5. That if in any district there is available accommodation for small-pox cases in convenient empty buildings, arrangements should be promptly made for the use of these buildings for the isolation of small-pox cases; and that local hospital authorities should also consider the advisability of at once erecting temporary hospital accommodation to enable them to promptly isolate all cases occurring.

4. That the medical officer of health for each sanitary district should communicate with every medical practitioner in his district, calling his attention to the urgent importance of keeping a careful look-out for all suspicious cases of rash and of at once acquainting the medical officer of health of such cases, and that a copy of the monograph of Dr. McConnel Wanklyn, entitled *The Accurate Diagnosis of Small-pox*, should be issued by the medical officer of health of each sanitary district to every medical practitioner practising in that district.

5. That this conference urges upon the Ministry of Health the importance of amending the Vaccination Acts with the object of making vaccination more general and efficient, as vaccination affords the quickest, most scientific, and most economic means of preventing and arresting outbreaks of small-pox.

6. That a copy of the report of this conference be sent to the press, all medical officers of health of counties and county boroughs, the British Medical Association, and the Society of Medical Officers of Health, urging their unanimous support to the resolution relative to vaccination.

THE DRIFT OF MODERN ANTHROPOLOGY.

BY

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It is useful for medical men to keep in touch with what is happening in the anthropological schools of Europe, for if anthropologists know their business and pursue it, what they teach as a theory in one year is not unlikely to become the basis of political practice in another. The political, or rather the economic, bearing of anthropology is very evident in the work which Dr. Walter Scheidt has written to serve as a general introduction to the study of human races.¹ The author is one of the younger anthropologists who have been bred in the schools of Munich and of Freiburg; for them evolution is not a dead process, one concerned in shaping human races which lived long ago and far away, but a very living thing, and is now determining the destinies of the nationalities of Europe. Dr. Scheidt and his colleagues regard evolution as a reality, and they are making it their business to find out how evolution in its widest sense is working out its ends under the conditions of modern civilization. Dr. Joseph Deniker's treatise² is of another kind; it is a clear exposition of all that relates to the identification of human races, to their distribution and to their ways of living. Anthropology is treated in this French treatise as if it were an academic discipline and had no ultimate bearing on human thought or action. Both of these works, in their respective ways, will provide their readers with an introduction to the wide and systematic study of anthropology; but for those who are about to begin this study Dr. Dahl's simple and living observations made on natives of the Australian bush³ may serve their purpose better than the two more ambitious and systematic treatises.

To-day Dr. Dahl is the leading authority, not only in Norway, his native country, but throughout the world, on all that relates to the breeding and habits of fishes, but thirty-four years ago he was a young graduate, and had then placed at his disposal, by a generous fellow countryman, a sum of money which permitted him to spend three years in collecting natural history specimens. Two of these years were spent in Arnhem Land, the most northern part of Central Australia, where he made the acquaintance of other hunters and collectors, the native blacks. He spent month after month in their company gathering specimens

and noting with a sympathetic and understanding eye their aptitudes and mode of gaining a subsistence. His book is an account of what he did, saw, and thought during these two years, and although it has only now appeared in an English dress, the original was written in Norwegian so long ago as 1897. It is the kind of book which will never grow old, and is a welcome addition to instructive books of travel.

Dr. Dahl describes the natives as "gatherers, catchers, and capturers"; they loved comfort, yet rarely erected a shelter; they enjoyed the warmth which clothing gives, yet never made it; they saw men sow and reap, but refused to copy them. Yet they had to labour harder and longer to obtain a bare subsistence in the "bush" than the Chinese gardeners who supplied Port Darwin with its vegetables. A little picture drawn by Dr. Dahl gives an intimate glimpse of what a primitive life means. He stepped from his tent one morning, having enjoyed a breakfast of damper, ham, and coffee, and had not proceeded far when he came across a native, also at breakfast. The native held in his hand, not a spoon, but a digging stick, where-with he was laboriously searching for a sufficiency of earth nuts to provide his morning meal. It is well to realize what "primitive life" signifies before we praise it unduly. Another observation by Dr. Dahl helps us to explain a matter which often puzzles students of modern civilization. Less than two hundred generations back our ancestors lived much as those blacks do now, and yet we find among us individuals who are endowed with all the qualities which go to make excellent clinicians. Dr. Dahl's description of how a native hunter sets to work when he wishes to discover whether or not a hollow tree holds an opossum helps us to understand the form in which our clinical abilities had their earliest manifestation. Dr. Dahl observed that the hunter first percussed the trunk and noted the sound emitted; if still in doubt he placed his ear against it and listened; if still unsatisfied he took a long wand, and, wetting the point, climbed the tree until he reached an opening in the trunk, where he thrust in the wetted point of the wand. If on withdrawing the wand he found opossum hair sticking to it, or if it smelt of that animal, then he knew his prey was within, and at once, with his stone knife, took surgical measures for its exposure and capture. A century ago Laennec applied these old-world hunting methods to the human chest, and was acclaimed a discoverer. Modern genius is often a mere perversion of a primitive ability. One is very apt to underestimate the mental outfit needed for leading a primitive life. Most of us, even if we can swim and dive, would be at a loss to know how to recover a 60-lb. turtle which we had seen disappear in the depths of a pool. Yet the Australian black knows how to do it. On diving and reaching his booty he simply turns the carapace with the head of the animal upwards; whereupon the turtle, having to follow its head, makes for the surface, and once upon the surface all that the swimmer has to do is to keep his captive's head turned shorewards, where both arrive in due course. All great inventions are simple when we know how they are made. The native who discovered the management of turtles in deep water had a brain of a high order.

