

of a middle or lower Cretaceous connection with Greenland, an hypothesis fully in harmony with the views of a connecting offshore Tertiary terrane, advanced by certain Neocene palæontologists.

There remain still many problems in the stratigraphy and chronology of Gay Head. Next year will doubtless offer opportunities for fresh conclusions, at least on subordinate points, to my friend or any other geologist. There may even be good reasons for the sincere entertainment of almost fundamentally different opinions on the part of an equally skilful observer.

Among other problems, not merely local, is the circumstance that, notwithstanding the incompatibility and irrationality of the idea in view of present continental geography and topography, no other inherent evidence has, I believe, been found as to the deposition of the clays and sands of this series except such as tends to support the view of Professor Uhler that these middle or lower Cretaceous terranes are essentially fresh water formations.

DAVID WHITE.

Washington, D. C., Nov. 16.

On the Vernacular Name of the Genus *Harporhynchus*.

THAT well-known genus of American birds, of which *Harporhynchus rufus* is the type, is almost universally called in English, by every ornithologist, or indeed by every one who knows the species in the United States, a *Thrasher*. In New England, and to the southward and westward, it is known as the Brown Thrasher. We find it printed Thrasher in the A. O. U. Check-List, without any synonymic term or terms, as is also the case in such an authoritative work as Coues's "Key to North American Birds." Now it is of interest to know that our British ornithological friends call these birds Threshers, spelled with an *e* in the first syllable, instead of an *a*. Recently Professor Alfred Newton submitted me the proof of a contribution of mine to his extensive work on Ornithology, now passing through the press, wherein this word occurred,—spelled Thrasher in my text, but Thresher in a supplementary note of his own. Upon his attention being called to it, I received from him the following in his reply: "I have not the least wish to interfere with your use of Thrashers,—there is some authority for it among English writers,—but I believe Thresher to be more correct (A. S., perscan or pirsan; Mid. Engl., preschen; Chaucer, threschen; Scal., preskja; Old Dutch, derschen; Germ., dreschen; Gothic, thrishen) and prefer that form for my own use—though, of course, giving it the sound of short *ä*, as in many other words, e.g., Derby. Thrash would seem to indicate a pronunciation like Thrāsh (almost thrarsh)—which is local and vulgar. A. N." This communication is dated Magdalene College, Cambridge, England, Nov. 12, 1892. According to this it would seem that our old, time-honored name of Thrasher, strictly speaking, should give way to the more correct appellation of Thresher.

R. W. SHUFELDT.

Takoma, D. C., Nov. 29.

Meteoritic Shower.

THE meteoric shower here on the evening of Nov. 23 was very fine. The average of several observations, from 7 to 10 P. M., gave 250 good-sized meteors per minute, with a great many very small ones resembling a fiery dust. The meteors appeared to radiate from a point nearly overhead at 9 P. M.

C. W. KEMPTON.

Austerlitz Mine, Oro Blanco, Pima County, Ariz., Nov. 26.

Remains of the Mastodon Recently Found in Tennessee.

NEAR Niebert's Springs, seven miles south-east of Knoxville, some workmen recently unearthed four molar teeth of the mastodon, which were in a fair state of preservation. They were found beneath about thirty inches of yellow tenaceous clay, containing water-worn stones. The largest tooth measured sixteen inches in circumference, and bears on its grinding surface one small and four large ridges, which are covered to the depth of one fourth of an inch with perfectly preserved enamel. The smallest tooth measures twelve inches in circumference, and has only three transverse ridges, whose surfaces are so worn as to expose the

dentine in a number of places. The roots are so decayed and broken that it is impossible to determine their original length or number.

The University of Tennessee has in its possession other remains recently found in Hawkins County of this State. These consist of part of a tusk, measuring twenty-two inches in circumference by twelve inches in length, and a molar tooth with only two ridges. The tooth is well preserved; but the tusk is much decayed.

S. W. MCCALLIE.

University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tenn.

The Humming-Bird's Food.

