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PANAMA WHITE INDIANS MAY PRODUCE NEW RACE

A race within a race, In the White Indians of Darien, famous as a part of San Blas tribes that are resisting Panamanian oppression and rule, there lies the potentialities of a new white race.

Such is the conclusion of Dr. Reginald G. Harris, director of the Biological Laboratory of Cold Spring Harbor, Long Island, N. Y. who last year, with the assistance of Mrs. Harris and R. O. Marsh, the civil engineer and explorer who brought the White Indians to America, made a first hand genetical study of the San Blas in their native villages, hitherto closed to foreigners, white or black.

How he made a careful analysis of the family histories of the White Indians is told in a scientific report which appeared in a recent issue of the American Journal of Physical Anthropology of which Dr. Ales Hrdlicka, anthropologist of the Smithsonian Institution, is editor.

"That the condition 'White Indian' is genetical in nature is amply demonstrated by the data contained in the family histories," Dr. Harris says in the report. "The White Indians thus hold potentialities for race production."

The San Blas Indians, both brown and white, are uncontaminated by Caucasian blood since their customs and race prejudices have assured exceptional "purity" of their blood, Dr. Harris found. Mr. Marsh's party, of which he was a member, was the first white group that had ever been allowed to stay in one of the San Blas villages overnight. Moreover, the White Indians, as well as the brown from which they came, are clearly Indians, not hybrids, and Dr. Hrdlicka in another article in the same journal says that the San Blas are related to and apparently the same as the famous Mayas of Central America and Mexico who years before the time of Christ had a civilization whose ruins today puzzle and astonish archaeologists.

In the technical sense the White Indians are partial albinos, but Dr. Harris says: "Their appearance is obviously the expression of a homozygous recessive condition, due originally to a mutation in one or more genes."

This means that sometime in the past something happened within the germ cells of the brown San Blas Indians that caused the white characteristics of the white Indians to appear. The brown pigmentation usually gains ascendancy over the white or partial albino characteristics in the offspring but occasionally the white becomes dominant and a brown Indian couple will have a white child.

According to legend the San Blas have hated the white race since the days of the Spanish conquest, and therefore the White Indians have been looked down upon

by the browns. Although they were not banished to the hills and did not form separate colonies as previous reports brought by Mr. Marsh indicated, infants that proved to be white upon birth were often killed and even now white Indian men are forbidden marriage altogether. White women are allowed to marry, but for one reason or another, nodoubt mainly because the brown women are far more attractive than the white, this is very rare.

The production of a new white race is therefore hindered since the largest number of white children would be produced by the marriage of white Indian men with white Indian women.

In spite of the artificial restrictions that customs impose, birth of white children to parents of brown or light brown coloration is so frequent that 50 to 100 times as many white are found among the San Blas as would be expected if the same ratio of one albino in 10,000, the usual figure among other races, was also true for the San Blas. Actually seven tenths of one per cent. or 138 out of the estimated 20,100 San Blas Indians are white, a remarkable percentage.

Thus the White Indians are dependent, under present conditions, upon the browns for their perpetuation.

Dr. Harris and Dr. Hrdlicka both say that the White Indians deserve a most thorough investigation from all points of approach.

INVISIBLE KILLER EATS DEADLIEST OF BACTERIA

Bacteriophage, that mysterious principle or organism, as yet unseen by any scientists though used daily by many, has been discovered in a new role as devourer of the deadliest of bacteria, by Dr. Paul F. Clark and Alice Shiedt Clark of the University of Wisconsin, and Dr. L. O. Dutton of the Methodist Hospital, Memphis, Tennessee.

The most dangerous of the disease-causing organisms which the three researchers have discovered to be a part of the bill of fare of the bacteriophage is known as the hemolytic streptococcus, or blood-dissolving chain-germ, because of its fatal action in the blood, causing one of the worst types of blood poisoning. It is also the causal organism of scarlet fever, and of one of the deadliest types of pneumonia.

Cultures of this organism in test tubes grow vigorously and make the nutrient fluid cloudy, but the introduction of a little material containing the bacteriophage soon makes it clear again, due to the death and disintegration of the disease germs. In Dr. Dutton's experiments, this clearing-up of the cultures took place in a short a time as thirty-six hours.

Bacteriophage, which literally translated means "bacterium eater", is a puzzling something discovered by the researches of F. W. Twort, a British scientist, and F. d'Herelle, a French Canadian. Bacteriologists are very much at odds over it, some claiming that it is a living organism, or at least a living substance, and