

# QUERIES

RESPECTING

## THE HUMAN RACE,

TO BE ADDRESSED TO TRAVELLERS AND OTHERS.

DRAWN UP BY A COMMITTEE OF THE  
BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE,  
APPOINTED IN 1839.

Copies of these Queries may be had on application to Richard and John E. Taylor, Red Lion Court, Fleet Street; John Phillips, Esq., York; and the Geographical Society, 21, Regent Street.

Answers to all or any of the preceding Queries are earnestly solicited, and they may be addressed as above, or to J. E. Gray, Esq., British Museum; Dr. Prichard, Bristol; or Dr. Hodgkin, 9, Lower Brook Street, London.

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AT the meeting of the British Association held at Birmingham, Dr. Prichard read a paper "On the Extinction of some varieties of the Human Race." He pointed out instances in which this extinction had already taken place to a great extent, and showed that many races now existing are likely, at no distant period, to be annihilated. He pointed out the irretrievable loss which science must sustain, if so large a portion of the human race, counting by tribes instead of individuals, is suffered to perish, before many interesting questions of a psychological, physiological and philological character, as well as many historical facts in relation to them, have been investigated. Whence he argued that science, as well as humanity, is interested in the efforts which are made to rescue them, and to preserve from oblivion many important details connected with them.

At the suggestion of the Natural Historical Section, to which Dr. Prichard's paper was read, the Association voted the sum of £5 to be expended in printing a set of queries to be addressed to those who may travel or reside in parts of the globe inhabited by the threatened races. A Committee was likewise appointed by the same Section to prepare a list of such questions. The following pages, to which the attention of travellers and others is earnestly invited, have, in consequence, been produced. It is right to observe, that whilst these questions have been in preparation, the Ethnographical Society of Paris has printed a set of questions on the same subject for the use of travellers. It has been gratifying to perceive the general similarity between the questions proposed by the French savans who compose that Society, and those which had been already prepared by the Committee; but the Committee is bound to acknowledge the assist-

ance which, in the completion of its task, it has derived from the comprehensive character and general arrangement of the Ethnographical Society's list. The following queries might have been considerably extended, and much might have been added to explain the reasons and motives on which some of them are founded. Such additions would, however, have inconveniently extended these pages, and, in part, have defeated their object. The Committee has only further to express its desire that the Association may continue its support to the interesting subject of Ethnography, and that their fellow-members will aid in bringing these queries under the notice of those who may have it in their power to obtain replies. Britain, in her extensive colonial possessions and commerce, and in the number and intelligence of her naval officers, possesses unrivalled facilities for the elucidation of the whole subject; and it would be a stain on her character, as well as a loss to humanity, were she to allow herself to be left behind by other nations in this inquiry.

It will be desirable, before giving direct answers to the questions proposed in the following list, that the traveller should offer, in his own terms, a description of the particular group of human beings, which he may have in view in drawing up his list of answers, seeing that the replies, however accurate and replete with useful information, may fail in some particulars to give a complete idea of the people to whom they relate.

### *Physical Characters.*

1. State the general stature of the people, and confirm this by some actual measurements. Measurement may be applied to absolute height, and also to proportions, to be referred to in subsequent queries. The weight of individuals, when ascertainable, and extreme cases, as well as the average, will be interesting. What may be the relative differences in stature and dimensions, between males and females?

2. Is there any prevailing disproportion between different parts of the body? as, for example, in the size of the head, the deficient or excessive development of upper or lower extremities.

3. What is the prevailing complexion? This should be accurately defined, if possible, by illustrative and intelligent example, such as by comparison with those whose colour is well known. The colour of the hair should be stated, and its character, whether fine or coarse, straight, curled, or woolly. The colour and character of the eyes should likewise be described. Is there, independently of want of cleanliness, any perceptible peculiarity of odour?

