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THE

West * American * Scientist.

A popular monthly review and record for the Pacific Coast. Official Organ of the San Diego Society of Natural History.

> C. R. ORCUTT, EDITOR.

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THE WEST AMERICAN SCIENTIST.

VOL VI

NOVEMBER, 1889.

No. 49.

NOTES FROM THE SAN DIEGO BIOLOGICAL LABORATORY ...

II.

ADDITIONS TO THE FAUNA OF CORTEZ BANKS.

In a trip to the Cortez Banks, subsequent to the one on which the fishes noted in the first part of these notes were collected, Captain Carter obtained the following species.

SPHYRNA ZYGAENA. (L.) August.

46. ECHENEIS REMORA. L. On Sphyrna zygaena.

47. DITREMA ATRIPES, Jordan & Gilbert. A single specimen of this species was caught with hook and line in 45 fathoms.

August, 1889.

It differs somewhat from the description of atripes. The lips are black, a black spot at root of mandible. Pectorals hyaline, a narrow black bar at their base, especially well defined on their inner surface. Ventrals dusky, most so at tip. Upper third of first ten anal rays black. Caudal dark. Sides gray, lighter below, the back being bluish.

D. X, 22; A. III, 28½. Scales 7-70-15.

From D. orthonotus, this species differs in its arched

back and less inclined anal basis.

48. CHROMIS PUNCTIPINNIS (Cooper)—A single specimen. It is undoubtedly identical with Cooper's Ayresia punctipinnis It differs from the specimens described by Jordan and Gilbert. (Syn. Fish. North Am. 611) in having the dorsal XIII, 11 instead of XII, II and the depth 27 instead of 21/3. Since writing this, Dr. Jordan has examined a specimen in his collection with the dorsal as above XIII, 11 and the depth 27.

49. OPHIODON ELONGATUS Girard—One specimen from the

Cortez Banks.

50. ZANIOLEPIS FRENATUS Sp. DOV. Type, one specimen,

.165 m. Cortez Banks, Capt. Carter, Coll.

This species is very closely related to Z. latipinnis of Girard. It differs from that species in the less convex profile, the more slender shoulder, lower dorsal spines and color.

D. XX, 1-12; A. III, 161/2; head 41/3; depth 63/4.

General form of Z. latipinnis, the body less compressed, the dorsal outline less arched. Profile gently arched; nasal spines prominent. Eye longer than snout, 3 in the head. Mouth small, lower jaw included, maxillary reaching to the anterior margin of pupil. Three preopercular spines, the lowest flat, triangular, the others conical.

Second and third dorsal spines highest, 11/5 in length of head, the spines gradually shortened to the 20th. Ventrals reaching

front of anal; pectorals scarcely to tip of ventrals.

Color in alcohol, olivaceous; suborbital and preorbital black, (the corresponding region in latipinnis, bluish silvery.) Dorsal and anal with large blackish spots; posterior half of pectorals dusky.

51. FIERASFER DUBIUS Putnam—A mass of larvæ and eggs imbedded in a transparent jelly-like matrix may be provis-

ionally referred to this species.

ADDITIONS TO THE FAUNA OF SAN DIEGO, WITH NOTES ON SOME RARE SPECIES.

SPHYRNA ZYGAENA (L.)

Myctophum—Sp. A single specimen from the Cortez Banks which was reterred to M. townsendi differs from that species in some respects. The occiput is more elevated, the preopercular margin is less inclined, agreeing with M. californiense. As far as evident, the sphosphorescent organs agree with those of townsendi; there is, however, no light area along the base of the anal. D. 13. A. 15. A single specimen of this species was taken out of the mouth of a Rock Cod caught a few miles off Point Loma.

MENIDIA TENUIS (Ayres)—This species has not been observed by us during the past year before Sept. 11th, when a large number were brought into the market. All the specimens examined by us have distinct bands of teeth and if the alleged absence of teeth in this species is the only character, as stated by Jordan and Gilbert., Syn., N. A. Fishes, 405, separating this species generally from Menidia, it must be placed in that genus.

