cursors to vitamin C requirements; to Dr. Charles O. Warren, Jr., of the department of physiology of the Cornell University Medical College, for his work on the metabolism of bone marrow, and to Dr. Samuel R. M. Reynolds, associate professor of physiology at the Long Island College of Medicine, to support investigations on the action of oestrin on visceral and somatic small blood vessels.

DR. DANIEL STARCH, consulting psychologist and director of the research department of the American Association of Advertising Agencies, delivered a series of eleven lectures on "Psychology for Living" during the week of July 11 to 16 at the Iowa State College.

DR. R. H. CARR, professor of agricultural chemistry at Purdue University, has been given a year's leave of absence and will spend the time in Australia, where he will carry on research on soils and on plant life. He will sail from San Francisco on August 16. Dr. Carr will represent the American Association for the Advancement of Science at the Canberra meeting of the Australian and New Zealand Association at Canberra, Australia, from January 11 to 18, 1939.

DR. HENRY FIELD, curator of physical anthropology at the Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, left on July 5 for an extended visit to Europe, where he will attend scientific meetings in Copenhagen, London and Brussels.

DR. H. G. FERGUSON, of the U. S. Geological Survey, left Washington on July 15 for Nevada, where he will be engaged in a study of the geology and mineral resources of the Hawthorne and Tonopah quadrangles. Field investigations of granites and related rocks in Massachusetts have been started by Dr. L. W. Currier. This work is to be conducted in cooperation with the State of Massachusetts. Dr. T. B. Nolan recently left Washington to resume studies in the Eureka and other mining districts in Nevada. Field work in the San Juan region and in the Cripple Creek district, Colorado, in cooperation with the state, has been resumed by W. S. Burbank and A. Herbert Koschmann, respectively.

THE French Association for the Advancement of Science will meet at Arcachon from September 22 to 27 under the presidency of M. Guilliermond, member of the Institute of France and professor of botany at the Sorbonne.

THE Government of Victoria plans to submit legislation to prevent refugee doctors from Europe, of whom forty have lately arrived, from practising in Victoria. The state has a reciprocal agreement with Italy permitting doctors qualified and registered in Italy to practise in Victoria and *vice versa;* also similar arrangements with the United Kingdom, the value of which is undermined by the action of the British medical authorities in registering refugees after an emergency course of fifteen months in a British university, though not allowing them to practise in the United Kingdom. The legislation will permit refugee doctors to practise only on completion of a course of five years in Victoria or a reciprocating country, thus overcoming the emergency registrations in the United Kingdom.

IT was reported recently in the daily press that all Jewish doctors and dentists in Germany are excluded as of January 1 from "panel" practice under the Compulsory Insurance Law. As ordinary medical practice in Germany is almost entirely paid for by the government insurance association, the great majority of Jewish physicians and dentists will suffer a heavy loss. Some eight hundred Jewish doctors and dentists in Berlin are reported to be engaged, at least in part, in such panel practice. Various restrictions have been laid on them, but they have still been able to treat patients under the Compulsory Insurance Law. The ruling does not seriously affect well-known specialists, but is said to make practice almost out of the question for most Jewish physicians. A recent wireless dispatch from Bucharest reports that the Rumanian Minister of Public Works, Alexander Cuza, Jr., issued an order that all Jewish doctors employed by sickness insurance companies must immediately be replaced by doctors of the Rumanian race.

DISCUSSION

AN UNPUBLISHED MANUSCRIPT BY THE LATE BASHFORD DEAN

FROM a cupboard in one of the offices of the Department of Fishes in the American Museum of Natural History there has recently been routed out a considerable collection of articles published by Dr. Dean between 1908–1912, together with various notes and drawings belonging to him. To my personal knowledge these materials have not been examined in twenty years. In going through these papers in search of data bearing on the drawings of the embryos of *Chlamydoselachus* and *Cestracion* wherewith to complete the Dean Memorial Volume, I have found an unpublished note by Dr. Dean on a Japanese water snake. This note, which is dated January 20, 1909, had been packed away and forgotten.

In possible explanation of the losing of this little manuscript, the following facts may be set forth. Dr. Dean spent the winter of 1901–02 in Japan and brought back not only a splendid collection of zoological materials but a very large one of Japanese arms and armor. This collection of armor was first loaned

to the Metropolitan Museum of Art and later purchased for it. Dr. Dean began to catalogue the collection in 1903 and in 1906 he was made honorary curator of arms and armor in the art museum. From this date on, more and more of his time was spent in the study of medieval armor in the Metropolitan Museum.

