

not the requisite knowledge among natives in India; the work must be done in this safer climate, and the specimens can be better preserved here than in the museums of the hot plains, or those which may be formed in the damp regions of the hills.

HYDE CLARKE

St. George's Square, S.W.

### Instinct

#### *Moving in a Circle*

IN your last week's number a letter appeared with the initials N. Y., in which it was stated that it is believed in North America that a lost man always strays in a circle towards the left. I may mention that whilst walking in a woody and hilly part of the New Forest, I found, to my great astonishment, that I had described a complete circle, and it was towards the left. My father also tells me that he has been informed (although under what circumstances he does not recollect) that the same idea obtains in Australia. It has been suggested that the reason of this fact (if fact it is) is, that the right side of the body is stronger than the left; in confirmation of the truth of this explanation, it is worthy of notice that Dr. Wm. Ogle (in a paper on Dextral Pre-eminence, *Medico-Chirurgical Transactions*, vol. liv.) finds that men are right-legged as well as right-handed, although the rule has not so universal an application. One of the points adduced by him in evidence is that bootmakers generally find the right foot larger than the left.

If any of your readers who have strayed in a similar manner, would take the trouble to write to you merely stating whether they wandered to the right or the left, it is possible that a sufficient body of facts might be collected either to confirm or disprove this curious belief.

GEORGE DARWIN

Down, Beckenham, April 29

#### *Perception in Dogs*

PERHAPS you will think that the following story of a Mentone dog, Pietrino, is worth adding to the similar stories which have appeared in your columns:—

The Archduchess Marie Régnier passed the winter of 1871–2 at the Hotel Victoria in Mentone. While there she became much attached to a spaniel belonging to M. Milandri, the landlord, and on her return to Vienna in the spring she took the dog there. Not long after, the dog reappeared at the hotel in Mentone, having returned on foot a distance of nearly one thousand miles over a country totally unknown, excepting having once traversed it by rail. The fatigue caused the poor fellow to die a few days afterwards, and Pietrino is honoured with a grave and a monument in the hotel gardens.

I send you a French paper containing the same facts.

JAMES B. ANDREWS

Villa d'Adhemar, Mentone, April 17

PERHAPS the following anecdote on the instinct of dogs, which has lately come to my knowledge, may prove of interest to some of your readers.

A family residing in Yorkshire possessed two dogs, one a mastiff, and the other a small dog. The owner, visiting Hastings, took the little dog with him, and at the house where he stayed there was a larger animal, who, disregarding the laws of hospitality, woefully maltreated his youthful visitor. The little dog, upon this, disappeared, and in a few days returned, bringing with him the mastiff from Yorkshire, which set upon the Hastings dog and thrashed him to within an inch of his life. Having performed this piece of retributive justice he returned to his home in the north, while the little dog stayed to rejoice over his fallen antagonist.

A. PERCY SMITH

Rugby, April 18

#### Prehistoric Art

MR. SEARLE V. WOOD's inquiry (*NATURE*, vol. vii. p. 443) whether any existing race of savages is capable of depicting animals with the spirit and fidelity of the supposed contemporary representations of the mammoth is a most pertinent one, but must be answered in the affirmative. In the Atlas to Gustav Fritsch's great work on the Aborigines of South Africa, just published at Berlin, will be found reproductions of delineations of animals, executed in caves by the Bushmen, which are certainly equal to the carvings and tracings of the prehistoric period. The originals are usually painted, but sometimes carved or scratched in sandstone or some other soft material. Five different colours are employed; the

objects represented are usually the animals indigenous to the country, but the human figure is occasionally introduced, and since the arrival of the European colonists, horses and even ships have been added. It is most remarkable to find the Bushmen in this respect so far in advance of the comparatively civilised negro, who has never of his own impulse produced anything approaching to the merit of these designs. Perhaps some of your contributors will be able to state whether any corresponding difference exists in the cerebral organisation of the respective races.