4. The head is so important as distinctive of race, that particular attention must be paid to it. Is it round or elongated in either direction, and what is the shape of the face, broad, oval, lozenge-shaped, or of any other marked form? It will contribute to facilitate the understanding of other descriptions, to have sketches of several typical specimens. A profile, and also a front view should be given. In the profile, particularly notice the height and angle of the forehead, the situation of the meatus auditorius, and the form of the posterior part of the head. It will also be desirable to depict the external ear, so as to convey the form and proportion of its several parts. The form of the head may be minutely and accurately described by employing the divisions and terms introduced by craniologists, and the corresponding development of moral and intellectual character should in conjunction be faithfully stated. So much of the neck should be given with the profile as to show the setting on of the head. The advance or recession of the chin, and the character of the lips and nose, may likewise be given in profile. The front view should exhibit the width of forehead, temples, and cheek-bones, the direction of the eyes, and the width between them: the dimensions of the mouth. When skulls can be collected or examined, it would be desirable to give a view in another direction, which may even be done, though with less accuracy, from the living subject. It should be taken by looking down upon the head from above, so as to give an idea of the contour of the forehead, and the width of the skull across from one parietal protuberance to the other.

5. State whether the bones of the skull are thick, thin, heavy, or light. Is it common to find the frontal bone divided by a middle suture or not? Note the form of the outer orbital process, which sometimes forms part of a broad scalene triangle, with the vertex downwards. How are the frontal sinuses developed? Observe whether the ossa triquetra are frequent, or otherwise; whether there be frequent separation of the upper part of the os occipitis; the relative situation of the foramen magnum. In regard to the bones of the face, notice the position of the ossa nasi and unguis; the former sometimes meet nearly or quite on the same plane, whilst, in others, they meet at an angle. The former character is strongly marked in many African skulls. State the form of the jaw bone, shape of the chin, and observe the angle of the jaw, the position and character of the teeth, and their mode of wear; and if they have any practice of modifying their form or appearance, let this be stated. The malar bones have already been noticed, but they may require a more minute description.

6. When the opportunity can be found, observe the number of lumbar vertebræ, since an additional one is said to be common in some tribes.

7. Give the length of the sternum as compared with the whole trunk; and also some idea of the relative proportion between the chest and the abdomen.

8. What is the character of the pelvis in both sexes, and what is the form of the foot?

9. The form of the scapula will also deserve attention, more especially as regards its breadth and strength; and the strength or weakness of the clavicle should be noticed in connection with it.

10. The internal organs, and blood-vessels will with greater difficulty be subjected to examination; but it may be well here to remark, that varieties in these may prevail locally in connection with race.

N.B.—Peculiarities may exist, which cannot be anticipated in queries, but which the observer will do well to notice amongst his answers to anatomical questions.

11. Where a district obviously possesses two or more varieties of the human race, note the typical characters of each in their most distinct form, and indicate to what known groups or families they may belong: give some idea of the proportion of each, and state the result of their intermixture on physical and moral character. When it can be ascertained, state how long intermixture has existed, and of which the physical characters tend to predominate. It is to be observed, that this question does not so much refer to the numerical strength or political ascendancy of any of the types, but to the greater or less physical resemblance which the offspring may bear to the parents, and what are the characters which they may appear to derive from each: whether there is a marked difference arising from the father or the mother belonging to one of the types in preference to another; also whether the mixed form resulting from such intermarriage is known to possess a permanent character, or after a certain number of generations to incline to one or other of its component types.

12. Any observation connected with these intermarriages, relating to health, longevity, physical and intellectual character, will be particularly interesting, as bringing light on a field hitherto but little systematically investigated. Even when the people appear to be nearly or quite free from intermixture, their habits, in respect of intermarriage within larger or smaller circles, and the corresponding physical characters of the people, will be very interesting.

*Language.*

13. Do the natives speak a language already known to philologists, and if so, state what it is; and notice whether it exhibit any dialectic peculiarities, as well as the modifications of pronunciation and accentuation which it may offer. State also the extent to which this dialect may be used, if limits can be ascertained.

14. If the language be little if at all known, endeavour to obtain a vocabulary as extensive as circumstances will allow, and at least consisting of the numerals, the most common and important substantives\*, the pronouns in all persons and numbers, adjectives expressive of the commonest qualities, and, if possible, a few verbs varied in time and person. The vocabulary should be tested by the interrogation of different natives, and more than one person should be engaged in taking it down from their mouths, to avoid, as far as may be, errors arising from peculiarities of utterance or defect of hearing. It is likewise of importance that the system of orthography be duly indicated and strictly adhered to.

