

While reminding one forcibly of some monstrous fossil bryozoan, it seems improbable that it is such, neither is it a plant, nor a mollusk, as I believe. Possibly it is the case of some ancient worm. I have shown the specimen to eastern as well as western geologists and botanists, besides sending drawings and descriptions of it to others, who pronounce it entirely new to them. As far as my own experience goes, I have neither seen anything of the kind in any of our large eastern museums nor have seen anything published relating



FIG. 3.—Diagram of another form of Devil's Corkscrew, as sketched in the field.

to it, and I feel reasonable confidence in offering a notice of what I believe to be a new paleontological specimen, trusting that, if nothing more, it may elicit information on the matter from anyone who has it to offer.

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CONFIRMATION OF THE DISCOVERY OF THE INFLUENZA BACILLUS.

To Dr. Pfeiffer of Berlin is due the discovery of the influenza bacillus. Dr. Kitasato has cultivated it to the fifth generation. Koch has shown, in an article not yet published, how pure cultures of tubercle bacilli can be obtained directly from the sputum. Kitasato has succeeded in employing the same method with the influenza bacilli. According to him, the single colonies are so uncommonly small that they can be easily overlooked, so that former investigators may have failed to see them. The colonies do not flow together as in other kinds of bacteria, but always remain separated; this is so characteristic that the influenza bacilli can be distinguished from all other bacteria with certainty.

The same bacilli have been found in the blood of influenza patients by Dr. Canon. Dr. Koch has compared these with the micro-organisms discovered by Pfeiffer, and pronounces them identical.

And now Dr. Canon has gone still further,¹ and has succeeded in cultivating the influenza bacillus from the blood of patients attacked with the disease. The cultivation is especially difficult since the bacilli in the blood-drops are very few in number, and the colonies, on account of their fineness, are concealed through the coagulated blood. The blood therefore was not inoculated in tubes upon glycerin or sugar-agar, but in the Petrian "Schalen." A great quantity was employed. By this method there was not only a greater probability of preserving colonies, but also the possibility of eventually seeking out the colonies with the microscope.

The blood is taken in the following manner: a finger-tip is cleansed with sublimate, alcohol, and ether in the usual

way; then with a red-hot needle the finger is pierced; an assistant presses the blood out of the opening in drops, being careful that they remain globular in form; from eight to twelve drops are placed upon the Petrian "Schale," and they are heated in a temperature of 37° C. The colonies show a slight development after twenty-four hours; in forty-eight hours they are distinctly seen. They are like those cultivated by Pfeiffer from sputum of influenza patients. In the cultures from the blood the colonies often lie close upon one another. The pure cultures from these colonies have the same appearance as those Kitasato has described.

Dr. Canon cultivated influenza bacilli from the blood of six patients, and in all the bacilli in the blood preparation were few in number and separated. And thus it appears that in those cases where the bacillus is wholly separated in the blood preparation, a sure diagnosis of influenza is given.

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NOTES AND NEWS.

THE University of Edinburgh in June, 1891, conferred upon Professor Simon Newcomb the honorary degree of doctor of laws (*in absentia*). Professor Newcomb was also elected, in June, 1891, an honorary member of the Royal Institution of Great Britain.

— At a meeting of the trustees of Johns Hopkins University, Dec. 15, 1891, it was determined to proceed to construct an academic hall on the property belonging to the university, at the corner of Monument and Garden Streets, running back to Little Ross Street. The trustees are enabled to take this important step by the gift of the late John W. McCoy, who made the university his residuary legatee. Sufficient funds have been received from his estate for the erection of a building which will furnish rooms for the classes in languages, history, and philosophy, with space for the present requirements of the library, and an assembly-room which will hold over six hundred persons. The trustees voted that the building should be known, in honor of the munificent donor, as McCoy Hall. The piece of ground on which the new hall is to be constructed is 100 × 185 feet, and is now taken up with residences used for purposes of the university. Messrs. Baldwin and Pennington have been selected to draw up the plans for the building.

— On 12th of May, 1890, while making a professional call in the outskirts of the town, B. H. Hartwell, M.D., of Ayer, Mass., was summoned into the adjacent woods by a messenger, who stated that her mother was "burned alive." In a paper read before the Massachusetts Medico-Legal Society, and published in the *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*, Dr. Hartwell says: "Hastily driving to the place indicated (about forty rods distant) a human body was found in the actual state of conflagration. The body was face downward; the face, arms, upper part of the chest, and left knee only touching the ground; the rest of the body was raised and held from the ground by the rigidity of the muscles of the parts. It was burning at the shoulder, both sides of the abdomen, and both legs. The flames reached from twelve to fifteen inches above the level of the body. The clothing was nearly all consumed. As I reached the spot the bones of the right leg broke with an audible snap, allowing the foot to hang by the tendons and muscles of one side, those of the other side having burned completely off. Sending my driver for water and assistance, I could only watch the curious and abhorrent spectacle, till a common spading fork was found with which the fire was put out by throwing earth upon it. The flesh was burned from the right shoulder, exposing the joint from the abdomen, allowing the intestines to protrude, and more or less from both legs. The leg bones were partially calcined. The clothing unburned consisted of parts of a calico dress, cotton vest, woollen skirt, and thick, red, woollen undergarment. The subject of the accident was a woman, forty-nine years of age, about five feet five inches in

¹ Deutsche Med. Wochenschrift, Jan. 21, 1892.