SCIENCE.

A WEEKLY NEWSPAPER OF ALL THE ARTS AND SCIENCES.

PUBLISHED BY
N. D. C. HODGES,
47 LAFAYETTE PLACE, NEW YORK.

Subscriptions.—United States and Canada.............. $3.50 a year.
Great Britain and Europe...................... 4.50 a year.

Science Club-rates for the United States and Canada (in one remittance):
1 subscription 1 year .................................. $ 3.50
2 " 1 year ........................................ 6.00
3 " 1 year ........................................ 8.00
4 " 1 year ....................................... 10.00

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We publish in this number certain suggestions that have been
made, by those best able to judge, as to improvements in
the taking of the census of the deaf. At the same time we would call
attention to certain suggestions by Dr. A. Graham Bell on
the census-taking of the deaf which may lead to important results in
the study of the heredity of this affection, and to its introduction
into certain families through unfortunate marriages. One of the
sections in the article to which we refer has reference to the new
springs of first-cousin marriages. This is a point of grave import-
ance, and one upon which, up to this time, no special data have
been obtained in this country. The committee of the deaf, as it
will be seen, recommends the introduction into the census sched-
ules of a question bearing on this point, and it is certainly to be
hoped that such a question will be inserted. In examining the
ancestry of deaf-mutes, Dr. Bell has had occasion to consult
the original population schedules of former censuses, which are pre-
served in the Department of the Interior, and he has found little
difficulty in tracing the families backward from census to census
in the male line of ascendency. If the name of the father had been
given in former censuses, it might now be possible for genealogical
experts to trace from these records the American ancestry of every
person now living in the United States in every branch, for the
name of the father would give the maiden name of females. Dr.
Bell therefore suggests that in the census of 1890 the father’s
name should be noted in that part of the schedule that relates to
the nativity of the parents, so that the people of the United States
may leave to their descendants genealogical records from which
their full ancestry may at any time be ascertained. This sugges-
tion is full of interest to the genealogists of the country, and, if
carried into effect, would undoubtedly prove of great value to
them. The committee of the New England Historical and Gene-
alogical Society, to whom this matter was referred, has strongly
endorsed it, and it is hoped that a question on this point, as shown
in the proposed schedule, will be inserted.

THE ENUMERATION OF THE DEAF.

A MEETING of the executive committee of the conference of
American instructors of the deaf was held in Washington, May 9
of this year, to consider the best method of enumerating the deaf
of the next census, and confer with the superintendent of the cen-
sus, Hon. Robert D. Porter, on the subject. Dr. Alexander Gra-
ham Bell and Mr. Frederick Howard Wines were invited to act
with the committee. All the members of the committee, including
Dr. Bell, were present; but Mr. Wines was unable to attend. After
discussion of several hours and a pleasant interview with Mr. Porter and Dr. J. S. Billings, who has charge of the mortality and
census-taking of the United States, Mr. Porter acceded to the
request of the committee, that in the next census the deaf
should be separated from the pauper and criminal classes, and
promised to give careful consideration to any suggestions the com-
mittee might make. In accordance with this, the committee,—
consisting of Edward M. Gallaudet, president of the National Col-
lege for Deaf-Mutes; Isaac Lewis Peet, principal of the New York
Institution for the Deaf and Dumb; Philip G. Gillett, superintendent
of the Illinois Institution for the Deaf and Dumb; J. L. Noyes,
superintendent of the Minnesota School for the Deaf; Caroline A.
Yale, principal of the Clarke Institution for the Deaf at Northamp-
ton, Mass.; Alexander Graham Bell; and Edward Allen Fay, editor
of the American Annals of the Deaf,—on June 21, addressed a let-
ter to Mr. Porter, in which they made the following statements and
suggestions:

At the sixth conference of principals and superintendents of
American schools for the deaf, held at Jackson, Miss., April 14-17,
1888,—a body representing all the schools for the deaf in the
United States, numbering last year 8,572 pupils, — we were
appointed a committee to endeavor to effect a reform in the method
of enumerating the deaf in the United States census, in the hope of
securing fuller and more accurate statistics in 1890 than have
heretofore been obtained. In accordance with your request at our
interview on the 9th of May last, that we should make such sug-
gestions as might seem desirable in this direction, we respectfully
submit the following recommendations:

I. Section 17 of the act of Congress, entitled ‘An Act to pro-
vide for taking the tenth and subsequent censuses’ [approved
March 3, 1879], provides that ‘Schedule No. 1 (here reproduced)
shall contain inquiries .... as to the physical and mental health
of each person enumerated, whether active or disabled, maimed,
crippled, bedridden, deaf, dumb, blind, insane, or idiotic, and
whether employed or unemployed, and, if unemployed, during what
portion of the year.’ In accordance with this provision, inquiries
were made in the ‘Tenth Census’ concerning the disabled; and
full returns were sought of all the classes named in the act, ex-
cepting the deaf and the dumb. Only those dumb were enumerated
who were also deaf, and only those deaf who had lost hearing be-
fore the age of sixteen years. We urge that in the ‘Eleventh Cen-
sus’ all the classes named in the act be fully enumerated; and we
specially urge that the returns of the deaf be not limited to that
sub-class of the deaf formerly denominated the ‘deaf and dumb.’
If the requirements of the law are fully complied with, the returns
will be much more useful to us, as teachers of the deaf, than if the
plan pursued in former censuses of inquiring only for the ‘deaf and
dumb’ is continued. Pupils are admitted to the schools we repre-
sent, not on account of their dumbness, but on account of their
deafness. Persons who are merely dumb are not received: per-
sons who are merely deaf are received. Our schools are open to