15. Endeavour to take down some piece of native composition, such as the ordinary phrases employed in conversation, and any other piece of prose which may be attainable; and specimens of metrical composition if such exist. Though these would be of comparatively little use without translation, yet independently of this some importance is to be attached to the metrical compositions if they have a national character and are widely diffused; and, in this case, it might be possible to express some of their airs in musical characters. A specimen of known composition translated into their language, may also be given, such as the first chapter of Genesis, the fifteenth chapter of Luke's Gospel, and the Lord's Prayer.

16. Endeavour to ascertain whether the language is extensively spoken or understood, and whether there are different languages spoken by men having similar physical characters obviously connecting them as a race, or if differing somewhat in this respect, inhabiting a particular geographical tract. When such groups are said to possess different languages, endeavour, as far as possible, to ascertain their number, the sources whence each is derived, and the languages to which it is allied; and also the circumstances, geographical or political, which may account for these distinctions.

[For further information connected with the investigation of languages, reference is made to a short essay on this subject read to the Philological Society of London.]

\* The names of mountains, lakes, rivers, islands, &c.

*Individual and Family Life.*

17. Are there any ceremonies connected with the birth of a child? Is there any difference whether the child be male or female?

18. Does infanticide occur to any considerable extent, and if it does, to what causes is it to be referred, want of affection, deficient subsistence, or superstition?

19. Are children exposed, and from what causes, whether superstition, want of subsistence or other difficulties, or from deformity, general infirmity, or other causes of aversion?

20. What is the practice as to dressing and cradling children, and are there any circumstances connected with it calculated to modify their form; for example, to compress the forehead, as amongst the western Americans; to flatten the occiput, as amongst most Americans, by the flat straight board to which the child is attached; to occasion the lateral distortion of the head, by allowing it to remain too long in one position on the hand of the nurse, as amongst the inhabitants of the South Seas?

21. Are there any methods adopted, by which other parts of the body may be affected, such as the turning in of the toes, as amongst the North Americans; the modification of the whole foot, as amongst the Chinese?

22. How are the children educated, what are they taught, and are any methods adopted to modify their character, such as to implant courage, impatience of control, endurance of pain and privation, or, on the contrary, submission, and to what authorities, cowardice, artifice?

23. Is there anything remarkable amongst the sports and amusements of children, or in their infantile songs or tales?

24. At what age does puberty take place?

25. What is the ordinary size of families, and are there any large ones?

26. Are births of more than one child common? What is the proportion of the sexes at birth and among adults?

27. Are the children easily reared?

28. Is there any remarkable deficiency or perfection in any of the senses? It is stated, that in some races sight is remarkably keen, both for near and distant objects.

29. To what age do the females continue to bear children? and for what period are they in the habit of suckling them?

30. What is the menstrual period, and what the time of utero-gestation?

31. Are there any ceremonies connected with any particular period of life?



32. Is chastity cultivated, or is it remarkably defective, and are there any classes amongst the people of either sex by whom it is remarkably cultivated, or the reverse, either generally or on particular occasions?

33. Are there any superstitions connected with this subject?

34. What are the ceremonies and practices connected with marriage?

35. Is polygamy permitted and practised, and to what extent?

36. Is divorce tolerated, or frequent?

37. How are widows treated?

38. What is the prevailing food of the people? Is it chiefly animal or vegetable, and whence is it derived in the two kingdoms? Do they trust to what the bounty of nature provides, or have they means of modifying or controlling production, either in the cultivation of vegetables, or the rearing of animals? Describe their modes of cooking, and state the kinds of condiment which may be employed. Do they reject any kinds of aliment from scruple, or an idea of uncleanness? Have they in use any kind of fermented or other form of exhilarating liquor, and, if so, how is it obtained? What number of meals do they make? and what is their capacity for temporary or sustained exertion?

39. Describe the kind of dress worn by the people, and the materials employed in its formation. What are the differences in the usages of the sexes in this respect? Are there special dresses used for great occasions? and, if so, describe these, and their modes of ornament. Does any practice of tattooing, piercing, or otherwise modifying the person for the sake of ornament, prevail amongst the people? N.B. Such modifications not to be blended with other modifications used as signs of mourning, &c.

40. Have the people any prevailing characteristic or remarkable modes of amusement, such as dances and games exhibiting agility, strength or skill?

