CURRENT NOTES ON ANTHROPOLOGY.

RELATION OF THE BRAIN AND SPINAL CORD IN MAN.

Some interesting facts were developed by Prof. Ranke at the last meeting of the German Anthropological Society, in relation to the relative weights of the brain and spinal cord in man.

It is well known that man has not the heaviest brain of any animal; the whale and elephant have heavier. Nor has he the heaviest in proportion to his weight; some singing birds, various small apes, and the mole have proportionately heavier brains. What Ranke brings out is that the weight of the human brain is much greater in proportion to the weight of the spinal cord than in any other vertebrate; and this, therefore, constitutes an anatomical distinction of man, strongly contrasting him with all other animal forms.

The article of Prof. Ranke may be found in the 'Correspondenzblatt' of the Society.

THE MAN FROM GALLEY HILL.

So long ago as 1888 Mr. Robert Elliott exhumed some human remains from the 'diluvial' gravel at Galley Hill, Northfleet, Kent, England, in immediate contiguity to 'palæolithic' implements. The remains were first described by Prof. Newton before the Geological Society of London, last year. The skull is markedly dolichacephalic, its index being 64; the forehead is low and retreating, the supraorbital ridges prominent; the chin is also retreating; the individual's height, calculated from the femur, was about 1.60 meter. In some respects, the remains were noticeably similar to those found at Spy, Belgium.

It must be said, however, that little value can be attached to these relics. The gravel deposit where they were found is now destroyed; they may have been a later burial in the gravel; years have elapsed since their exhumation during which time the finder concealed the discovery. Mr. Elliott has no one but himself to blame if men of science decline to accept the accuracy of his observations at this date. Let it be a warning to others to be more careful and more liberal.

D. G. Brinton.

SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS.

A GIGANTIC ORTHOCERATITE FROM THE AMERICAN CARBONIFEROUS.

It is a well known fact that the straight-shelled cephalapod was an abundant form of life during Paleozoic times. This is attested by the large number of species that have been described, those of the Orthoceras group alone numbering upwards of twelve hundred. The culmination and greatest expansion of the group was in the Silurian, and from that period it appears to have gradually dwindled in number of species, size and abundance, until at the close of the Paleozoic the form was all but extinct. In the American Silurian some of the shells attained huge proportions; but with the general decline of the group the later ones have heretofore seemed to rapidly become dwarfed until only small unimportant individuals were recorded after the Devonian.

In the Carboniferous a few dimunitive species have been described, none of them being more than a few inches in length. In the Coal Measures of the Mississippi basin the remains found were of rather rare occurrence, imperfectly preserved and of very small size. Seldom did the shells exceed six inches in length, and half an inch in diameter.

Of late years, however, some unusually fine material has been obtained in the black shales of the Lower Coal Measures in the vicinity of Des Moines, Iowa. Several of these shells were so large as to excite considerable wonderment. They were over two feet long and one inch in diameter at the larger end. These were thought to be giants of their kind and day.

Recently there was found in one of the coal mines at Fansler, in Guthrie County, Iowa, about forty miles from Des Moines, an Orthoceras shell of gigantic proportions, by the side of which all the other Carboniferous species of