

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

Greenland geology.

IN the seventh volume of Heer's *Flora fossilis arctica*, just issued, my distinguished colleagues, Professor Heer of Zurich, and Herr K. F. V. Steenstrup of Copenhagen, seem to be at cross purposes with me, regarding the positions and Eskimo names of the localities where the collections of fossil plants discovered by us were obtained; Mr. Steenstrup giving the spot one name, and I another, while, owing to this misapprehension, the exact latitude of at least one place is differently entered in our respective papers. For instance: we apply the name of 'Kudlisaet' (Kittludsat) to spots at considerable distances from each other, and do not quite understand the same place by the word 'Unartok.' Heer, who has, however, never been in Greenland, notes (p. 203) that "nach Steenstrup fällt Ujarasuksumitok von R. Brown (*Flora foss. arct.*, ii. p. 452) mit Unartok zusammen und der Name beruht auf missverständniss." Again: Steenstrup, in the admirable memoir appended to Heer's work, mentions that "Brown zufolge l. c. [*Philosophical transactions*, 1869, p. 445, and *Transactions of the geological society of Glasgow*, vol. v. p. 36], war es hier [at Unartok], dass er und Whympier im Jahr 1867 versteinerungen sammelten. Meines erachtens rührt der name Browns 'Ujarasuksumitok' von dem umstande her, dass der Grönländer ihn missverstanden und geglaubt hat, dass er gefragt würde, woher er (der Grönländer) wäre, worauf er eine antwort gab, die ungefähr bedeutet 'Ich bin aus Ujaragsugsuk'." (p. 247). I do not doubt for a moment that Mr. Steenstrup may be right; and his general accuracy forbids me to assert that he is wrong. My acquaintance with Danish was in 1867 (as it is still) trifling, while of Eskimo I was all but ignorant. And even with the greatest care, it is always difficult to arrive at the exact designation of localities in Greenland. However, Mr. Tegner, who accompanied us, was familiar with Eskimo, and of course, as a Dane, with Danish; and the names attached to my map and paper referred to were arrived at, after repeated cross-questioning of our native boatmen, and of Paulus, the intelligent Eskimo catechist at Ounartok (Unartok), who wrote them down in a note-book, at present before me. Curiously enough, in a note in the hand-writing of the late Chevalier Olrick, so many years governor of North Greenland, the place is called 'Ujarasaksumitok,' which naturally led me to believe that this was a synonyme of Ujaragsugsuk, under which name it is also designated by Dr. Rink, in my edition of Danish Greenland (p. 349). 'Ritenbenks Kolbroff' I regarded as the same place as Unartok, for there coal was being mined; while Steenstrup seems to consider it the same as Kudlisaet. The latter spot, after a series of very careful, and, I am certain, accurate, meridian altitudes, I place in Lat. 70° 5' 35" N., while Nares puts the Ritenbenk coal-mine, so called (Kudlisaet), in Lat. 70° 3' 4", which convinces me that this spot is what I took to be Unartok. At my Kudlisaet there was, in 1867, no coal being dug. Anyhow, in the 'Geological notes on the Noursoak Peninsula, Disco Island, etc.' (*Trans. geol. soc. Glasgow*, vol. v. p. 55), I have so fully described these localities, that no future explorer can mistake them. But as many may see Heer's work who may not be able to consult my humbler brochure, I ask permission to make these explanations in the columns of a scientific journal, which, as the mouthpiece of American geologists, takes cognizance of far-away Greenland also. Moreover, as one might suppose, from Mr.

Steenstrup's (inadvertently, no doubt) mentioning that Nares and I differed two minutes and thirty-one seconds (2' 31") in our latitudes of 'Ritenbenks Kohlenbruch,' that there was some *inexcusable roughness* in the use of the sextant and artificial horizon, while in reality we observed *at two totally different places*, the matter is, though not of great scientific or geographical importance, in a manner personal to myself, if not to Sir George Nares.

ROBERT BROWN.

Streatham, London, Eng.,
Sept. 24, 1883.

Human proportion.