Dr. Dahl asks a question of the greatest interest to everyone, and returns an answer which, I think, most students of mankind will accept as true. Are the aborigines of Australia what they are for lack of opportunities, or are they what they are because of their mental outfit? Dr. Dahl sums up the evidence, and comes to the conclusion that it is not possible, by any process of education whatsoever, to convert an aboriginal tribe into a civilized community. Dr. Scheidt, if he knew of Dr. Dahl's opinion, would agree with it, for he realizes that we who form the nationalities of Europe come of an ancestry which has been sifted in the sieve of civilization for some two hundred generations; those ancestors whose mental abilities and proclivities fitted them for the restrictions and discipline of civilization have come through the meshes of the selective sieve; the families and breeds which refused to bend their necks to the yoke have been rejected and thus eliminated. If an aboriginal population is to become fit to live our lives it must do what our ancestors have done—go through

¹ *Allgemeine Rassenkunde, als Einführung in das Studium der Menschenrassen*. Von Dr. Walter Scheidt, Privatdozent für Anthropologie an der Universität Hamburg. Rassenkunde: Erster Band. München: J. F. Lehmann. 1925. (Sup. roy. 8vo, pp. vii + 585; 21 plates, 144 figures. M. 30.)

² *Les Races et les Peuples de la Terre*. Par Dr. Joseph Deniker. Deuxième édition, revue et considérablement augmentée. Paris: Masson et Cie. 1926. (Roy. 8vo, pp. viii + 750; 2 plates, 340 figures. 65 fr.)

³ *In Savage Australia*. By Knut Dahl, Professor of Pisciculture at the Norwegian College of Agriculture, Oslo. London: Philip Allan and Co., Ltd. 1926. (Med. 8vo, pp. xii + 326; 27 figures. 21s. net.)

the sieve of selection for hundreds of generations. Dr. Scheidt is fully alive to the importance of Darwin's law of selection; but he lays even greater stress on Count Gobineau's doctrine of race. In a long and meritorious historical introduction, Dr. Scheidt, a German anthropologist, gives the French count, who began to preach his doctrine of race in the middle of last century, a foremost place among the students of mankind. Put briefly, this doctrine implies that a nation's destiny depends entirely on its racial composition.

It is interesting to note what the French anthropologist has to teach concerning these matters, for Dr. Deniker, although born in Astrakan, was in all respects a Frenchman. Dr. Deniker was bred in the school of Topinard; some forty years ago he was known to anatomists by contributions made to the embryology and anatomy of anthropoid apes. Then he took to the study of human races, and published in 1900 the first edition of the work noted here [a review of the first edition appeared in our pages, April 28th, 1900, p. 1030]. On the eve of the great war he had made preparations for a second edition, but died just as the war ended, and so it has come about that this work, although issued in 1926, is in reality a production of pre-war times. Nevertheless, it is a valuable record of fact and opinion, compiled by one of the foremost anthropologists of Europe. Nowhere in his pages does the name of Gobineau appear; indeed, we are quite convinced that if the matter had been put to him, Dr. Deniker would have rejected the doctrine so forcibly promulgated by Count Gobineau.

It was, in fact, Deniker more than anyone who gave rise to the conception that all the nationalities of Europe are mongrel entities. He believed that war, commerce, and repeated migrations had utterly confused the racial issues of Europe. Certainly a survey of historical records leads to such a conclusion; but there is much to be said against Deniker's doctrine of racial confusion, only it would take us too far afield to discuss such a large problem now. It is more to the point to note the criteria on which Dr. Deniker relied to separate the racial types of Europe from each other. They were three in number—stature, shape of head, and colouring. All of these characters are variable even within human stocks which we have reason to believe have been isolated and uncontaminated for many generations. The degree of variability among the individuals of a true race or breed of mankind is much greater than is usually believed. We have only to attempt to apply Dr. Deniker's criteria to the population of any part of the British Isles to realize the chaos which follows such an attempt. Dr. Deniker's scheme of classification, however well it looks on paper, breaks down the moment we attempt to put it into practice in the field. So far as his account of human races is concerned, I think that the one given by Mr. A. H. Keane in *Man Past and Present* (a new edition of which was prepared by Mr. Quiggan and Professor Haddon, and issued in 1920) is superior in every respect. Dr. Deniker, however, included a survey of man's structure and culture as well as of his racial distribution, and thus his book covers a much wider field than does Mr. Keane's treatise.

