CURRENT NOTES ON ANTHROPOLOGY.—XXXVII.

(*Edited by D. G. Brinton, M. D., LL.D., D.Sc.*)

Art in Anthropology.

The student of anthropology must be delighted to see how it is enriching learning in all directions by supplying the material from which can be derived the laws for the development and acquisition of knowledge—that which the Germans call *Erkenntnisslehre.*

In few directions has there been greater need of this than in the domain of art. We have had abundance of histories of art, and some efforts toward systems of the philosophy of art; but a science of art, something which would show us the laws which prevail in, and govern, the apparently so irresponsible and capricious development of art,—this has been wanting.

An admirable effort to supply this deficiency has recently been published in Leipzig under the title, "The Beginnings of Art" (*Die Anfänge der Kunst*), by Dr. Ernst Grosse. It is a manageable volume of 300 pages, in an attractive style, enriched by a sufficient number of illustrations. The author understands art in its broad sense, including music, poetry, painting, sculpture, ornamental design, dancing and cosmetics. In all these directions he examines the conditions and influence of primitive art, and its social and individual significance The conclusion which he reaches is one most significant and pregnant with suggestion, to wit, that certain definite and absolute relations exist between given forms of general culture and the growth of the arts which accompany them; though the hidden psychical forces which underlie the laws of these relations may and generally do remain obscure or unseen, the fact of the relation cannot be denied.

The volume is worth a careful study.

The Ancient Kingdom of the Himyarites.

In the early Greek and Roman geographers southern Arabia is referred to as "Arabia Felix" and described as "a fortunate land, odorous with spices, and abounding in gold and ivory and all manner of precious stones." When its majestic Queen visited King Solomon "no such spices as the Queen of Sheba brought had been known in Jerusalem."

How does it happen that that land is now, and for a thousand years has been, a barren waste? That its ancient palaces are choked with sand? Its gardens and spice groves given way to the arid desert? Some fatal change in climatic conditions, a destructive increase in exsiccation, may be the cause. Only in the last few years, owing to the researches of Glaser, and later of J. T. Bent, are we in some measure able to restore the faint outlines of that wondrous kingdom, which for nearly a thousand years was the medium through which the gold of south Africa, the frankincense of Abyssinia, the diamonds and spices of India, passed to the wealthy nobles of Egypt, the dealers of Tyre and Sidon, and the peoples of the Mediterranean.

The great Zimbabwe ruins in Mashona land, the venerable temples near Aksum in Abyssinia show by their plans, and the latter by inscriptions as early as 800 B. C., that they were colonies of the Himyarites.

What a mighty influence this trade exerted on the ethnography of east Africa and India and all the intermediate regions, we can readily imagine. It is enough to explain the strange discovery of M. Dieulafoy, at Susiana, that that ancient realm had a large population of African negroes. We need no other theory for their presence than this trade of the early Arab merchants, who brought then, as they do to-day, their dhows loaded with human freight from the teeming shores of the dark continent, to dispose of them among the whites of the Asiatic main.

Human Relics in the San Isidro Gravels.

In the Museum of the University of Pennsylvania is a chipped stone implement which about a year ago was found in place, and extracted with the most scientific precautions, by Mr. H. C. Mercer, one of the curators of the Museum, from the gravel bed of the River Manzanares, at San Isidro, near Madrid, Spain. It is peculiarly valuable because these gravels are held to belong to the Palæolithic or oldest stone age. It was exhibited and described by Mr. Mercer before the American Association for the Advancement of Science at Madison, last August, and it is a well-marked type of a most ancient implement.

The same locality has been made the subject of an excellent paper by the Baron de Baye, in a late number of the Bulletins of the Anthropological Society of Paris. He refers quite fully to the literature of the subject, and imparts a considerable amount of new information from M. Siret, the Belgian engineer, well known for his admirable researches into the archæology of Spain. The objects belong to the "Chelleen" and "Mousterien" types of the French archæologists, which would put them back to the very beginning of human industry.