THE notes that have recently appeared in *Science* regarding the humming-bird's food, would seem to show that the bird's taste varies with the locality. In southern New York their favorite flower is the swamp-thistle (*Cirsium muticum*). No better place could be selected for studying the feeding-habits of the ruby-throats than a spot where these flowers abound. Dr. Gibbs thinks the individual flowers of the red clover too small for the ruby-throat's attention, but in the thistles the flowers are even smaller. Since it has been said that the bee gets pollen but not honey from the thistle, it would appear that the birds visit these flowers for insects. There is scarcely a flower that contains so many minute insects as a thistle-head. Examine one with a lens and it will be found to contain many insects that can hardly be seen with the unaided eye. If the ruby-throat eats insects at all, these are the ones it would take; and because the larger ones remained the observer might conclude that none were eaten.

WILLARD N. CLUTE.

Birghampton, New York, Nov. 21.

AMONG THE PUBLISHERS.

"GENERAL TAYLOR," a biography by Major-General O. O. Howard, U. S. A., will follow Mahan's "Farragut" in the Great Commander Series published by D. Appleton & Co. General Howard has visited the scenes of Taylor's campaigns in Mexico, and his book will be found to be an authority for those who are interested in the military history of our country. This biography contains a portrait and several maps.

—Macmillan & Co. announce the publication of a new work on the heavens and their origin, under the title of "The Visible Universe," by J. Ellard Gore, F.R.A.S., the author of "Star Groups," etc. The book is a discussion of the theories which have been advanced from time to time as to the construction of the heavens, celestial chemistry, stellar distances and motions, etc., and is illustrated by stellar photographs and lithographic plates.

—The January *St. Nicholas* will contain the opening paper in a series that magazine is to print on leading American cities, illustrated. In this article Colonel T. W. Higginson describes Boston in a way to interest boys and girls in the literary history of that city. For future numbers of *St. Nicholas*, Dr. Lyman Abbott will write of Brooklyn, Edmund Clarence Stedman will describe New York, and other famous residents of the different cities will describe them.

—"Electric Light Cables and the Distribution of Electricity," by Stuart A. Russell, is the latest volume in the Specialists' Series (London, Whittaker & Co.; New York, Macmillan). The recent extension of electric lighting from large central stations has brought to the front many problems connected with the economical distribution of electricity over large areas; and to the discussion and elucidation of these problems this volume is devoted. In its 319 pages the author presents a clear, reasonably comprehensive, and fully illustrated description of the various systems of distribution and types of conductor now in use, and suggests the directions in which future improvements will be made. Price, \$2.25.

—The Appalachian Mountain Club has just published a second work, with the title, "The Land of the Cliff-Dwellers," from the pen of Mr. Frederick H. Chapin. The region to which the reader

is introduced is south-western Colorado, and, in particular, the curious cañons of the Mesa Verde, which have been only recently explored and found unusually rich in abandoned homes of the cliff-dwellers; one is also made acquainted with the beautiful mountain scenery of the San Juan country, through which the cañon district of the Rio Mancos is approached from the north. The introductory chapters present in brief the history of the settlement of the south-west from the earliest Spanish explorations to the recent Anglo-American occupation. Then follows the personal narrative of the author's visits to the region, with a detailed account of his researches. Mountain-climbers will find the story of the ascents of Mount Snaefell and Uncompahgre Peak of special interest. The work is profusely illustrated. The 180 pages of text are interspersed with some 60 full-page illustrations, heliotypes, and "half-tones." "The Land of the Cliff-Dwellers" can be procured of the sales-agents of the Club, Messrs. W. B. Clarke & Co., 340 Washington Street, Boston.

— "American Mental Arithmetic" is the title of one of the American Book Company's latest school-books, by A. M. Bailey, professor of Mathematics in the Kansas State Normal School at Emporia, Kan. The designation "American" is doubtless given to the volume from purely patriotic motives, as there is no apparent reason why it would not be a good book to use in any school where the English language prevails. Price, 35 cents.

