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Note on Eskimo Skulls

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## ANTHROPOLOGICAL MISCELLANEA.

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### NOTE ON ESKIMO SKULLS.

IN the last number of the *Journal of the Anthropological Institute* (November 1877, page 142) my friend Dr. Rae alludes, on my authority, to "the wonderful difference in form exhibited between skulls of Eskimos from the neighbourhood of Behring Strait, and of those inhabiting Greenland, the latter being extremely dolichocephalic, whilst the former are the very opposite, brachycephalic; the natives of the intermediate coast, from the Coppermine River eastwards, having mesocephalic heads."

As possibly Dr. Rae's impression of what was really said at the lectures to which he refers in such kind terms was occasioned by some ambiguity on my part, I should be glad to be allowed to amend the statement without delay, otherwise the passage quoted, and some others in the same communication, might lead to the erroneous supposition that I had myself examined and exhibited specimens of Eskimos both from Behring Strait and the Coppermine River.

The subject under discussion was the cephalic index, its mode of measurement, ethnological value, &c., and the well-known but curious fact was pointed out that the two extremities of the almost continuous hyperborean land, which are separated by the Atlantic Ocean, are inhabited respectively by one of the longest and one of the shortest headed races known, the Greenlanders and the Lapps; and it was further stated that, as far as our very scanty information allows us to judge, the people of the extensive intermediate land tracts present various degrees of intermediate condition of head formation. With regard to the natives of the northern shores of America a considerable series of Greenlanders was shown, exhibiting the most extreme form of dolicocephaly, and other very marked characters; others were shown from the western side of Baffin's Bay in which the dolicocephaly was slightly diminished, but for evidence of the altered characters, and still greater diminution of length (though far from amounting to true "brachycephaly") seen in the Eskimos of the western shore of North America, the valuable "Thesaurus" of Dr. Barnard Davis was quoted. It will, however, be observed that this rectification of a term does not in the least affect Dr. Rae's general argument. I hope before long to lay before the Institute some observations upon the Osteology of the Eastern

Eskimos, founded upon materials in the Museum under my care, not yet fully described, including a fine series of skulls obtained in the "Pandora" expedition of 1876, and presented by Sir Allen Young.—W. H. Flower.

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ANTHROPOLOGY BY DR. PAUL TOPINARD. Translated by Robert T. H. Bartley, M.D. (London: Chapman and Hall 1878).

ANTHROPOLOGY is to many both a new word and a new science. It is also a much misunderstood word and a science whose great advance has been somewhat unobserved in this country. As one test of progress in the other sciences, we may compare the articles on them in the present and former editions of the "Encyclopædia Britannica," but this cannot be done for Anthropology, that word appearing for the first time in the present edition only.

The first Ethnographical Society of which there is any record was instituted in Paris in 1800, under the title of the Société des Observateurs de l'Homme, and died of inanition during the war. The second was instituted in London in 1838, and was of an exclusively philanthropic character (page 16). The term ethnography is somewhat synonymous with ethnology, which is defined by M. Littré as treating of the origin and distribution of peoples, and ethnography of their description; ethnology again is to be considered as a section of anthropology, to which it bears about the same relation as the term Social Morality does to Morality.

The progress of Anthropology has been greatly retarded by the different views which are held as to the proper aim and scope of the science. Amongst the many different subjects it embraces, there was and often is a tendency to enhance the one above the other. The physical anthropologist often regards the prehistoric worker as an anti-quarian only, whilst the former is sometimes simply looked upon in the light of a demonstrative anatomist, and thus repulsion and disintegration are frequently produced in the place of attraction and cohesion. Two degrees are admitted: the *Positive*, or collection of ascertainable facts, and the *Comparative*, or natural method of deduction from those facts. A third, or *Superlative*, has been attempted to be introduced, viz., a metaphysical and spiritualistic one. The field of study even when defined by the rigorous method of science is still vast and the workers too few, though, as M. Topinard remarks, "Naturalists, physicians, men of letters, artists, philosophers, lawyers, diplomatists, travellers, archaeologists and linguists, are all carrying the material wherewith to build the edifice," page 13.

The first collective work upon Anthropology in this country was that of our father Prichard in 1813, and its subsequent editions. This was shortly followed by "Lectures on the Natural History of Man," by Lawrence. Under the auspices and by the energy of the Anthropological Society, two excellent translations of standard works were given: the "Introduction to Anthropology" of Waitz, and the "Lectures" of Carl Vogt. A short time since a trans-