In the middle part of last century—when Count Gobineau's first book appeared—anthropologists discriminated unhesitatingly Saxon from Celt by their respective mental, moral, and emotional characters. Everyone is familiar with the detailed critical lists then drawn up; indeed, they are still the stock-in-trade of politicians. Dr. Deniker dismisses such modes of racial discrimination as "banalities." Indeed, he cites only one exception to his general condemnation, and that is contained in the report of the expedition which Professor Haddon led to the Torres Straits. Tradition and education do materially affect the actions and reactions of man's mind, but no one who takes into account all the evidence of everyday experience can do otherwise than come to the conclusion that human races differ profoundly in mental outfit. Our difficulties lie in discovering reliable and effective methods of measuring mental differences; our present methods have hardly a rule-of-thumb value. Even Dr. Scheidt, who estimates Gobineau's doctrine of race so highly, is in agreement with Dr. Deniker as to the futility of our present methods of measuring the mind of a race.

Dr. Deniker, like Dr. Scheidt, believes that a race

retains its physical characters however much its environment may be changed. Amongst other examples he cites the case of German settlers in Siberia and in Brazil; at the end of four generations these settlers are still German in their physical characteristics. He holds that any race—the fair Nordics, for example—can be acclimatized in time to arctic or to tropical conditions; this is one of the few passages in which Dr. Deniker touches on a practical problem. He admitted that South Europeans will become fitted for life in the tropics in a smaller number of generations than will be the case with natives of North Europe. Acclimatization, Dr. Deniker held, can be brought about only in one way—through the operation of Darwin's law of "natural" selection; the mortality, he conceived, would be heavy in the earlier pioneer generations, but ultimately, after an undefined number of generations, there should emerge descendants of the original race well adapted for a full and healthy life under tropical conditions. It is possible that amongst the Queenslanders of to-day there may emerge certain families who find that they can tolerate a tropical temperature better than their neighbours, and by means of such selected families the white fringe may gradually creep northwards into the tropics. Even Dr. Deniker, I think, would never have suggested that the experiment of acclimatization should be tried by plunging a European community in the midst of tropical surroundings.

Dr. Scheidt as well as Dr. Deniker has much to say concerning the offspring which results when one primary human race is crossed with another. Both authors agree that a hybrid child is in reality a mosaic of characters rather than a real blend. There is no doubt that Mendel's laws can be applied to many of man's inherited characters, but it is also clear that our knowledge concerning the modes of human inheritance is still in its infancy. Dr. Deniker hardly touches on the laws of heredity, whereas Dr. Scheidt, as is now usual in German treatises on anthropology, deals with them at great length. We see, too, that biometrical methods are receiving very full treatment in the anthropological systems of Germany. In short, the tendency to-day is to base anthropology on the methods of experimental biology rather than on the principles of human anatomy. Nevertheless, a full knowledge of the human body is the ultimate foundation of anthropology.

VITAL STATISTICS FOR ENGLAND AND WALES, 1926.

WE are indebted to the Registrar-General for the following statement regarding the birth rates and death rates and the rates of infantile mortality in England and Wales and certain parts of the country during 1926. The statement is issued for the information of medical officers of health. The birth rate and infantile mortality rate for London have been provisionally corrected for transfers.

ENGLAND AND WALES.

Birth Rate, Death Rate, and Infantile Mortality during the Year 1926 (Provisional Figures).

	Birth Rate per 1,000 Total Population.	Death Rate per 1,000 Population (Crude Rate).	Deaths under One Year per 1,000 Births.
England and Wales	17.8	11.6	70
105 county boroughs and great towns, including London	18.2	11.6	73
158 smaller towns (populations from 20,000 to 50,000 in 1921)	17.6	10.6	67
London	17.1	11.6	64

The death rate for England and Wales relates to the whole population, but that for London and the two groups of towns to the civil population only.

England and Wales.

The birth rate is 0.5 per 1,000 below that of 1925, and, with the exception of the rate in 1918, the last year of the war, is the lowest recorded.

The death rate is 0.6 per 1,000 below that recorded in the previous year and is equal to that of 1923, the lowest recorded rate. The infantile mortality rate is 5 per 1,000 births below that of 1925, but 1 per 1,000 above that of 1923, the lowest on record.