las), giving as the reason that Linnæus did not give the name *Ursus maritimus*, as usually attributed to him, and that "the next date when any mention of the Polar Bear was made was 1776, when Müller and Pallas each gave it a name." Allow me to suggest that Mr. Rehn's statement is not correct. It is true that Linnæus did not give a binomial term to the Polar Bear, but it is not true that it did not receive one until 1776.

In 1773 Sir C. J. Phipps undertook a voyage to Spitzbergen, and in the account which he published in 1774 * the Polar Bear, with full references to Linnæus and Pennant and measurements from specimen, is formally named *Ursus maritimus*. I have not now at hand the original edition, and consequently cannot quote the page, but I possess the French translation of 1775, † in which the name occurs on p. 188. I may add that Mr. Rehn's is not the first attempt at resurrecting Pallas's name. It was done as early as 1844 by Keyserling and Blasius, who have been followed, among others, by Nilsson and Pleske. But the name of the Polar Bear should be *Thalarctos maritimus* (Phipps).

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   WASHINGTON, D. C., August 26, 1899.

THE MENTAL EFFECTS OF THE WEATHER.

IN reading the interesting article by Dr. Dexter in SCIENCE of August 11th under the above heading two or three suggestions as to the causes in action occurred to me and are perhaps worth mentioning. Dr. Dexter's curves show that the greatest number of assaults occur between the temperatures of 50° and 90° F., with a maximum between 70° and 80°. There is a greater number on clear and partly cloudy days than on days with rain. In other words, the conditions which we know attract people out of doors and bring them in contact are the conditions which, it appears, produce the greatest number of assaults and thus, perhaps, are indirectly the cause of them. Even

* Phipps (C. J.). A voyage towards the North Pole undertaken by H. M's command, 1773. London, 1774. 4to.

' † Voyage au Pole Boréal, fait en 1773 * * * etc. Paris, 1775. 4to.

the slightly greater number of assaults on partly cloudy days than on clear days may be interpreted from this standpoint. The partly cloudy days average warmer than the clear days, and people are more attracted out of doors on mild days than on cold days.

The number of errors in banks is found to be greater on cloudy and on rainy days than on clear days. This may be due to the greater amount of light on clear days by means of which the figures are more clearly seen.

The number of people insured appears to be less on rainy days. Again, this may be explained by a tendency of rainy days to keep people in doors. A man having decided to have his life insured on a certain day which proves to be rainy postpones it to a pleasant day, when traveling is more agreeable.

The increased energy which people feel on sunny days also no doubt contributes to the effects described above, as suggested by Dr. Dexter.

The number of deaths he found to increase with the temperature when the temperature was above 80°, and in this case there is probably a direct relation of cause and effect.

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BLUE HILL METEOROLOGICAL OBSERVATORY,
   September 5, 1899.

NOTES ON PHYSICS.

PHOTOGRAPHY OF SOUND WAVES.

PROFESSOR R. W. WOOD publishes in *Phil. Mag.*, August, '99, some very interesting photographs of sound waves, taken by a modification of the method of Toepler. A telescope objective pointed at a star appears as a uniformly illuminated field to an eye situated at or a trifle behind its focus, inasmuch as light enters the eye from every part of the objective. A condensed mass of air between the lens and the focus turns the light which passes through it to one side of the focus; this deflected light may be cut off by means of a screen, the edge of which just grazes the focus, and the portion of the field of view which is covered by the condensed mass of air appears dark. Instead of the eye an ordinary photographic camera may be focussed upon the telescope objective, and by using the light from an electric spark, instead of