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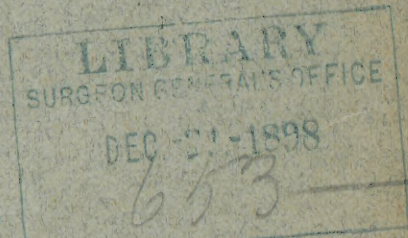
PHYSICAL DIFFERENCES

BETWEEN

WHITE AND COLORED CHILDREN

BY

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PHYSICAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN WHITE AND COLORED CHILDREN¹

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This paper presents an abstract of a study of the more stable differences of a physical nature which exist between white and negro children of the same sexes and the same ages.

Within the last two years I have examined about fourteen hundred children, of whom about three hundred were negroes. Such a number of subjects gave me sufficient opportunity to satisfy myself that certain well-defined physical differences do exist between the white and the colored children of the same sex and age, and also to follow those differences in children from five years of age up to and even a little beyond the age of puberty.

The differences found may be arranged into those which occur equally in both sexes, and those which are prevalent in either the boys or the girls. Some of the characters in which white and black children differ are fairly well known and will receive but a passing notice. Other differences, on the other hand, have been as yet never or but seldom mentioned, and these will receive more consideration.

DIFFERENCES NOT DEPENDENT UPON AGE OR SEX

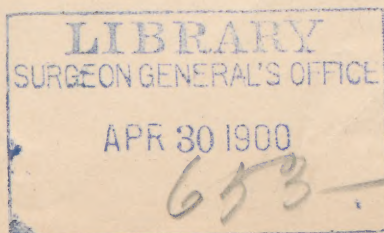
In a general way, white children present *more diversity*, negro children *more uniformity*, in all their normal physical characters. This becomes gradually more marked as age increases.

As to physical abnormalities, those of congenital origin are much less frequent in the negro child than in the white one. With acquired abnormalities, principally the result of rachitic conditions, the case is almost the reverse, those characters being less frequent in the white children.

In detail we find the following differences between the two classes of children:

Size of body: The average height of the colored child is in all ages from one to three centimeters greater than that of white

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children, all the nationalities of these latter being taken together. It is still, though not at all ages, slightly greater when compared with the average height of only the American-born children, who are taller than the children of most other nationalities.

The average weight, unlike the height, is greater in the white children at all ages up to puberty. Beyond puberty, particularly in the girls, the colored subjects seem to gain in weight more rapidly than do the white ones.

The size of the head is, on the average, slightly less in negro children than in the white, provided we consider this in its relation to the size of the body. There are individual exceptions to this rule.

The form of the head is less variable in the colored children than it is in the American-born white children. A pure American colored child almost always shows a pronounced dolichocephaly, while the normal white American child will show every variation from a markedly long head to a pronounced brachycephaly. West Indian negro children are more frequently short-headed than those of North American origin.

The hair of the pure negro child is quite lusterless, and, as a rule, either curly or wavy, by far more frequently the former than the latter. The proportion of wavy hair increases largely in mixed subjects, and the same is true about luster of the hair. In white children, those of American origin especially, curly hair is very seldom found, and the curls always differ from those of the negro. They possess luster, and will never show the compact rouleau arrangement. We do find curly hair now and then among Jewish children and children born in southern European countries. Wavy hair is quite common among Jewish and Syrian subjects.

The forehead averages narrower at all ages in the negro child than in the white. The height of the forehead, however, is not less in the colored subjects, and is occasionally even greater than in some of the white children.

The face of colored children is generally more prognathic than is that of white. The prognathism is both facial and alveolar.

The malar bones are somewhat more prominent in the colored child, but the difference is not so great as that which may be observed between a child of a yellow race and a white one.

The nose in the negro is frequently shorter and generally lower and broader than the nose of the white child. These differences increase with age.

The lips of the colored subjects are very prominent. This is partly due to the greater prognathism of the alveolar processes in the colored, but, besides this, the lips of the colored children are substantially thicker.

The mouth is broader, and it is also more spacious antero-posteriorly in negroes. This is due to the fact that in the colored child the palate is larger and longer.

The teeth of negro children are often stronger than are those of white individuals. Irregularities in the setting of the teeth, so frequent in white children, are quite rare among the colored.

Dentition in the colored is more regular.

The uvula is frequently shorter and stouter in the colored than it is in the white children, and is less frequently deflected in the former.

The lower jaw is often somewhat higher and stronger in the colored subjects than it is in the white.

The ears of the colored child deserve special notice. They show in many cases a marked and almost specific character but rarely seen in the white, in that the helix is bent on itself and compressed at the highest fourth of the ear. The negro ear is usually somewhat smaller in all its dimensions than the white one, and in a certain number of cases broader in the lower half than in the upper.

The body shows marked differences in the two classes of children, some of which are more marked in children of certain ages than in adults. These differences are more marked in females.

In general, the body of the negro child shows less adipose tissue and greater muscular development. The average strength in each arm, as measured by the dynamometer, is greater in colored children, not only at all ages, but also in proportion to bodily weight.

The pelvis of the colored child is more inclined forward than that of the white child, and this is equally true in both sexes.

The arms of the colored child are longer than those of the white, and the arm-spread, relatively to the height of the body, is greater.

Both hands and feet, but especially the feet, are longer in the colored than in the white child. The feet are flatter in the colored. The thighs of the negro child show a remarkable difference from those of the white. They appear not unlike the thighs of a frog, being most prominent in the middle. This character is due to a higher forward and outward curvature of the thigh bone in the colored.

The calves are somewhat smaller in the negro child than in the white one.

DIFFERENCES PECULIAR TO BOYS

The negro boy is generally well built, lean, and muscular. The body, unlike that of many normal white boys, and unless deformed by disease, is plastic, straight, and symmetrical. His chest is a little deeper.

The pelvis of the colored boy is more inclined, and in consequence of this the lumbar curve is more pronounced and the buttocks are more prominent.

The penis of the colored boy is generally longer than that of a white boy of corresponding age or size.

DIFFERENCES PECULIAR TO GIRLS

The colored girl, before the age of puberty, and sometimes even beyond this period, *is shaped more like a boy than is the white girl*. Among white children girls can be seen to show decided feminine characters—that is, feminine shoulders and thorax, waist distinctly narrowed, large hips, and fat thighs—as early as eight years of life. Among negro female children these characters do not become manifest, unless in exceptional cases, until after twelve years of age, or even much later. When seen in profile the greater inclination of the pelvis in the female colored child becomes very apparent.

Such are, in abstract, the principal differences between white and colored children. A detailed study will follow promptly.