41. Are games of chance known to the people, and is there a strong passion for them?

42. Do the people appear to be long- or short-lived? If any cases of extreme old age can be ascertained, please to state them. Such cases may sometimes be successfully ascertained by reference to known events, as the previous visits of Europeans to the country. Is there a marked difference between the sexes in respect of longevity?

43. What is the general treatment of the sick? Are they cared for, or neglected? Are any diseases dreaded as contagious, and how are such treated? Is there any medical treat-

ment adopted? Are there any superstitious or magical practices connected with the treatment of the sick? What are the most prevailing forms of disease, whence derived, and to what extent? Is there any endemic affection, such as goitre, pelagra, plica, or the like? With what circumstances, situations, and habits do they appear to be connected, and to what are they referred by the people themselves?

44. Where there are inferior animals associated with man, do they exhibit any corresponding liability to, or exemption from disease?

45. Do entozoa prevail, and of what kind?

46. What is the method adopted for the disposal of the dead? Is it generally adhered to, or subject to variation?

47. Are any implements, articles of clothing, or food, deposited with the dead?

48. Is there any subsequent visitation of the dead, whether they are disposed of separately, or in conjunction with other bodies?

49. What is the received idea respecting a future state? Does this bear the character of transmigration, invisible existence about their accustomed haunts, or removal to a distant abode?

#### *Buildings and Monuments.*

50. What are the kinds of habitations in use among the people? Are they permanent or fixed? Do they consist of a single apartment, or of several? Are the dwellings collected into villages or towns, or are they scattered, and nearly or quite single? If the former, describe any arrangement of them in streets or otherwise which may be employed.

51. Have any monuments been raised by the present inhabitants or their predecessors, and more especially such as relate to religion or war? State their character, materials, and construction. If they are still in use amongst the people, state this object, even if they should be of the simplest construction, and be little more than mounds or tumuli. If these monuments are no longer in use, collect, as far as possible, the ideas and traditions of the natives regarding them, and, if possible, have them examined by excavation or otherwise, taking care to deface and disturb them as little as possible.

52. In these researches be on the look out for the remains of the skeletons of man or other animals, and, if discovered, let them be preserved for comparison with those still in existence.

#### *Works of Art.*

53. Let works of art, in metal, bone, or other materials, be

likewise sought and preserved, and their similarity to, or difference from implements at present in use amongst the people of the district, or elsewhere, be noted.

54. When a people display their ingenuity by the extent or variety of their works of art, it will not only be desirable to describe what these are, but also the materials of which they are constructed, the modes in which these materials are obtained, the preparation which they undergo when any is required, and the instruments by which they are wrought. Such particulars will not only throw light on the character and origin of the people, but will, directly or indirectly, influence the commercial relations which may be profitably entered into when commerce alone is looked to. When colonization is contemplated, the facts contained in the replies to these queries will point out the mutual advantages which might be obtained by preserving, instead of annihilating, the aboriginal population.

#### *Domestic Animals.*

Are there any domestic animals in the possession of the people? Of what species are they? Whence do they appear to have been derived, and to what variety do they belong? Have they degenerated or become otherwise modified? To what uses are they applied?

#### *Government and Laws.*

55. What is the form of government? Does it assume a monarchical or democratic character, or does it rest with the priests?

56. Are the chiefs, whether of limited or absolute power, elective or hereditary?

57. Is there any division of clans or castes?

58. What are the privileges enjoyed by or withheld from these?

59. What care is taken to keep them distinct, and with what effect on the physical and moral character of each?

60. What laws exist among the people? How are they preserved? Are they generally known, or confided to the memory of a chosen set of persons? What are their opinions and regulations in reference to property, and especially the occupation and possession of the soil? Does the practice of hiring labourers exist among them?

61. Have they any knowledge or tradition of a legislator, to whom the formation of laws is ascribed?

62. Do they rescind, add to, or modify their laws? and how?

63. Are they careful in the observance of them?

64. What are their modes of enforcing obedience, and of proving and punishing delinquency?

65. How are judges constituted? Do their trials take place at stated periods, and in public?

66. How do they keep prisoners in custody, and treat them?

67. What are the crimes taken cognizance of by the laws? Is there gradation or commutation of punishment?

### *Geography and Statistics.*

68. Briefly state the geographical limits and character of the region inhabited by the people to whom the replies relate.