Unfortunately, the bones which have been taken from these gravels have not received careful examination, so from them we cannot define the age of the horizon. It is quite certain that these beds were not deposited by the Manzanares, but by a much larger stream running in a different direction. The physical geography of the district has undergone profound alterations since they were stratified. The station is one of the first in importance and merits a thorough investigation.

The Mocovi Language.

Students of American languages, especially of those of South America, will welcome with much satisfaction the appearance of the collection on the Mocovi, edited for the Museo de la Plata, by S. A. Lafone-Quevedo.

It is largely based on the MSS. of Father Tavolini, an Italian missionary, but is by no means confined to these. The editor begins with a learned essay on the comparative linguistics of the Chaco languages, and in his notes brings forward much other information from the writings, in part manuscript, of Barcena, Dobrizhoffer, Pelleschi, and others. From these varied sources the diligent student will find in the volume, which altogether makes up more than five hundred large quarto pages, abundant material from which to acquaint himself satisfactorily with this little-known tongue.

In this connection, it is pleasant to note that the attention to American languages is slowly on the increase. Among the "Conferences" published in 1893 by the Atheneum of Madrid, was one of 112 pages on American linguistics by Don Francisco de Fernandez y Gonzalez, which is marked by a creditable acquaintance with the literature of the subject; and in the Anales de la Universidad, of Santiago, Chili, there is a well-prepared article on "La Linguistica Americana, su Historia y su Estado Actual," by Diego Barros Arana and Rodolfo Lenz. Several works have also been announced in Germany and France, which show that the scholars in those countries are awakening to the large scientific interest which these languages have.

SECRET LANGUAGE OF CHILDREN.

BY OSCAR CHRISMAN, CLARK UNIVERSITY, WORCESTER, MASS.

Two parties having seen the article in *Science* of Dec. 1 have sent me the secret languages of their childhood.

William M. Gregg, M. D., No. 143 West Twenty-first street, New York, sends the following:

"Olafoscarlafar Crilafistelafamalafan:

"Halafavilafing olafobserlafirved alafan artafartilafecalafal ilafin *Silafialafance* olafon 'Selafecalafrete Lanafangalafage olafove Chilafreldelafrend,' ilafi ilafinclolafose thilafis notafote tulafu alafask ilafif oolafue halafave elafeverlafer selafene elefennelafeny lilafike ilafit."

The translation of the foregoing is:

"Oscar Chrisman:

"Having observed an article in *Science* on 'Secret Language of Children,' I inclose this note to ask if you have ever seen anything like it."

Dr. Gregg states that he has not used the language, except to himself, in over fifty years. He thinks it must have originated in his family, or in the neighborhood, at Elmira, N. Y., where he lived when a child. He and his younger brother became most proficient in the use of this language, although all the members of the family understood it, being used by them for ten or twelve years. The spelling of the words is quite arbitrary, the principal object being to disguise them as much as possible. Sometimes words were contracted, as in *yalafas*, for *yes*, *fas* was simply used, leaving off the *yala*. When the language is well spoken it sounds somewhat like Hebrew.

Miss Martha L. Sanford, No. 21 Oread Place, Worcester, Mass., furnishes the following:

"Concerning the 'secret language,' Hog Latin, or rather the particular form of the dialect I knew, perhaps some concrete examples may be best, for instance: *Cagry yougry uggry stagry Hogry Lagry?* meaning, Can you understand Hog Latin?

"*Igry wegry dowgry towgry thigry morgry.* I went down town this morning.

"*Itgry igry raigry horgry nowgry.* It is raining hard now.

"*Wegry shagry hagry agry greegry Chrigrymagry, Mrigry Praggry sagry.* We shall have a green Christmas, Mrs. Pratt says.

