

particulars of a curious Zuni dramatic ceremonial; and Dr. Cyrus Alder reviewing museum collections made to illustrate religious history and ceremonies.

Thursday morning was assigned to folk-lore, and papers were presented by Mr. W. W. Newell on ritual regarded as a dramatization of myth; by Dr. Franz Boas on the ritual of the Kwakiutl Indians; by Mr. J. Walter Fewkes on Tusayan ceremonial dramatization; and by Mr. George Kunz on the folk-lore of precious stones. The afternoon was devoted to the collections of American archaeology in the anthropological building under the care of Professor F. W. Putnam, Chief of the Department, who delivered the opening address on the subject. He was followed by Mr. Frank Cushing on the "cliff-dwellers"; by Mrs. Zelia Nuttall on Mexican archaeology; by Mr. G. A. Dorsey on South American archaeology; and by Mr. E. Volk on cache-finds from ancient village sites in New Jersey.

"Religions" was the subject taken up on Friday morning. Dr. Morris Jastrow, Jr., began with an explanation of the method and scope of their historical study; Mrs. Sarah Y. Stevenson gave an interesting sketch of an ancient Egyptian rite illustrating a phase of primitive thought; Mrs. Matilda C. Stevenson contributed a chapter in Zuni mythology obtained by personal study on the spot; and Mr. F. Parry read a theory relating to certain elements of religious symbolism. The afternoon was given to discussion of various points in North American ethnology by Professor O. T. Mason and to the ethnology of Paraguay by Dr. Emil Hassler.

The last day, Saturday, was set apart for "Linguistics," and for reading papers which had been crowded out on previous days. Dr. Daniel G. Brinton gave a brief review of the present status of our knowledge of American languages with especial reference to the parts of the continent in which it is deficient. These he especially found in Mexico and central South America. Dr. Boas stated his classification of the languages of the north Pacific coast; Dr. C. Abel illustrated his theory of the affinities of the Egyptian and European languages; Mr. Richardson read on the Cameroons of South Africa; Mr. Wildman on the ethnology of the Malay peninsula; and Dr. Jahn on the ethnological collection in the German village at the Fair. The session and the week closed with a social dinner in the Midway Plaisance given by the American to the foreign delegates, presided over by Professor F. W. Putnam and Dr. D. G. Brinton, which closed the scientific proceedings in the most agreeable manner.

All of the papers mentioned above were read before the congress and discussed as far as time permitted. Besides these, a number were read by title from writers who could not be present. Among them were Mr. Horatio Hale, A. L. Lewis, Dr. A. F. Chamberlain, Dr. F. S. Krauss, M. Raoul de la Grasserie, Dr. F. Jacobsen, Senor C. De la Torre, and others.

The number of foreign delegates embraced a fair proportion of those present, and in this respect the Congress merited its title as an "international" one. Among them may be mentioned Dr. Carl Peters, the Imperial German Commissioner for East Africa, Senor Manuel M. de Peralta, Minister from Costa Rica, Dr. Carl Abel, the well-known Egyptologist, Mr. C. Staniland Wake, of London, Dr. Ernst, of Venezuela, etc.

It was decided to print at an early date the transactions of the Congress by subscription. They will form a volume of 500 pages, price \$5.00, subscriptions for which may be sent to Dr. Franz Boas, Secretary, Department of Ethnology, Columbian Exposition, Chicago.

FREDERICK WARNE & Co. will issue immediately a "Dictionary of Quotations from Ancient and Modern English and French Sources."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

* * * Correspondents are requested to be as brief as possible. The writer's name is in all cases required as a proof of good faith.

On request in advance, one hundred copies of the number containing his communication will be furnished free to any correspondent.

The editor will be glad to publish any queries consonant with the character of the journal.

INSECT SWARMS.

On the evening of June 26th, last, the fire department was called to two of the highest buildings in this city, the alarms being caused by an appearance as of smoke issuing from the pinnacles of the towers. In both cases the appearance was found to be caused by clouds of insects. On the following evening I witnessed the same interesting phenomenon about the court-house tower. I knew that I was looking at a swarm of insects, yet it was difficult to realize that it was not smoke, issuing from the summit, and driven by a brisk breeze. Near the tower the swarm was narrow and dense, gradually widening and thinning to a distance of about fifty feet, where it seemed to vanish by attenuation. The extent of the swarm varied but little during my observation, but the constant changes within it exactly simulated puffs of smoke driven away by the breeze. The deception was still more complete from the fact that the insects swarmed on the leeward side. On other dates up to July 18th I saw the same display, in each instance agreeing in every detail with the above description. The insects appeared to gather just before sunset and probably remained till attracted by the lights of the city.

On a store front near-by I captured some insects which I have good reason to believe were identical with the swarmers. These are Neuropters, about one-half of an inch in length, exclusive of the antennæ, genus and species unknown.

C. D. McLOUTH.

Muskegon, Mich., Sept. 2.

PROSOPOPHORA; A GENUS OF SCALE-INSECTS NEW TO THE NORTH AMERICAN FAUNA.