69. State approximatively the number of inhabitants. As this is an important, but very difficult question, it may not be amiss to point out the modes in which the numbers may be ascertained. The people themselves may state their number with more or less accuracy, but it should be known whether they refer to all ranks and ages, or merely comprehend adult males, who may be mustered for war, or other general purpose requiring their combination. In this case state the apparent proportion between adult males and other members of families. The number of habitations in a particular settlement may be counted, and some idea of the average numbers of a family be given. Where the people inhabit the water-side, the number and dimensions of their craft may be taken, and some idea of the proportion between the number of these and of the individuals belonging to them, may be formed. In drawing conclusions from observations of this kind, it will be necessary to have due regard to the different degrees of density or rarity in which, from various causes, population may be placed.

70. Has the number of inhabitants sensibly varied, and within what period?

71. If it have diminished, state the causes; such as sickness, starvation, war, and emigration. When these causes require explanation, please to give it. If the inhabitants are on the increase, is this the result of the easy and favourable circumstances of the people causing an excess of births over deaths; or is it to be assigned to any cause tending to bring accessions from other quarters? State whether such causes are of long standing, or recent.

72. Is the population generally living in a manner to which they have been long accustomed, or have new relations with other people, and consequently new customs and practices, been introduced?

73. If the people, being uncivilized, have come under the influence of the civilized, state to what people the latter belong,

how they are regarded, and what is the kind of influence they are producing\*. State the points of their good influence, if any, and those of an opposite character, as the introduction of diseases, vices, wars, want of independence, &c.

74. Is there any tendency to the union of races? how is it exhibited, and to what extent?

### *Social Relations.*

75. What kind of relationship, by written treaty or otherwise, subsists between the nation and other nations, civilized or not? Have they any intercourse by sea with other countries? Do any of them understand any European language? Or are there interpreters, by whom they can communicate with them?

76. Are they peaceable, or addicted to war? Have they any forms of declaring war, or making peace? What is their mode of warfare, either by sea or land? their weapons and strategy? What do they do with the slain, and with prisoners? Have they any mode of commemorating victories by monuments, hieroglyphics, or preservation of individual trophies, and of what kind? Have they any national poems, sagas, or traditions respecting their origin and history? Where Europeans have introduced fire-arms, ascertain the modes of warfare which have given place to them.

State whatever particulars respecting their origin and history are derived, either from traditions among themselves or from other sources.

### *Religion, Superstitions, &c.*

77. Are the people addicted to religious observances, or generally regardless of them?

78. Do they adopt the idea of one great and presiding Spirit, or are they polytheists?

79. If polytheism exist, what are the names, attributes, and fables connected with their deities, and what are the modes in which devotion is paid to each? Are any parts of the body held sacred, or the reverse? Do they offer sacrifices, and are they of an expiatory character, or mere gifts?

80. Have they any sacred days or periods? fixed or moveable feasts, or religious ceremonies of any kind, or any form of thanksgiving or other observance connected with seasons?

81. Have they any order of priests, and if so, are they hereditary, elective, or determined by any particular circumstance?

82. Is the religion of the people similar to that of any other people, neighbouring or remote? If different, are they widely

\* This question will comprise the existence of missions—the success or the want of it from causes connected with missionaries themselves or others.

so, or dependent on particular modifications, and of what kind?

83. In what light do they regard the religion and deities of neighbouring tribes?

84. Is there any idea of an inferior order of spirits and imaginary beings,—such as ghosts, fairies, brownies, and goblins; and how are they described?

85. Have they any notions of magic, witchcraft, or second sight?

86. What ideas are entertained respecting the heavenly bodies? Have they any distinction of stars, or constellations? and if so, what names do they give them, and what do these names signify?

87. Are they in any manner observed with reference to the division of the year, and how?

88. If time is not divided by observations of those bodies, what other mode is adopted? and do observances connected with them rest with the priests or chiefs?

89. When the traveller, by personal acquaintance with the language, or by means of competent assistance from interpreters, can freely converse with the people, it will be desirable that he should form some idea of their amount of intelligence, their tone of mind with regard to social relations, as respects freedom, independence, or subserviency, and their recognition of moral obligations, and any other psychological character which observation may detect; and more especially such as may contribute to an estimation of the probable results of efforts to develope and improve the character.

