The History of Anthropology.

I have been asked to speak on the history of anthropology. The task that has been allotted to me is so vast and the time at my disposal is so short, that it will be impossible to do justice to the work of the minds that have made anthropology what it is. It would even be futile to characterize the work of the greatest among the contributors to our science. All that I can undertake to do is to discuss the general conditions of scientific thought that have given rise to anthropology.

Viewing my task from this standpoint, you will pardon me if I do not first attempt to define what anthropology ought to be, and with what subjects it ought to deal, but if I take my cue rather from what it is, and how it has developed.

Before I enter into my subject I will say that the speculative anthropology of the 18th and of the early part of the 19th century is distinct in its scope and method from the science which is called anthropology at the present time and is not included in our discussion.

At the present time anthropologists occupy themselves with problems relating to the physical and mental life of mankind as found in varying forms of society, from the earliest times up to the present period, and in all parts of the world. Their researches bear upon the form and functions of the body as well as upon all kinds of manifestations of mental life. Accordingly, the subject matter of anthropology is partly a branch of biology, partly a branch of the mental sciences. Among the mental phenomena language, invention, art, religion, social organization and law have received particular attention. Among anthropologists of our time we find a consid-