

# SCIENCE

VOL. 76

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1932

No. 1983

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SCIENCE: A Weekly Journal devoted to the Advancement of Science, edited by J. MCKEEN CATTELL and published every Friday by

## THE SCIENCE PRESS

New York City: Grand Central Terminal  
Lancaster, Pa. Garrison, N. Y.  
Annual Subscription, \$6.00 Single Copies, 15 Cts.

SCIENCE is the official organ of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Information regarding membership in the Association may be secured from the office of the permanent secretary, in the Smithsonian Institution Building, Washington, D. C.

## THE AIMS OF ANTHROPOLOGICAL RESEARCH<sup>1</sup>

By Dr. FRANZ BOAS

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

THE science of anthropology has grown up from many distinct beginnings. At an early time men were interested in foreign countries and in the lives of their inhabitants. Herodotus reported to the Greeks what he had seen in many lands. Caesar and Tacitus wrote on the customs of the Gauls and Germans. In the Middle Ages Marco Polo, the Venetian, and Ibn Batuta, the Arab, told of the strange people of the Far East and of Africa. Later on, Cook's Journeys excited the interest of the world. From these reports arose gradually a desire to find a general significance in the multifarious ways of living of strange people. In the eighteenth century Rousseau, Schiller and Herder tried to form, out of the reports of travelers, a picture of the history of mankind. More solid attempts were made about the middle of the nineteenth

<sup>1</sup>Address of the president of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Atlantic City, December, 1932.

century, when the comprehensive works of Klemm and Waitz were written.

Biologists directed their studies towards an understanding of the varieties of human forms. Linnaeus, Blumenbach, Camper are a few of the names that stand out as early investigators of these problems, which received an entirely new stimulus when Darwin's views of the instability of species were accepted by the scientific world. The problem of man's origin and his place in the animal kingdom became the prime subject of interest. Darwin, Huxley and Haeckel are outstanding names representing this period. Still more recently the intensive study of heredity and mutation has given a new aspect to inquiries into the origin and meaning of race.

The development of psychology led to new problems presented by the diversity of the racial and social groups of mankind. The question of mental charac-

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