— Charles L. Webster & Co. announce that they have arranged with Henry George for the publication of his new work, "A Perplexed Philosopher," being an examination of Mr. Herbert Spencer's various utterances on the land question, with incidental reference to his synthetic philosophy. They have also arranged with Mr. George for the control of his former books and will issue them in a uniform edition. In "A Perplexed Philosopher" the main argument is an examination of Mr. Spencer's position on the land question. In 1850 Mr. Spencer issued his first book, "Social Statics," in which he denied the justice of the present treatment

of land. Later he seemed anxious to minimize and explain away these utterances, and finally he formally withdrew them. In his last book, "Justice," the recants and opposes them. Mr. George brings together and analyzes these various utterances. He also directly attacks the Spencerian idea of evolution, — that is to say, the idea of evolution that eliminates the spiritual element and assumes that the hypothesis of an intelligent Creator is unnecessary. Mr. George argues in favor of the spiritual element in evolution, and the necessity of an intelligent Creator.

— "Induction Coils" is the title of a practical manual for amateur electricians, written by G. E. Bonney (author of "The Electro-Platers' Handbook") and published by Macmillan & Co. The volume is a 12mo of 228 pages, with upwards of a hundred illustrations, and gives a general insight into the construction of ordinary spark coils, medical coils, and batteries for working them. The various chapters treat respectively of inductive theories and experiments, the construction of intensity coils, accessories to coils, special forms of induction coils, some famous coils, batteries, repairs, and useful notes on coils. To these are added a table of copper-wire properties and a list of conductors and insulators. Price, \$1.

— Charles Scribner's Sons announce "Etruscan-Roman Remains in Popular Tradition," by Charles Godfrey Leland. It is only within a few years that Mr. Leland discovered what is now for the first time published in this book, that there exists among the peasantry of secluded mountain districts in Italy, as well as among the numerous fortune-tellers or "witches" of the cities, a vast amount of ancient Etruscan or Roman traditions of extremely varied and interesting character. That no scholars had ever surmised the existence of this lore is due to the fact that it is now in a great measure kept secret, as being strictly forbidden by the priests, and connected with fortune-telling, which is punished by the law. It consists of a worship or invocation of the ancient deities, in which the names and attributes of nearly all

CALENDAR OF SOCIETIES.

Anthropological Society, Washington.

Nov. 29.—Arthur MacDonald, Genius and Insanity as forms of Abnormality; W. H. Holmes, Ancient Quarrymen of South Mountain; H. C. Mercer, Ancient Jasper Quarries in Pennsylvania.

Dec. 6.—Robert Fletcher, The Poet — is He Born, Not Made? James Mooney, Report of Special Committee on Aboriginal Geographic Names in the Potomac Region; followed by Continuation of Symposium upon same subject, by B. A. Colonna, John W. Douglass, O. T. Mason, and others.

Biological Society, Washington.

Dec. 3.—B. W. Evermann, The Cruise of the U. S. Fish Commission Steamer Albatross in Alaskan Waters in 1892; Geo. Vasey, Some New Grasses; J. N. Rose, On the Rediscovery of Certain Rare Plants; C. Hart Merriam, Exhibition of a Complete Series of the Large American Ground Squirrels of the Subgenus *Otospermophilus*; B. E. Fernow, The Mathematics of Forest Growth.

Society of Natural History, Boston.

Dec. 7.—Leon S. Griswold, Some Indian Quarries in Arkansas; Roland Thaxter, Notes on a New Order of Schizomycetes (Bacteria).

Appalachian Mountain Club, Boston.

Dec. 6.—A paper describing a trip through the White Mountains, and illustrated with

the lantern, was presented by a member of the club.

Dec. 14.—G. Frederick Wright, The Discovery and Significance of the Glacial Outlet from Lake Huron to the Ottawa River.

Society for the Advancement of Science, Las Cruces, N.M.

Dec. 1.—C. H. Tyler Townsend, Notes on the Occurrence of the Puma (*Felis concolor* L.) in Southern New Mexico; Hiram Hadley, Alkali Soils; E. O. Wooton, Notes on the Ferns of the Organs.

Publications Received at Editor's Office.

