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PHYSICAL ANTHROPOLOGY AND ITS AIMS¹

THE phenomena of the universe, brought within the range of human understanding and preserved in memory or writing, constitute knowledge; and systematic search for knowledge, on the basis of the highest standards of learning, is science. This in its application being of the utmost utility, constitutes the most important function of mankind. A branch of science is a portion of systematic research that extends to closely related phenomena and has become the special function of a definite class of qualified observers.

One of these branches is anthropology, described by its principal promoter, Broca, as "the natural history of the genus *homo*," or, more in detail, as "that science which has for its object the study of mankind as a whole, in its parts, and in its relation with the rest of nature."² In the light of to-day, it may be defined more strictly as that portion of systematic research which deals with the differences

¹ Annual address of the president of the Anthropological Society of Washington, given under the auspices of the Washington Academy of Sciences, February 11, 1908.

² Article "Anthropologie" in the Diction. encyclop. d. sc's. méd., Vol. V., p. 276—Paris, 1866; also in Broca's "Mémoires d'anthropologie," Paris, 1871, Vol. I., p. 1. References to numerous definitions in R. Martin, "System d. (physischen) Anthropologie, etc.," *Korr.-Bl. d. deutsch. Anthropol. Ges.*, 1907, Nr. 9/12. See also L. Manouvrier, *Rev. de l'École d'Anthrop.*, 1904, pp. 397-410, and F. Boas, "Anthropology," 8°, pp. 1-28, The Columbia University Press, N. Y., 1908.

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