In 1914 Dr. Dean became full curator of arms and armor in the art museum and retained only an honorary curatorship of fishes in the American Museum of Natural History. Somewhere in the years 1909 to 1914 the mass of personal materials—the little manuscript included—was packed away in the cupboard referred to and forgotten.

The note on this snake, published herein ten years after his death, illustrates Dr. Dean's wide interest in all living things and his keen powers of observation and interpretation. Dr. G. K. Noble has read the note, has corrected the nomenclature and has suggested publication.

E. W. GUDGER

NOTE ON THE SEA-SNAKE, PELAMAS PLATURUS (LINNAEUS) BY BASHFORD DEAN

THE zoologist has up to the present time given but little attention to the habits of sea-snakes (Hydrophiidae), in spite of their relative abundance and their wide distribution. He has long noted that they have become eel-like in their adaptation to purely aquatic conditions—every museum specimen tells him this—but he would none the less be surprised, I fancy, to see how utterly eel-like they have become when he observes them living.

In the aquaria at Misaki [Japan] I have kept at different times specimens of the striped *Pelamas platurus* (Linnaeus); they are curiously unsnake-like, constantly active and moving about with the least apparent effort, gliding through the water with fish-like rapidity. Their movements are obviously aided by an enlarged and flattened caudal "fin" and an outcropping ventral body wall, which serves as an anal fin. These snakes are, on the other hand, unsuited to living on land, and it is altogether improbable that they ever emerge from the waters. A specimen placed on the ground threshed vainly about like an eel—it progresses hardly more rapidly, for its vertically compressed body yields it no attachment for propulsion, and it lacks the supporting costal plates.

Numerous other adaptations to its complete aquatic life would, we might expect, be brought to light upon detailed observation. It may be worth while to record that on one of the specimens I secured the skin was notably "foul" and that young barnacles (Lepads of some species) were growing at various points, and that a large tuft of them was attached to the dorsal lobe of the tail. It was clear, accordingly, that the sea-snake had lost the ancient ophidian habit of cleaning its body surface by writhing through its coils, and it was quite possible that the period of skin-shedding was not as brief a one as in the case of its land-relatives—for in the present instance the tuft of barnacles measured nearly an inch in diameter.

This adaptation on the part of the sea-snake could easily give rise to more serious reflections. Is the fouling of the surface of the adapted form a harmful, harmless or useful character? It is harmful if it retards progression, injures the skin in the sense that it renders this organ the seat of attachment for disabling parasites of various kinds; harmless in the sense that the fouling of the cuticular surface affected only the tissue which was already in train to be sloughed off; useful if the green color of the fouled surface would make the snake inconspicuous to both enemy and prey, or if, by the fostering of edible growths, barnacles, hydroids, etc., it would provide a "bait" to various creatures upon which the snakes might feed. Each or all of these views could considerably be upheld by more or less serious people who have not the opportunity to observe and to experiment—witness the numerous and unconvincing discussions in adaptation, even during the past decade.

A TRIBUTE TO JOHN L. RIDGWAY

WHEN John Livzey Ridgway retired from active duty as scientific illustrator for the California Institute of Technology and the Carnegie Institution of Washington on July 31, 1938, there came to a close a long and distinguished career having few parallels among workers in the natural sciences.

Urged to go to Washington from his home in Illinois by his brother Robert, who later became the eminent authority in ornithology, John L. Ridgway as a lad was first employed to make scientific drawings at the Smithsonian Institution. His ability to draw birds with great accuracy was quickly apprehended, and it was not long before his talents were sought after in other fields of natural history. His first preceptor in drawing, the late William H. Holmes, encouraged him to take the Civil Service examination for the post of draughtsman in the U. S. Geological Survey. On passing this examination and receiving an appointment under Mr. Holmes, Ridgway found himself in a small company of young illustrators, several of whom, like H. Hobart Nichols and De Lancy W. Gill, were destined to become nationally known artists.

At that time the Geological Survey and Bureau of Ethnology were under the directorship of Major Powell, and Ridgway was therefore called upon to furnish drawings not only for geology and paleontology but also for ethnology and anthropology. Ridgway