ECHENEIS REMORA L.—Found on every specimen of

Sphyrna zygaena.

XENISTIUS CALIFORNIENSIS (Steindachner)—Raspers.

This species has so far been very rarely found. Steindachner found it in San Diego Bay, (Ichthyol. Beitr. III. 3. 1875) and Streets at Cerros Island, (Bull U. S. Nat Mus., VII. 49), since then the species has been noted but once, having been collected by Rosa Smith in '85. The specimens collected by her are now in the Museum of the Indiana University. On May 3d, '89 we procured a single specimen; the latter part of August and during September of this year they were very abundant about the wharfs in San Diego Bay, as many as twenty being caught in a day by a single person with hook and line. When they are pulled from the water they grate their pharyngeals together producing a noise like that of a rasp. Silvery below, steel blue above, lateral stripes rust color.

RHACOCHILUS TOXOTES Agassiz—A single specimen. October 3d.

SEBASTICHTHYS MELANOPS (Girard)—Not rare in the markets

in Summer and Fall.

SEBASTICHTHYS OVALIS Ayres—Not rare.

SEBASTICHTHYS RUBER (Ayres)—Not rare, usually large in-

dividuals brought to the market.

SEBASTICHTHYS LEVIS Eigenm and Eigenm-Equally abundant as S. ruber, none but large individuals seen.

SEBASTICHTHYS ROSACEUS (Girard)—Common. Sebastichthys elongatus (Ayres)—Not rare.

SEBASTICHTHYS RUBROVINCTUS Jordan and Gilbert—The rarest of the Rock Cods.

XYSTREURYS LIOLEPIS Jordan and Gilbert—Three specimens, Sept. 30th and Oct. 3d.

FISHES OF ÆTNA SPRINGS, NAPA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA.

PHOXINUS (Tigoma) CLEVELANDI sp. nov.—Types, three specimens .10.12 m. to base of caudal. D. Cleveland, Coll.

Closely related to Ph. hydrophlox (Cope) associated with

Leucus bicolor (Girard)

D. 9½; A. 10½; head 4-4¼; depth 3¾-4¼; teeth 2, 4-5 or

5,2; scales 10-59-6.

Mouth oblique, jaws equal, maxillary reaching front of eye or somewhat farther in the largest specimen. Eye 4-41/4 in head, 11/2 in the interorbital space. Pectorals reaching ventrals in male,

much shorter in female.

Color in alcohol; chocolate above, bordered on the s des by a darker stripe; a black band from tip of snout to base of middle caudal running along the lateral line in front and on the tail, above the lateral line along the abdominal region; a light band from upper angle of eye between this and the dark of the back. Sides below the dark lateral band silvery, more or less peppered with black or chocolate. Dorsal and caudal dusky. Anal and ventrals light, the rays chiefly dusky. Upper surface of pectorals dusky, the color becoming more intense toward the outer ray which is black; lower surface of pectorals white. All markings most intense on male.

FISHES OF ALLEN SPRINGS, LAKE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA.

A few specimens were collected by Mr. D. Cleveland, at Allen Springs, Lake County, California.

PTYCHOCHEILUS OREGONENSIS (Richardson.)

SALMO IRIDEUS (Gibbons.)

URANIDEA SEMISCABRA CENTROPLEURA var. nov.

Two specimens .072 and .08 m. long

Head 3½; depth 4¾ D. VIII, 17½; A. 14; V. I, 4. Pec-

torals 3-31/4 in length; ventrals 5, caudal 4.

Spinous dorsal pale at base and tip, the median region black. A band of prickles along the median line of the body to near posterior margin of anal; the rest of the body without villi or prickles. Lateral line complete. Ventrals reaching $\frac{2}{3}$ - $\frac{4}{5}$ to vent, which is nearer to base of caudal than to tip of snout, otherwise as in semiscabra.

THE YOUNG STAGES OF SOME SELACHIANS.

SQUALUS ACANTHIAS L. Captain Carter of the Azalene obtained the young of this species from its mother in August. They were far along in their development.

