. Wolcott and Professor V. E. Shelford to the effect that there is now no adequate opportunity for plant and animal ecologists to meet together, and also that there is for ecologists an urgent need of summer field meetings in addition to the present winter meetings.

The conference was attended by Messrs. Adams, Bartlett, Blodgett, Bray, Cannon, Cowles, Dachnowski, Griggs, Harshberger, Hill, Jennings, MacDougal, Nichols, Pearse, Shantz, Shelford, Shreve, Taylor and Wolcott, Professor Harshberger being selected chairman. The opinion was practically unanimous that the time is ripe for the organization of an Ecological Society, and it was voted, in connection with the Columbus meeting of the American Association, to call a conference of all ecologists interested in the formation of such a society. A committee was appointed to call such a conference and present a scheme of organization, the committee consisting of Professor J. W. Harshberger (chairman), Professor V. E. Shelford (vice-chairman), Professor H. C. Cowles (secretary-treasurer), Professor R. H. Wolcott, Professor Charles C. Adams, Dr. Forrest Shreve.

Announcement will be made later of the exact time and place of the Columbus conference, but it may be assumed that it will not be earlier than Tuesday, December 28, nor later than Thursday, December 30, 1915. The purpose of this early announcement is to give ample opportunity for full expression of opinion. It is hoped that all working ecologists will write to the undersigned, noting (1) whether the proposed society is favored or disfavored and why, and (2) whether attendance at the Columbus conference is to be expected.

Henry C. Cowles

University of Chicago

GREENE VARDIMAN BLACK

To the Editor of Science: Will you permit me to call attention to the death of Dean Greene Vardiman Black? He was a figure of world-wide importance. Even before he was called to the deanship of Northwestern University Dental School he had established an international reputation as a man of science, and I think it fair to say that no man in his time—perhaps in any time—has done more to advance his profession.

He brought to his work a broad general and sound scientific training. He had the natural equipment of a man of science. It was his research work which developed and practically gave to the world the amalgam of to-day. He was the inventor of one of the first cord driven, foot power, dental engines. His scientific contributions number nearly one thousand.