R. G.

London, April 19

#### April Meteors

IN continuation of my report sent you yesterday in reference to the April meteors of this year, I desire to add the following. The evening of April 21 being clear, a watch was sustained from 9<sup>h</sup> to 12<sup>h</sup>, during which time 14 shooting-stars were seen. These, with the 20 observed on the two previous evenings, make the total number seen 34 in 7½ hours of observation. The details of the meteors noticed on April 21 are as under:—

Ref. No.	Date.	Time.	Beginning.	Ending.
			R. A. D.	R. A. D.
21 ...	April 21 ...	9.8 1½ mag. *	256° 54°+	236° 32°+
22 ...	" ...	9.10 2nd mag. *	299 38½+	309 38+
23 ...	" ...	9.29 3rd mag. *	310 59+	319 58+
24 ...	" ...	9.41 3rd mag. *	239 61+	270 63+
25 ...	" ...	9.57 2nd mag. *	263 50+	238 47+
26 ...	" ...	10.22 3rd mag. *	273 51+	273 61+
27 ...	" ...	10.30 4th mag. *	325 68+	328 60+
28 ...	" ...	10.32 4th mag. *	264½ 61+	255 55+
29 ...	" ...	10.50 4th mag. *	319 6½+	339 66+
30 ...	" ...	11.7 a Lyrae	293½ 45+	309 49+
31 ...	" ...	11.16 3rd mag. *	278 49+	270 59½+
32 ...	" ...	11.32 4th mag. *	275 14+	283 12+
33 ...	" ...	11.40 3rd mag. *	284 59+	270 47+
34 ...	" ...	11.45 4th mag. *	334 47+	341 41+

Nos. 22, 25, 26, 30, and 31 were from the radiant near a Lyrae. On April 19 and 20 the largest proportion of meteors were Lyraids, but on April 21 they were in a minority. Nos. 21, 23, 24, 33, and 34 were conformable to a radiant at  $\alpha$  Draconis, R.A. 283°, D. 59°+, and it is worthy of note that on the two preceding nights there were no indications of this radiant point. To sum up my recent observations, it would seem that from the various meteoric tracks noted, the April shooting-stars of this year had three well-marked centres of radiation, viz., (1) near a Lyrae, (2) near Arcturus, and (3) at  $\alpha$  Draconis (R.A. 283°, D. 59°+). There were also evidences of at least two other radiant points that, owing to the paucity of meteors, could only be approximately ascertained, viz., (1) near  $\zeta$  Draconis, and (2) near a Cygni. The brightest meteor seen on April 21 was a Lyraid; time, 11<sup>h</sup> 7<sup>m</sup>. Its path was accurately fixed. The meteor first appeared at 1° N. of  $\delta$  Cygni, and travelling to N., disappeared in a small triangle of stars 5° N. of a Cygni. Several of the meteors emitted sparks in traversing their courses, but the majority were small objects of very brief duration.

The foregoing particulars (taken in conjunction with my previous letter) may be useful in determining the radiant point of the April meteors, especially with regard to those diverging from Lyra, which, I believe, are considered identical with Comet I. 1861. I fixed this point at R.A. 274°, D. 37°, which is nearly of accord with the result of Karlinski (1867), R.A. 278° 2 D. 34° 5+, and of Prof. A. Herschel (1864), R.A. 277° 5, D. 34° 6+.

Bristol, April 22

WILLIAM F. DENNING

#### A proposed new Barometer

IN the number of the *Philosophical Magazine* for May 1871 is an article by Prof. Heller, of Ofen, rendered (carelessly enough) from Poggendorff's *Annalen*, describing a balance fitted with nearly equal weights of very different volumes, which he proposes as a barometer. He says that the principle on which it is founded "has not hitherto been used in barometric measurements." This is not quite correct; a balance, absolutely identical in principle, is described by Boyle in vol. i. p. 231, of the *Philosophical Transactions*, under the title of "A new Statical Baroscope." It would seem that the practical difficulty of keeping it in accurate adjustment has been and still will be a bar to its use in the way the two inventors have proposed; otherwise, it might perhaps be advantageously employed in mountain surveys; it would, at any rate, be free from many of the objections to the aneroid.

Considered, however, as an exact barometer, I would main-