Total length .22 m; dimensions of the yolk. 02 x. 04 m upper surfaces are blue, the lower white; a series of white spots along the sides. A light streak on sides above the ventrals. Anterior portions of dorsals black, the posterior margin and tip white. Upper margin of caudal and anterior margin of its lower lobe white; tip of upper lobe black; a white and then a black band between the black tip of the upper lobe and the anterior margin of the lower lobe. Upper basal portion of ventals dark blue, the remainder of the fin white. Pectorals largely blue above, the posterior margin being white, their lower surfaces largely white a median blue spot on its outer half. Snout broad and rounded.

TRIACIS SEMIFASCIATUS Girard. A female of this species about 1.5 m. long, caught Sept. 6, 1889, contained a number of young measuring .095-.105 m. Each embryo is surrounded by a delicate membrane filled with a hyaline watery albumen. yolk is pyriform and measures .03 x. 07 m. In the smallest individuals the external gills are still present; the spiracular gills have, however, disappeared. In the proportions, position of find and coloration these embryos greatly resemble the adult. The asperities of the skin are entirely wanting. The ventral surface with the paired fins, the anal and lower lobe of the caudal are A dark cross bar between the spiracles; three cross bars between this and the first dorsal fin, one on the middle of the first dorsal, another at its posterior margin, two between the dorsals, a dark cross bar on the anterior and posterior margins, of the second dorsal four behind the second dorsal fin. In the larger specimens there is a spot on the middle of the lower caudal lobe and two or three along the sides anteriorly. The remaining color marks of the adult are not yet developed.

RHINOTRIACIS HENLEI Gill. A specimen of this species about 1.5 m. in length was caught off the wharf Sept. 7th, 1889. It contained six young, three in either uterus. They are .115 m. long and possess most of the characters of the adult. The tips of the caudal and dorsal fins and a median dorsal band behind the second dorsal are dark blue, otherwise the embryos are colorless. The external gills have disappeared. The umbilicus is very long .14 m. The yolk is bright yellow; it is intimately connected with the walls of the uterus. As the young of this species are attached by a placenta it may be generically distinguished Triacis from in which the young are free.

GALEORHINUS ZYOPTERUS Jordan and Gilbert. This species is common in San Diego Bay, but, as with most sharks it is most abundant in the latter part of Summer. Few males arcaught; all the specimens examined by us were females. Two individuals taken August 30th, 1889, were with young which average .05 m. in the one, .08 m. in the other. The yolk is a large spheroid measuring .05 x .08 m., and, as in the case of Triacis, is surrounded with a loose, delicate membrane. The embryos are colorless. The position of the fins agrees with the adult, All the young, including the largest, have external gills still persisting at the gill openings and spiracles. The head is comparatively shorter and broader than in the adult and the eye much larger.

Scylliorhinus ventriosus Garman. On January 19th, 1885, Mrs. E. D. Buell hatched a shark from a flat egg case which she gave to Rosa Smith. The shark may be said to have been "hatched" although the embryo had not absorbed the vitelline sac and it may have been not quite matured as Mrs Buell pried open the case to let out the shark which was still alive. The shark was provisionally identified as Scylliorhinus ventriosus and the egg case sent to Mr. S. Garman to be figured.

The young shark differs from the description of the adult sharks in a few very prominent characters, i. e., the caudal is not continuous around the tail, the tip of the tail is margined by a series of flat spines and there is a series of rather strong spinelets along the sides of the back from in front of the second dorsal forward to the head. The central portion of the dorsal fins, the anal and the paired fins dark blue. Back and sides with dark blue double cross bars which are more or less interrupted, those of the tail extending upon both lobes of the caudal.

Length .085 m. Diam. of yolk about .02 m. Greatest depth .12 of total length; greatest width .14; length of head .17; width of head .18; length of snout .06; length of branchial area .09; width of mouth 14; distance from snout to first dorsal .49; length of base of first dorsal 07; length of caudal .26; length of pectoral

.12; length of ventral . 10.