"In order to represent the sounds I ought really to use the diacritical marks, since in writing the language (which I think I never did before, since it was, so far as I know, always a *spoken* means of communication) the same combination of letters may represent more than one word; for instance, *wegry* may mean *went, we, well, wet,* and so on. Of course, the sentences we composed were usually simple, and if the hearer failed to comprehend a word, it could be made plainer by simply adding the syllable *gry* to the word, as, *wetgry, wentgry,* etc."

It is pleasantly surprising that these two parties should each have furnished me something in secret languages which I had not met with before in my study.

Dr. Gregg gives the following numbering connected with his "gibberish," as he calls it:

"1, unzol or unica; 2, zulzol or ureica; 3, ziczol or irick; 4, zan or an; 5, filize; 6, falize; 7, niczol-tan or nicholastan; 8, minzol; 9, tinzol; 10, hoppzolan or hip.

"The above are the numbers which were used in connection with the gibberish I have sent you. It may possibly be derived from some nursery rhyme, as you will observe that it has a sort of sing-song about it."

Miss Sanford sends this small scrap of a cipher alphabet. I do sincerely hope she may get the whole of it, as, if I recall correctly, otherwise than in her note I have not met the least intimation of any cipher being used, and, also, this so well shows the wonderful ingenuity of children:

"With two or three intimates I arranged a cipher alphabet, using such symbols as ∞, ꝑ, for letters, and I think I have, packed away in California, some scraps of our correspondence, but unfortunately they are at present unobtainable."

I wish to make a collection of the secret languages of children, so I have asked the editor of *Science* to be kind enough to insert the following:

1. Please look back into memory and see if you have traces left of secret languages.
2. How old were you when you used such? How long since?
3. In what city, town, or district were you living at the time you used these languages?
4. What did you call it?
5. Was it written, spoken or both?
6. Did you use special characters to write it? If so, give them.
7. Was the language pretty generally used or was it known to only a few?
8. Did the language originate with you or your schoolmates? If not, trace it as far as you can to its origin.
9. What is the special catch in the language; is it a syllable, a letter, an alphabet, or something else? Give it.
10. Write a sentence of not more than *twenty-five* words in your secret language, then immediately following give the words in the regular English.
11. If other points come into mind not touched upon by the queries above, give them.
12. If you can learn of a secret language being used now by children it will be of the very greatest interest and benefit to gather it up.
13. In writing down the secret language be careful to make your letters very plain, and go over it again and again to be sure that your words are spelled as you want them.
14. You may be aided in gathering and writing your language by reading my article "Secret Language of Children," in *Science* for Dec. 1, 1893.

If the readers of this will be kind enough to collect such material as they may find in memory or from notes or from children and send to me, I shall be truly thankful, as I wish to continue my studies on the secret language of children, and your aid will be of great service

WERNER'S REAL CONTRIBUTION TO GEOLOGY.

BY J. B. WOODWORTH, CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

PROF. G. H. WILLIAMS did a service to his generation by recalling to mind, at the Boston meeting of the Geological Society of America, the contributions to North American geology made by Johann David Schoepff. It would be a very useful thing for the student of philosophical geology to have at hand a thesaurus of first authors or originators, arranged somewhat after the plan of theories of mountain building compiled by the late Alexander Winchell in his "World Life." A work of this kind would place credit where it belonged, and would, if carried out on a comprehensive plan akin to Gilbert's "Classification of Geological Phenomena," present the state of geological theory in the different departments of the science. The case of Abraham Gottlob Werner illustrates the need of such a handbook.

Werner was born Sep. 25, 1750, and died June 30, 1817. He is justly celebrated for his influence upon geology, but the prominence which the erroneous theory he propounded gave him in the controversy between the Vulcanists and Neptunists has led, as Professor John Phillips has stated, to overlooking his real contribution to geology. "We must forget his theory," writes Phillips in his sketch of the progress of the science, "and view only the data which he collected for its foundation." Sir Charles Lyell, in the admirable résumé of the history of geology, which he gives in his "Principles," does not credit Werner with the development of the principles of studying rock structure, on which the success of the field geologist depends. Phi