

seem to be aware, why these twenty-one vocabularies were collected by a priest in 1788; but I have no hesitation in attributing them to the desire to comply with the wishes of the empress of the Russias, and am sure it could be readily shown.

Their publication is praiseworthy, and carefully made; but it does not offer any new material on Central-American dialects in the sense of new stocks. Two of the Maya dialects, the so-called Populucan and Subinhan, are slightly different from those already known; and the language termed "Lean y Mulia" is the same as what we know from other sources under the more appropriate name Xicahque. The vocabularies include the Chapaneque of Chiapas and several Costa Rican dialects, though the majority are branches of the Maya family.

#### An Anatomical Criterion to Distinguish Male from Female Skulls.

It has long been most earnestly desired to discover some anatomical feature which would enable us to distinguish the skulls of the sexes. Two years ago Virchow declared that all alleged modes of differentiation so far discovered were worthless. Very lately Dr. Thiem-Cottbus, in the "Archiv für Klinische Chirurgie," Band 37, describes what seems a satisfactory craniological criterion of sex.

The os tympanicum forms part of the posterior wall of the glenoid cavity of the inferior maxillary, and also closes in front and below the bony meatus of the ear. It arises perpendicularly from the petrous portion of the temporal bone posteriorly, and turns backward, in the woman at about half the height of the mastoid process, but in man at a less height. In the male, the bone develops a sharp edge, which divides to form the sheath of the styloid process; but in woman this sharpened edge does not exist, the bone is rounded into a tubercular form, and the fossa is shallower and flatter.

Thus, in the male this fossa-tympanico-stylo-mastoidea is small, and the posterior wall of the glenoid cavity extends so deep that it is not possible for the condyloid process to slip over it. In the female, it is so much more spacious that this feature alone will serve to distinguish the crania of one sex from the other; and it also explains the surgical fact that luxation backward of the inferior maxillary is observed only in women.

#### An Etruscan Ritual Book.

Before Rome was founded, the powerful federation of the Etruscans had spread an advanced civilization over central Italy, capping her hill-tops with fortifications, whose impregnable walls still bid defiance to time. But by the beginning of our era, the Etruscan people, and language and religion, had disappeared, leaving no testimony but their tombs. From these some five thousand inscriptions have been copied, but they tell us little. Not a single word of the language has been identified beyond peradventure.

The Etruscan religion profoundly modified that of Rome. They were a literary people, and in very early times wrote numerous religious books. These are referred to by Livy as works of divination, *fatales libri*, and by Cicero as books of ritual, *Etruscorum rituales libri*, or as Etruscan documents, *chartæ Etruscae*; and even in the latter's day, they were in use by the Roman priesthood.

It seems an incredible piece of good fortune that one such Etruscan Ritual Book should turn up in fair preservation in the year 1891; but such seems to be the case. Two or three centuries, B.C., a mummifier of Alexandria bought a lot of waste paper and old rags for use in his business, and employed some of it in wrapping the corpse of a young lady. About 1849 her mummy was brought to Austria, and last year in her wrappings this Etruscan book was identified by Professor Krall. The Vienna Academy of Sciences has undertaken its publication, and on its appearance I shall return again to its curious history and character.

#### Ethnography of the Finns.

One of the most interesting questions in the ethnic history of the north of Europe is that concerned with the origin and migra-

tion of the Finns. They are ancient settlers, as they were known to the Romans of the time of Tacitus as dwellers on the Baltic Sea. In language they are first cousins of the Magyars of Hungary and also of the Samoyeds of Siberia. Indeed, some maintain that their name "Suomi" is from the same radical as "Samoyed."

Those resident in Finland proper rarely show any marked Mongolian appearance, as I can say from personal observation; but their strain is deeply Aryanized. A much less familiar branch of them are the Sirieni or Syränen, who dwell in north-eastern Russia, on both slopes of the Ural Mountains, extending east to the valley of the river Ob, on which the town of Muji is one of their principal resorts, in latitude 65° north.

This group has been carefully studied by M. Stephen Sommier, whose volume, "Sirieni, Ostiacchi e Samoiedi dell'Ob," appeared a few years ago in Florence. From numerous anthropometrical measurements he carried out, he satisfactorily showed that the Sirieni are Germanized Finns, quite like their relatives on the Baltic, and differing widely from the Ostiaks and Voguls to the east. It is probable, indeed, that the Sirieni, who are much given to trading and wandering, are an offshoot of the western branch of the stock, rather than the eastern.

#### NOTES AND NEWS.

THE sixth annual convention of the Association of American Agricultural Colleges and Experiment Stations will meet in New Orleans, La., on Nov. 15, as announced by the chairman of the executive committee. Titles of papers should be sent to C. F. Atkinson, Auburn, Ala., before Oct. 1. It is proposed to discuss the different subjects assigned to station workers for the Columbian exhibition.

— A timely book is "The Career of Columbus," by Charles Elton, M.P., announced by the Cassell Publishing Company.

— Professor D. S. Margoliouth of Oxford has undertaken to translate the great Arabic geographical dictionary.

— G. P. Putnam's Sons are about to publish a new edition of Professor F. W. Taussig's "Tariff History," enlarged by about 100 pages of new matter, including a discussion of the McKinley Bill.

— Francis P. Harper will publish shortly a new and important edition of Lewis and Clarke's "Expedition over the Rocky Mountains," on which Dr. Elliott Coues has been engaged for some time. He is specially fitted for the task, and the index to this faithful reprint of the Philadelphia edition of 1814 will be of great scientific value.

— Harper & Brothers will soon publish an interesting work by Walter Besant, entitled "London," which will not be a history of the city as a body politic, but the story of the life of the people at different periods from the earliest historical records to the times of the Georges, and will be fully illustrated.

— Edward Stern & Co., Philadelphia, will publish at once "In Arctic Seas," by Dr. R. N. Keely, in which the author, who accompanied in the capacity of surgeon the West Greenland Expedition last summer, gives an account of the incidents of the voyage of the "Kite," conveying Lieutenant Peary's party to McCormick's Bay.

— On Sept. 1, *The Open Court* (Chicago, Ill.) began the publication of a series of articles by Mr. Charles S. Peirce, to be entitled "The Critic of Arguments." (The word *critic* here means an art, like *logic*.) This series will be devoted to a critical and historical discussion of the methods of reasoning. Mr. Charles S. Peirce is one of the most distinguished scholars and mathematicians of which America boasts. But especially in the department of modern logic has his work contributed, perhaps more than that of any other living investigator, to the permanent advancement of science. The results of his thought are, however, for the most part locked up in the proceedings and reports of learned societies, and now for the first time, in *The Open Court*, are they to be presented in a less rigid and technical form, and made accessible to all who place a value on right thinking.