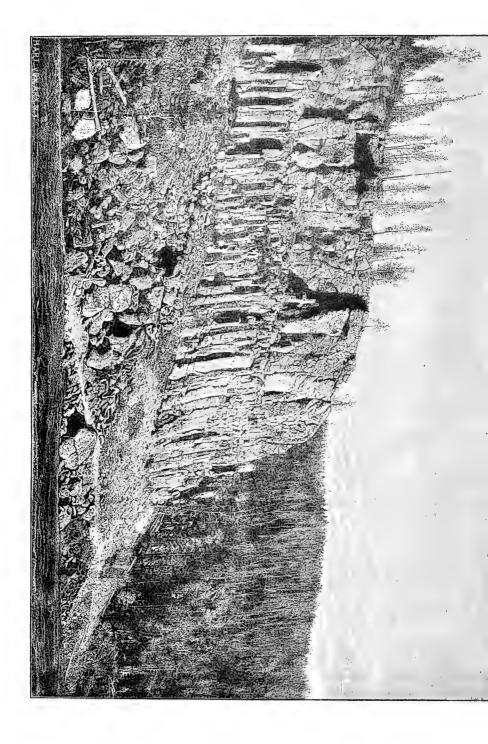
C. H. & R. S. Eigenmann,

OBSIDIAN CLIFF.*

Obsidian Cliff is at the northern end of Beaver Lake, in the Yellowstone National Park, about eleven miles south of Mam. moth Hot Springs. The cliff extends for half a mile, rising from one hundred and fifty to two hundred feet above Obsidian creek and falling away gradually to the north; the upper half is a vertical face of rock, the lower portion a talus slope of the same material.

The southern end is formed of nearly vertical columns of black

^{*)} From the seventh annual report of the U. S. Geological Survey.



obsidian, or volcanic glass, which has resulted from the rapid cooling of a perfectly fused, igneous rock. From this, great blocks have fallen and accumulated at its base in a talus slope, over which has been built what is popularly known as the glass road, the material of which it is made, being as true a glass as any artificially produced. The colors and structure of this natural glass not only make it the most interesting rock the visitor will find, but the phenomena of its occurrence in this locality are

of special scientific importance.

What was the original thickness of this lava sheet it is not possible to say. The dense glass or obsidian forming the lower portion is from seventy-five to one hundred feet thick; the porous and pumiceous upper portion has suffered more or less erosion, which was in part the result of ice action, the evidence of glaciation being more marked along the lower western slope of the plateau than on the top of it. The surface of the plateau is mostly pumice, with little, if any glacial debris scattered over it; but along the western slope the rock has been worn down to the massive obsidian, and the top of the cliff is covered with planed and striated glacial drift from a great variety of sources.

Half a mile southeast of Obsidian Cliff, on the plateau, about five hundred feet above the level of Beaver Lake, is a circular pit one hundred feet deep, the mouth of it being three hundred feet wide by three hundred and fifty feet long; its sides stand at an angle of thirty-five degrees and appear to be formed of pumiceous obsidian, the angular masses in the bottom being pumice. The rim of the pit does not rise above the level of the surrounding surface, and one comes upon it quite unexpectedly in the timber. The general appearance is that of a small crater which has been

but slightly affected by glaciation.

In the Solfatara Creek valley, the lava flow is exposed in a cliff the lower portion of which is black and red obsidian.

CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS A LIST OF THE FAUNA AND FLORA OF WET MOUNT-AIN VALLEY, COLORADO.

(Compiled for the Colorado Biological Association.)

III.ALGÆ.

The locality cannot be said to be rich in forms, although the irrigation ditches and creeks yield a certain number of species. Most of the species are of general distribution elsewhere. For identification we are greatly indebted to the Rev. F. Wolle, while one species was kindly named by Dr. W. G. Farlow.

Conferva vulgaris, Rab., near Ula.

2. Cladophora glomerata, Kg., well distributed; also found in Pueblo Co.

3. Mesocarpus scalaris, DeBy., near Ula.

Hyalotheca disilliens.

5. Draparnaldia plumosa, in Swift Creek, over 8,000 feet alt.

Zvgnema anomalum.

