

CURRENT NOTES ON ANTHROPOLOGY.

THE PAPUANS AND MELANESIANS.

IN a short article in *Globus* (Bd. 72, No. 9) Professor F. Müller sets in sharp contrast from the linguistic side the Papuans and Melaneseans. The latter he considers to be Malayo-Polynesians, deeply tinged with Papuan blood, and speaking languages which are Malayan in grammar, but with a vocabulary containing a considerable residuum of Papuan roots. They have a decimal system, while the Papuans have only two numerals; the Melanesian dialects all have pronominal suffixes, which are wholly unknown in Papuan tongues; and other equally marked differences.

Like the negroes of Africa, the Papuans have a large number of widely distinct linguistic stocks; while it is well known that the Melanesians and Malayo-Polynesians are monoglottic. Physically the Melanesians are almost identical with the Papuans, but their tongues prove the deep influence of other blood. The purest examples of the Papuans are to be found in the interior of New Guinea, where they occupy a vast territory of which we know scarcely anything.

In this connection should be mentioned a paper on 'Observations on a Collection of Papuan Crania,' by Dr. George A. Dorsey, with notes on their decorative features by Professor Wm. H. Holmes, lately published by the Field Museum, Chicago. The measurements are most carefully done.

ETHNOGRAPHY AND HISTORIC SCIENCE IN AMERICA.

UNDER the above title Dr. F. Ratzel has an article in the *Deutsche Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft*, 1897, No. 3, appreciative of several recent works by American historical writers. He points out with force how the study of the aboriginal population of America has widened the range of historical views among us in the last quarter

of a century. "Prescott described ancient Mexico as a curiosity which might have belonged to another planet. To-day the pre-Columbian culture of America pours light on the historic consciousness of Americans. Far beyond colonial history stretches the indefinite expanse of aboriginal history. This close relationship of history and ethnography forces the problems of the histories of races and peoples on the attention of every historical student."

Just how that relationship is to be understood and brought into the writing of history is a question which is not yet fully answered, as is easily evident from Dr. Ratzel's paper and the appendix to it by Dr. K. Lamprecht, one of the editors of the *Zeitschrift*. Enough, however, that it is recognized by such high authorities as one which can no longer be neglected.

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BOTANICAL NOTES.

ENUMERATION OF THE PLANTS OF EUROPE.

SEVEN years ago (1890) Dr. K. Richter brought out the first volume of a work entitled 'Plantæ Europææ,' which was intended to enumerate all the flowering plants growing spontaneously in Europe. The death of the author brought the undertaking to a standstill, and threatened to leave the work unfinished and fragmentary. Fortunately this calamity has been averted, and we are likely to see the work completed within a few years. Dr. M. Gürke, of the Berlin Botanical Museum, has recently issued the first fascicle of the second volume, and a second fascicle is promised within a few months.

The original plan of the work, which is practically unchanged by the new editor, included the systematic arrangement of all the European species under their proper orders and classes. The first description of