

tained from the Miocene formation of the Bad Lands of the Hat Creek Basin, in northwest Nebraska; for these the name *Archihicoria siouxensis* is proposed, the embryo showing unmistakably their close relationship to the modern *Hicoria*.

#### THE OVARY OF OPUNTIA.

DR. JOSÉ RAMÍREZ, in the *Anales del Instituto Médico Nacional*, of Mexico, describes and figures three monstrous ovaries of *Opuntia*, which he regards as evidence of the axial nature of the inferior ovary in general. In the first case the ovary, though entirely normal in color, function, etc., instead of being articulated with the joint, is fused with it. Moreover, the spiral disposition of the arolae is continuous from joint to ovary. In the second example the ovary resembles a joint externally, while within it is in no wise different from a normal ovary. In the third a mature ovary bears thirteen perfectly developed ovaries, which are arranged spirally upon it. From the fact that the uppermost are already mature, the author concludes that the inflorescence of *Opuntia* is determinate.

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#### CURRENT NOTES ON ANTHROPOLOGY.

##### ON PYGMY RACES.

MR. R. G. HALIBURTON has devoted much time to the study of the pygmy races of men, and it is to his researches that the learned world owes the best information about the small people of the Atlas and Pyrenees Mountains.

Under the title 'How a Pygmy Race was found in North Africa and Spain' (Toronto, 1897, pages 147), he has republished the scattered articles containing his results, and added, also, various papers on other anthropological topics. Among the latter, as touching upon points of special interest,

I may note one on 'The Days of Rest of Prehistoric Men,' which refers to the inauspicious, intercalary days of primitive calendars; and one on 'The Connection of November Flood-Traditions with the Pleiades,' where he ingeniously suggests that the sacredness of the number four in many mythologies may be due to the fact that the heliacal rising of the Pleiades corresponds to that of the new moon once in four years. Five articles refer to the Gypsies in Africa, and several to the customs and myths of ancient Egypt.

##### UNSOLVED PROBLEMS OF ANTHROPOLOGY.

MR. E. W. BRABROOK, in his third inaugural address as President of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain, reviewed the recent progress of the science of man, and recounted the unsolved problems which it offers. It is worth while to quote these, as to know where we are especially deficient is the best preparation for extension of knowledge.

He mentions: (1) the development from the brute to man; (2) the *hiatus* between the palæolithic and neolithic periods in Europe; (3) the process of the disappearance of races; (4) the development of religions; (5) the accurate measurement of different races; (6) the record of the passing mental phases of humanity.

The postulates which he claims the science of anthropology should always regard as fixed beyond doubt are: (1) the unity of the anthropologic sciences (in aim, I suppose); and (2) the doctrine of the continuity of the phenomena which it studies. These suggestions from one who understands the field so thoroughly merit careful reflection.

##### ABOUT THE HITTITES.

THE latest contribution toward an identification of the Hittites with some known stock is from the pen of Professor Fritz Hommel, and is printed in the *Sitzungsberichte* of

the Bohemian Academy of Sciences, 1898, under the title 'Hethiter und Skythen.'

From a thorough study of sources he shows that the Scythians were an Aryan and especially an Iranian folk. It is clear that a portion of them lived in Cilicia and Cappadocia, where other authorities locate the Hittites; and in Mitanni certainly some Aryan blood must have entered; for the Amarna tablets speak of the Mitanni princess as 'blue-eyed.' Also the Amorites were blonde and blue-eyed. To these facts of a physical character Hommel adds a lengthy investigation into proper names, all tending to illustrate a deep Iranian influence in eastern Anatolia. This does not exclude, but much modifies, the 'Alarodian' hypothesis of Sayce and others. Of course, that the Hittites were Aryan has already been asserted by other writers, but not in the form here presented.

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#### SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS.

THE death of Dr. James Hall, which occurred at Echo Hill, Bethlehem, N. H., on August 7th, at the age of eighty-seven years, will cause universal regret among men of science. Since Dr. Hall's return from the International Geological Congress, last year, his health has been failing somewhat, but he fully intended to attend the approaching fiftieth anniversary meeting of the American Association, of which he was one of the founders. It will be remembered that at the meeting of the Association at Buffalo, two years ago, a special session was devoted to appreciations of Dr. Hall's scientific and official work as Geologist of the State of New York for fifty years. Portraits of Dr. Hall were included in the full report that appeared in *SCIENCE* at the time.

PROFESSOR EDWIN RAY LANKESTER, Linacre professor of comparative anatomy at Oxford, has been appointed Director of the Natural History Museum, South Kensington, in succession to Sir William Henry Flower.

PROFESSOR MOSSO, of Turin, has been elected a correspondent of the Paris Academy of Sciences in the section of medicine and surgery. Twenty-six votes were cast for Professor Mosso and ten for Professor Zambaco, of Constantinople.

DR. CARL I. CORI, of the German University at Prague, has been elected Director of the Zoological Station at Trieste.

DR. F. J. V. SKIFF, Director of the Field Columbian Museum, Chicago, has been appointed Director of Mining and Mineralogy at the Paris Exposition of 1900.

LORD PEEL has been appointed a trustee of the British Museum in the place of the late Mr. Spencer Walpole.

It is proposed to erect a bust of Victor Meyer in the chemical laboratory at Heidelberg, and should sufficient money be collected a scholarship for the advancement of chemistry will be established.

THE monument to Charcot will be formally unveiled in the Saltpêtrière in Paris on October 23d.

PROFESSOR PARK MORRILL, Chief of the Forecast Division of the Weather Bureau, died at Washington on August 8th of typhoid fever.

THE death is announced of Dr. E. B. Aveling, in London, on August 4th, at the age of 47 years. He had been assistant in physiology at Cambridge and professor of chemistry and physiology at New College, and had written on scientific topics, especially in the direction of the popularization of the doctrine of evolution. He was, however, best known as a lecturer and writer on socialism.

M. PAUL SEVRET, the mathematician, member of the Paris Academy of Sciences, died in Paris on June 24th, aged seventy years.

WE regret further to record the death of Professor W. F. R. Suringar, professor of botany in the University of Leyden and Director of the Botanical Garden and Herbarium.

A FOURTH International Congress of Agriculture will meet at Lausanne from the 12th to the 17th of September.

DR. HENRY BESSEMER has presented to the