

CHAPTER II

THE MEASUREMENT OF INTELLIGENCE

THE successful measurement of intelligence, first accomplished by the method of Binet and Simon, is perhaps the most brilliant achievement of modern psychology. It supplied an imperative need long felt by all discerning persons engaged in work with children. The science of psychology has been vitalized and rejuvenated by this achievement, which, in its far-reaching and ever-growing developments in the fields of psychology and education, has exceeded the most sanguine expectations of those men of clear vision who labored towards its culmination.

Pioneer Studies in the Measurement of Intelligence.—Work earlier than that of Binet, and, indeed, much of the earlier work of Binet himself, was directed not so much towards the measurement of intelligence as a whole as towards the development of tests for measuring various elementary features of human capacity. The great pioneer in this sort of work was Francis Galton, who, in 1883, published an elaborate account of individual and racial differences.¹ The object of his tests and measurements, he described as follows: "It is to obtain a general knowledge of the capacities of a man by sinking shafts, as it were, at a few critical points. In order to ascertain the best points for the purpose, the set of measures should be compared with an independent estimate of the man's

¹"Inquiries into Human Faculty."