

MEASUREMENTS OF ASYLUM CHILDREN.

DR. ALES HRDLICKA has recently published a paper containing a series of very interesting 'Anthropological Investigations on One Thousand and 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.