In a review of my lecture on 'Human proportion in art and anthropometry' (*SCIENCE*, ii. 354), the accuracy of certain statements contained therein is questioned. Permit me space for a brief reply.

The critic says that the implement in the hand of the Egyptian figure is a *crux ansata*, the symbol of eternity, and not 'a key.' But M. Charles Blanc, whose description I was quoting, says 'la personnage tient une clef de la main droite;' and the expression is warranted, as it is, in its symbolical sense, spoken of by Egyptologists as 'a key.'

His next assertion is, that the Doryphorus of Polykleitus was not, as I stated, 'a beautiful youth in the act of throwing a spear,' but a spear-bearer of the body-guard of the Persian king. The latter functionary, however, wore a long robe, termed the 'candys,' extending from the neck to the mid-leg, and could not have been selected for a model, which necessarily required a naked figure. Pliny (*Hist. nat.*, xxxiv. 8) says, 'Idem et Doryphorum viriliter puerum fecit,' etc.; and many other allusions in classical writers confirm this view.

The last and most surprising criticism is the statement that my assertion that prior to the time of Phidias, the face, hands, feet, etc., were carved in marble, and were fastened to a wooden block, is "a complete misunderstanding of the nature of the archaic *ἑώρα*, or wooden statues, which in Greece preceded those made of stone or metal." Now, the *ἑώρα* was simply a wooden statue. (Cf. Pausanias, vii., 17, 2, *τοιαύτῃ ἢ ὡς ἂν τὰ ἑώρα*, etc.) It was succeeded by a more elaborate invention, known as an *acrolith*, from *ἄκρος* and *λίθος*, *stone-ends*. Pausanias describes one of them (ix. 4): "The statue of the goddess [the Plataean Athena of Phidias] is made of wood, and is gilt, except the face, and the ends of the hands and feet, which are of Pentelican stone." See also Quatremère de Quincy, *Monuments et ouvrages d'art antiques*, vol. ii., *Restitution de la Minerve en or et ivoire de Phidias au Parthenon*, pp. 63-123; also Müller, *Handbuch d. archaeol. d. kunst*, § 84. Dr. William Smith states the case concisely (*Dict. Gr. and Rom. mythol.*, vol. iii. p. 250): "Up to his [Phidias's] time, colossal statues, when not of bronze, were *acroliths*; that is, only the face, hands, and feet were of marble, the body being of wood, which was concealed by real drapery." ROBERT FLETCHER.

Washington, Oct. 8, 1883.

[The most common of all the Egyptian symbols is an emblem in the form of 'a handled cross,' symbolical of 'life;' but both the nature of the object represented, and the reason of the symbolism, are equally unknown. To call it 'a key' is certainly wrong, as the Egyptians had none; and by archeologists it is usually designated by the conventional term '*crux ansata*.'

That the word 'Doryphoros,' *ex vi termini*, cannot mean 'a youth in the act of throwing a spear,' as Mr.

Fletcher says, but simply a 'spear-bearer,' is what our criticism was intended to convey.

Although it may be true enough that 'prior to the time of Phidias, colossal statues, when not of bronze, were acroliths, our criticism was directed to the author's broad assertion, which entirely ignored the existence of ξόανα.]

WRITER OF THE NOTICE OF 'HUMAN PROPORTION.'

Geology of Philadelphia.

Will Professor Henry Carvill Lewis state where the term 'hydro-mica-slate' is used by H. D. Rogers, or in that portion of the report on Chester county written by the undersigned?

The word occurs seven times in the Lancaster county report; but in every case except the italics on p. 10, which the reference on the ninth line below shows to be a misprint, it is used in the sense defined in my criticism, and not as an equivalent for hydro-mica-schist. As his defence of the use of the other terms alluded to does not meet the objections, no further remark is necessary.

PERSIFOR FRAZER.

Sept. 28, 1883.

The chinch-bug in New York.

We have the chinch-bug (*Blissus leucopterus* Say) in New York in formidable numbers. Its appearance with us is of great interest, as hitherto the only record of its occurrence is that of Dr. Fitch, who, several years ago, saw three individuals of it upon willows in the spring. I had never before met with it in our state. Dr. Harris, you will remember, mentions having seen one example in Massachusetts. By some manner it has been introduced here, and I can think of no way so probable as that it has been brought in a freight-car from the west.