SOME time ago, I found at Las Cruces, N. Mex., a chenopodiaceous plant suffering severely from the attacks of scale insects (Coccidæ). On examination, it turned out that there were three species of these insects present, all new to the fauna of the United States. One is a form of *Mytilaspis albus*, Ckll., known hitherto only from Jamaica; the second is *Ceroplastes irregularis*, Ckll., the description of which, from Mexican specimens, is about to be published; and the third, to my surprise, proves to be a new species of Mr. Douglas's genus *Prosopophora*.

The genus *Prosopophora* was established in 1892 (Ent. Mo. Mag., August) for a species found on orchids in Demerara, which superficially resembled a *Lecanium*, but was distinguished by a number of peculiar characters. This year (Trans. N. Z. Inst.) Mr. Maskell has described two more species of the genus, found in Australia on *Acacia* and *Eucalyptus* respectively. Now we have a fourth from the United States,—so that within a little more than a year four species have been discovered of a remarkable genus, which had been altogether overlooked until 1892!

Mr. Maskell has kindly sent me both his Australian species, and I have the Demerara one from Mr. Newstead. Our insect is most like *P. acacie*, Mask., in appearance and color, but it is amply distinct in its structural characters. I propose to call it *P. rufescens*, and the following short description includes its more important characters: *Prosopophora rufescens*, n. sp. Scale waxy, about 4 1/2 mm. long, shape and outline of *Lecanium hesperidum*, with a slight but distinct median keel, and a subdorsal row of raised points on each side. Posterior end with a small oval orifice, as in *P. acacie*. Surface obscurely granular

hardly shining; color pale red-brown, varying to whitish. Female with very numerous waxy filaments projecting from the surface; gland-orifices minute, circular. Antennæ 8-jointed, the last joint very short, and bearing a few straight hairs, as in *P. dendrobii*. Third joint variable, sometimes rather longer than the second, sometimes decidedly shorter. Legs absent. Anal ring apparently without hairs, but with a strong chitinous projection on each side. Mouth-parts well developed.

On boiling the insects in soda, the scale was entirely dissolved, and the insects became colorless and transparent.

T. D. A. COCKERELL.

Agricultural Experiment Station, Las Cruces, New Mexico, Aug. 29, 1893.

A SMALL TRAGEDY.

In contrast to the "snake story," given in *Science* (Jan. 20, '93), the following incident may be of interest:

Several months ago a small spotted snake was captured and placed in the "snake box;" it is thought to be a common "milk snake," and is, perhaps, twelve or fourteen inches in length. It was somewhat injured when captured; the boys say its back was broken. It is quite evident that it was hurt, from the depression or deformity at one point, and, from this portion to the extremity of the body, it had great difficulty in shedding its skin. For days and days it was, as it were, half dressed, or undressed, as we may choose to consider this condition.

A few days ago another snake was placed in the same box—what kind it was I am unable to say—but it was a small (not more than eight or ten inches in length), agile, quite slender little thing, of a plain slate or dove color.

What was our surprise when it was discovered that the spotted snake was in process of swallowing the smaller one. It was horrible, and yet we could not refrain from observing it. In a very short time the little snake entirely disappeared, even to the tip of the tiny tail, and the spotted snake appeared to have enjoyed the meal. The boys claim that it has eaten several small toads; it is now in company with a snake considerably larger than itself. They seem disposed to be "friendly," thus far, and no doubt enjoy each other's society.

Mrs. W. A. KELLERMAN.

Columbus Ohio.

THE CACKLE OF HENS.

It is claimed that the cackling of hens "is very liable to attract the attention of any ovivorous bird or beast to the probable presence of an egg."

It is quite probable that ovivorous birds or beasts may understand that the hen's cackle is the announcement of the presence of an egg, but the hen is wise even in her apparent imprudence. She lets it be known that an egg is somewhere, but she does not tell where. How many, many times she sends the farmer's wife or children on a hunt for eggs they fail to find. Of course, when hens are well cared for, and ample and sufficient nests are provided, they lose their cautiousness, but when they are left to take care of themselves they will "steal" their nests, as the people say; that is, they will go off in the weeds, or seek some sheltered spot, and there make a nest. When an egg is laid, in a "stolen," nest, the hen makes a quick run, quite a distance from her nest, before she makes a sound, so that her cackle would not discover her eggs to any enemy, for one gropes, as in the dark, in search of stolen nests, no matter how loud may be the cackle.

Mrs. W. A. K.

Columbus, Ohio.

THROWING STICKS.

I HAVE just made a discovery that has given me great pleasure. In the Anthropological Building at the World's Columbian Exposition is a Cliff Dweller's Exhibit, exposed by the State of Colorado. Other loan exhibits are in the building from that region, and outside is an attractive realistic representation of the industrial products of the same people. In looking carefully through the Colorado State alcove I discovered two examples of the Mexican atlatl or throwing stick. The shaft is a segment of a sapling of hazel wood. At the distal end is a shallow gutter and a hook to receive the end of a spear shaft. At the proximal end or grip, in the more perfect specimen, about four inches from the extremity is a loop on either side of the stick, one for the thumb, the other for the fore-finger. The remaining three fingers would be free to manipulate the spear shaft. These loops were made by splitting a bit of raw hide, sliding it down the proper distance on the

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