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CURRENT NOTES ON ANTHROPOLOGY.—IV.

[Edited by D. G. Brinton, M.D., LL.D.]

The Study of Jargons.

ONLY lately have linguists awakened to the extreme value of the study of jargons, and of hybrid and mixed languages. The fact is that in such we have the nascent condition of speech, the parturition of language, caught in the act. The phonetic and grammatic laws we see at work in the formation of a jargon are the same which have given to all existing tongues their form and ideology.

The linguist to whom we owe the most in this new field is Hugo Schuchardt of Gratz. His works, published by the Imperial Society of Vienna, have presented especially the mixed dialects arising from the intermingling of Spanish and Portuguese with the native tongues of Insulindia. His analyses of them are masterful, and may justly serve as models for all similar researches.

More interesting to American readers is the recent publication of Dr. Karl Lentzner of Berlin, "*Wörterbuch der englischen Volkssprache Australiens*." It is in English in spite of this German title, and presents glossaries of Australian, Anglo-Indian, Pidgin English, West Indian and South African words. He adds an appendix, with numerous examples, and a discussion of these curious forms.

The book offers racy material for a magazine article, is full of quaint and humorous expressions, and tempts to numerous extracts. But it is enough to name it here, that it may not be overlooked by those who are interested in "Americanisms," folk-lore, slang, and such developments of language.

The Lotos-Eaters and the Troglodytes.

There is something peculiarly attractive in following the ancient Homeric voyages by the light of modern science. Who were the "mild-eyed, melancholy Lotus-Eaters," who

dreamily strolled their island shores? Who the Troglodytes, cave-dwellers, speaking a strange language, which Herodotus compares to the squeaking of rats?

Two recent articles enable us to answer these questions satisfactorily. The one is by Dr. E. T. Hamy, in *L'Anthropologie*; the other by Rudolf Fitzner in the *Globus* (Band lxi.). The Lotos Isle was undoubtedly the island of Djerba, at the southern entrance to the Gulf of Gabes (north latitude 33° 40'). Its population is of unusually pure blood, and presents a fine example of the native blonde type of Northern Africa. The complexion is a full white, or slightly reddish, the head short, the face round, the nose straight, the lips thin. In other words, they are entirely similar to the Kabyles of the Djurdjura, and the Rifians of Morocco. All three belong to the true Berbers, and speak near dialects of the same tongue.

The Troglodytes are of the same blood. They also are Berbers, of the stem of the Matmâta, living in the mountainous region between the Gulf of Gabes and the great salt lagoon, the Schott El Djerid. There they construct their strange, boat-shaped, cave-dwellings, just as they did in the days of Sallust and Herodotus and long before.

It is interesting to note that Fitzner (who adds a good ethnographic map of the regency of Tunis) recognizes the probable ethnic identity of the Berbers, Iberians and Etruscans,—a relationship which I believe I was the first to maintain.

A Native Maya Historian.

One of the most interesting documents relating to the history of America in the sixteenth century is a narrative of the Spanish conquest of Yucatan, written in his native language by a chieftain of one of the subjugated Maya tribes. The original text was published complete for the first time in Vol. I. of the "Library of Aboriginal American Literature" (Philadelphia, 1881), with an English translation. It merited, however, a much more complete analysis than was there given it, and this it has lately received from the competent hand of the eminent linguist, the Count H. de Charencey. Under the title, "*Chrestomathie Maya d'après la Chronique de Chac-Xulub-Chen*," he gives us an octavo volume of 301 pages containing the original Maya text with an interlinear translation in Latin, an exhaustive grammatical analysis, and a complete Maya-French vocabulary.

M. de Charencey very justly remarks that there is scarcely any other American language which presents so much interest as the Maya, in view of the high civilization of the people who spoke it, as well as its own linguistic traits. His excellent "*Chrestomathie*," therefore, should be obtained by all our leading libraries. It is published in Paris, Librairie C. Klincksieck, 11 Rue de Lille.

Dr. Topinard's Latest Work.

All who know anything about the literature of anthropology are acquainted with the works of Dr. Paul Topinard, and will acknowledge that there are none better on physical anthropology. The latest from his pen is "*L'Homme dans la Nature*" (Paris, 1891), a title which cannot be considered a very fortunate one, as it is difficult to imagine where else man could be than in nature. But let that pass. The interest of the volume lies in the more pronounced position which the author takes on the theory of human evolution, or, as the French prefer to call it, transformation. This theory is undoubtedly less popular in France than it was