The locality of its occurrence is in St. Lawrence county, the most western of our northern counties. As it was for some time thought that the insect could not live north of 40° of latitude, this seems a strange locality for its first appearance.

Its operations were first noticed in a field of timothy-grass last summer, but the depredator was not then discovered. This summer the infested area had largely extended, and, upon a more thorough search being made, it was found in myriads — could be scooped up, it is stated, by handfuls — among the roots of the living grass bordering the killed area. In the fields infested, the timothy, June, and 'wire grass' are completely killed, so that they are succeeded the following season by thistles, weeds, and patches of clover. So far, it has not attacked wheat or corn, of which, however, very little is grown in St. Lawrence county.

I have just visited the infested locality, and I find it to be a very serious attack. It is rapidly extending to other than the two farms upon which it was observed last year, and it in all probability exists in many places where it has not yet been detected. Great alarm is felt throughout the district invaded, as the timothy-grass is the foundation of the grazing interests of that region. Clover, owing to the severity of the winters, cannot be grown to any extent. The most threatening feature of the attack is, that it has continued to increase, notwithstanding that this year and the preceding have both been unusually wet in northern New York. Garden-crops were killed by the heavy and continued rains; grass is lying in the meadows, which could not be secured; and so cold has the season been, that fields of oats are still unharvested. All writers have concurred in stating that the chinch-bug could not endure cold and

wet seasons, and that heavy rains were invariably fatal to it. It really seems as if the new-comer was destined to be a permanent institution in the state.

The farmers are aroused to the importance of doing what they can to arrest and repel the invasion. I have recommended that it be fought with that valuable insecticide, kerosene-oil, emulsified and diluted; and, if generally used the ensuing spring, I have great faith in its proving efficient.

J. A. LINTNER.

Office of the state entomologist
Albany, Oct. 9, 1883.

Ziphius on the New-Jersey coast.

A telegram was received at the Smithsonian institution on the 3d inst. from the keeper of the life-saving station at Barnegat City, N.J., announcing the stranding of a large cetacean at that place. Professor Baird immediately despatched the writer and a preparator from the museum to take charge of the specimen. On arriving at Barnegat City, I immediately perceived that we had to do with an example of an aged female of an interesting ziphioid whale; and, when the skull was cut out, it became evident that the animal was of the genus *Ziphius*. The specimen measures 19 feet 4 inches in length, and was apparently of a light stone-gray color, darkest on the belly. This disposition of color is unusual in cetaceans. The species is probably *Z. cavisortris*.

Mr. Palmer and myself succeeded in making a plaster mould of half the exterior, and in cutting out the complete skeleton.

The genus *Ziphius* has not, I believe, been hitherto recorded as occurring in the north-western Atlantic.

FREDERICK W. TRUE,

Curator of mammals.

U. S. national museum,
Oct. 11, 1883.

THE DE LONG RECORDS.¹

The voyage of the Jeannette. The ship and ice journals of George W. De Long, Lieut.-commander U.S.N., and commander of the polar expedition of 1879-81. Edited by his wife, EMMA [JANE WOTTON] DE LONG. 2 vols. Boston, Houghton, Mifflin, & Co., 1883. 12+911 p., illustr. 8°.

The voyage of the *Jeannette*, owing to its connection with a great newspaper, has become, in its general features, familiar to all. The courage, endurance, and patience with which the members of the party met pain, peril, privation, and even death, will always remain a conspicuous example of manly quality. This expedition, however, was unique in several of its features, which should be taken into account in any judgment rendered upon its results. It was not an expedition for scientific research in the arctic regions. It was not scientifically planned. It had, so far as can be learned from the documents, no programme. Of its members, but two, a civilian and a seaman, had had any experience of an arctic winter; none had made any serious study of the physical conditions of the polar area; and, without

¹ For the woodcuts illustrating this article, the editor is indebted to the publishers of the work, Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin, & Co.