

Negro Children Vary

Psychology

Negro children who live in different sections of America vary markedly in mental ability, judging by results of psychological tests which have been given to children in Nashville, Chicago, and New York City. Two hundred white children and three hundred negro children, all twelve years of age, have been examined by Prof. Lyle H. Lanier, of Vanderbilt University, who described the investigation before the International Congress of Psychology.

The children were asked to learn to associate certain numbers with certain letters of the alphabet. In Nashville, the white children excelled the negroes in time required to learn the series, in the errors made, and in the speed of responding. The negroes were practically equal to the whites in the number of repetitions required. In Chicago smaller differences were found, though the white children made a better rating on the test. In New York the negro children were superior in the number of repetitions required and in the total number of errors made, and in the number of logical errors made. The white children excelled in speed and in the number of repeated errors, and they were markedly faster in responding, Prof. Lanier stated.

Science News-Letter, September 7, 1929

Brown Spider is Sleepers' Friend

Entomology

Bedbugs, which have given tourists many a bad night in Athens and which added to the discomforts of the already wretched refugees in Greek camps during the troubles with Turkey a few years ago, have met their Nemesis in a spider. So reports Dr. N. T. Lorando, chief physician to the Evangelismos Hospital and Near East Relief, Athens.

During 1923 and 1924, Dr. Lorando says, conditions in the large refugee camp near Athens were deplorable. In spite of the efforts of the people to keep the premises cleaned and disinfected the bloodsucking insects bred in hordes, sometimes driving them out of the barracks to sleep in the streets. Then, suddenly, the bedbugs disappeared altogether.

At first it was thought that the disinfectants had at last prevailed, but on investigation it was discovered that a medium-sized brown spider was the real benefactor. This eight-legged friend of man would walk up to an unsuspecting bedbug, bite it through the back, and drain it of its blood. It also seemed to have the power of making the insects suspend movement by touching them with one leg, if it saw a fresh victim while it was still busy with a recent catch. Its appetite was large, laboratory specimens devouring thirty or forty bedbugs a day.

Each female spider laid two or

three batches of eggs during a summer, standing guard over the nest until the young spiderlings hatched. These were precocious hunters, starting off on the business of bedbug eradication the day they first saw the light, in spite of the fact that they were then much smaller than their prey.

The generic name of this spider is suggestive: *Thanatos*, which is the Greek word meaning death. The spider is death only to vermin, however, for it is not poisonous to human beings. Another species of the same genus has been observed hunting horseflies in Sicily, which may account for the Sicilian folk-belief that horses can not be healthy unless there are cobwebs in the stable.

Dr. Lorando cites several other instances on record, where bedbugs have found enemies in the ranks of their own insect kin. Among these are the assassin bugs, better known a generation ago as "kissing bugs," and also cockroaches and the tiny red house-ants. But all of these are themselves rated as vermin, so that the remedy is almost as bad as the ill. Dr. Lorando recommends the artificial encouragement of his spider, because *Thanatos* is not herself offensive and because she has made a very good record as a pest-destroyer.

Science News-Letter, September 7, 1929

Mastodons in North America—Continued

lectors of fossil bones; and we soon obtained a small *Ancylus* and *Cylas*. Afterwards, in the most eastern marsh, in the middle of which a powerful spring throws up beech nuts and shells from the mud below, we found two species of *Melania* known as recent, *Physa heterostropha*, *Cyclas similis*, *C. dubia*? (and another species, not known to naturalists here,) *Pisidium* (supposed to agree with one from Lake Erie), *Ancylus* (not known), and fragments of *Unio*; also the following land shells—*Helix solitaria* (with bands of colour not effaced), *H. alternata*, *H. clausa*, *H. fraterna*, and *Pupa armifera*. As new terrestrial and freshwater shells are occasionally added to the recent American fauna, I think it very probable that all the fourteen species which we met with, and which, I believe, co-existed with the mastodon, are still living, though perhaps not all of them in the immediate neighbourhood.

The Ohio River

It is impossible to view this plain, without at once concluding that it has remained unchanged in all its principal features from the period when the extinct quadrupeds inhabited the banks of the Ohio and its tributaries. But one phenomenon perplexed us much, and for a time seemed quite unintelligible. On parts of the boggy grounds, a superficial covering of yellow loam was incumbent on the dark-coloured mud, containing the fossil bones. This partial covering of yellow sandy clay, was at some points no less than fifteen or twenty feet thick. Mr. Bullock passed through it when he dug for fossil remains on the left bank of the creek, and he came down to the boggy ground with bones below. We first resorted to the hypothesis that the valley might have been dammed up by a temporary barrier, and converted into a lake; but we afterwards learnt, that although the Ohio is seven miles distant by the windings of the creek, there being a

slight descent the whole way, yet that great river has been known to rise so high as to flow up the valley of Big Bone Creek, and, so late as 1824, to enter the second story of a house built near the springs. The level of the Licks above the Ohio, is about fifty feet, the distance in a straight line being only three miles. At Cincinnati the river has been known to rise sixty feet above its summer level, and in the course of ages it may occasionally have risen higher. It may be unnecessary, therefore, to refer to the general subsidence before alluded to (probably an event of a much older date), in order to account for the patches of superficial silt last described.

After spending the day in exploring the Licks, we were hospitably received at the house of a Kentucky proprietor a few miles distant, whose zeal for farming and introducing cattle of the "true Durham breed," had not prevented him from cultivating a beautiful flower-garden.

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