CHILDHOOD: A Monthly Magazine of all that Concerns the Welfare of the Child. Vol. I., No. I. New York. 40 p. 4°. \$1 per year.

EDWARDS, W. S. Coals and Cokes in West Virginia. Cincinnati, Robert Clarke & Co. 162 p. 8°.

HART, A. B. Formation of the Union. Epochs of American History Series. New York and London, Longmans. 278 p., maps. 12°. \$1.25.

HERTWIG, OSCAR. Text-book of the Embryology of Man and Mammals. Tr. from third German edition by E. L. Mark. New York, Macmillan. 670 p. 8°. \$5.25.

JUKES-BROWNE, A. J. The Student's Handbook of Physical Geology. 2d ed. New York, Macmillan. 666 p. 12°. \$2.25.

STERNBERG, GEO. M. Manual of Bacteriology. New York, Wood. 886 p. 8°.

THE INQUIRITOR: A Monthly Journal of Science in Plain Language. Vol. I., No. I. Chicago. 20 p. 4°. \$1 per year.

WILLIAMS, GEO. H. Geological Map of Baltimore and Vicinity. Baltimore, Johns Hopkins Press. 1°.

Reading Matter Notices.

Ripans Tabules cure hives.

Ripans Tabules cure dyspepsia.

FOSSIL RESINS.

This book is the result of an attempt to collect the scattered notices of fossil resins, exclusive of those on amber. The work is of interest also on account of descriptions given of the insects found embedded in these long-preserved exudations from early vegetation.

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—The second edition of "The Horticulturist's Rule-Book," by L. H. Bailey, has just been issued by the Rural Publishing Company (Times Building, New York). It has been thoroughly revised, and brought down to the beginning of the year 1892. The volume is a useful and convenient compendium of information for fruit-growers, "truck" gardeners, florists, and others interested in horticulture. The opening chapters are devoted to insecticides, injurious insects, fungicides, plant diseases, and animal pests. These are followed by chapters on weeds and moss, grafting, seed-tables, planting-tables, maturities, yields, and multiplication, etc.

—From Frederick Warne & Co., London and New York, we have received "Electricity up to Date, for Light, Power, and Traction," by John B. Verity, M. Inst., E.E. It is a small volume of 178 pages, bound in vellum, and contains a folding map showing the areas allotted to various electric-supply companies

in London. The book is intended for the general public, not for the electrician, and consequently Mr. Verity has treated the subject in as popular a manner as its nature will admit. (Price 75 cents.)

— "A Review of the Systems of Ethics founded on the Theories of Evolution," by C. M. Williams, soon to be issued by Macmillan & Co., is one of the more important books of the year. The work is a substantial volume of over 500 pages, divided into two parts of nearly equal length, of which the first is historical, giving in detail the position of each of the prominent writers on Evolutional Ethics; while the second or constructive portion presents the combined results of such independent investigations in chapters dealing with the concepts of evolution; intelligence and "end;" thought, feeling, and will; egoism and altruism; conscience and the moral progress of the race; the ideal and the way of its attainment.

—The progress which has characterized American mining and metallurgy during the past quarter of a century and which has made them standards and models for the whole world has been due, in no small degree, to the *Engineering and Mining Journal*. This paper has not only made those engaged in these industries familiar with the best practice in every part of the world, but it has itself created a practical technical literature of inestimable value to those engaged in mining, metallurgy, and general engineering. The collection and publication in the *Engineering and Mining Journal* of reliable statistics of the mineral industry of the United States, within a few days of the close of each year, is an achievement which has elicited the admiration of statisticians and business men in every part of the world. This work has become so important that this year its publication will require a large separate volume, which will be issued in January, 1893. The constant improvement and greatly increased cost of the *Engineering and Mining Journal* necessitate and justify the increase of its subscription to \$5.

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For exchange.—Fine specimens of Wis. fresh-water pearls. I want books or papers on marine and fresh-water algae; also classified specimens of same. I will exchange for Smithsonian reports or crystallized minerals. D. M. ANDREWS, Dodge Centre, Minn.

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The American Geologist for 1893.

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