- Spirogyra quinina, Ag., near Short Creek, 8,200 feet; West Clift.
 - Spirogyra nitida, West Cliff. 8. Oscillaria froelichii, Kutz. gracillima, Kg. 10.
 - Vaucheria geminata, Short Creek. dichotoma, West Cliff.

13. Nostoc sphæricum.

interruptum.

15. Navicula viridis, Kutz, near Ula.16. "rhomboides, (Ehrenb), Greg, near Ula.

dactylus, West Cliff. 17.

- 18. Nitzschia amphioxys, Sm., near Ula. 19. Epithemia turgida, Sm., near Ula.
- gibba, Kutz, Short Creek, 8,200 feet alt. 20. 21. Synedra ulna, Ehrenb., near Ula and Short Creek.

22. Gomphonema acuminata, Ehrb.

- dichotomum. 24. Cocconeis pediculus, common, and also found in Pueblo Co.
- 25. Fragilaria capucina, Sm., West Cliff and Short Creek. 26. Diatoma (Odontidium) hiemale, Kutz., Short Creek.

27. Closterium acerosum, Ehr., near Ula.

28. leibleinii, Kutz.

cucumis, Short Creek. 29.

30. Cosmarium nitidulum, DeNot.

31. Euastrum ansatum, Ehr.

IV. PTERIDOPHYTA.

Botrychium lanceolatum, Angst., Willow Creek, 8,200 feet (M. E. Cusack.) A syrphid larva, about 10 mill. long, pale, the dorsum dull orange, was found on this plant.

Cryptogramme acrostichoides, (Spreng.) R. Br., Porter

and Coulter, Fl., S. Colorado.

- 3. Woodsia oregana, Eaton. Porter and Coulter, "Fl. Colorado."
- Pteris aquilina, Linn., somewhat local at about 8,400 feet alt.
- Cystopteris fragilis, Bernh., Porter and Coulter, "Fl. Col-5. orado.''

6. Equisetum pratense, Ehrh., West Cliff.

Equisteum lœvigatum, Braun, Grape creek (Demetrio), Ellis and Everhart. This species has priority over E. lœvigatum, Lesqx, fossil at Golden. The fossil species may be amended to E. perlœvigatum, so as not to conflict with the recent one.

8. Equisetum arvense L, Willow creek and elsewhere. Some

of the specimens are not typical.

9. Equisetum hiemale, L., Willow creek and elsewhere, common.

V-GYMNOSPERMÆ.

1. Juniperus communis L., abundant at 8,200 feet and upwards. The berries form part of the food of robins (merula migratoria).

2. Picea engelmanni (Parry) Eng., Short creek and Willow

creek.

3. Picea pungens, Eng., Short Creek and Willow Creek.

4. Pinus ponderosa var. scopulorum, Eng., abundant, Short Creek, Willow Creek, etc.

T. D. A. Cockerell.

WEST CLIFF, October 7, 1889.

PRELIMINARY NOTES ON THE GEOLOGY OF THE ANACAPAS.

(Read before the Santa Barbara Society of Natural History, August, 1889.)

The group of islands known as the Anacapas are more exclusively of volcanic origin than any other of the Channel Islands, the base from the exposure above the level of the ocean being composed of black vesicular basalt, capped in many places by a trachytic rock of a more recent lava flow, and at some points on the most elevated portions of the islands covered by a drift formation, among which are found jasper, chalcedony, and other fragmentary metamorphic rocks.

Where these metamorphic rocks are found there is abundant evidence that the aborigines, who inhabited the islands, frequented the place of deposit for the purpose of selecting rocks suitable for the manufacture of their arrow and spear points.

An unimportant deposit of limestone exists on the middle island, and a vein of chalcedonic quartz was found near the eastern end of the larger island; this was also used for the manufacture of weapons and knives.

Amygdaloides of chalcedony are very abundant, filling the

almond-shaped cavities in the basalt.

An article on the geology of the Channel Islands, including the Anacapas, with geological sections, the result of the studies of the islands during the past twelve years, is being prepared, and will be presented to this society at its next meeting.

There are many things connected with the fauna and flora of these islands which are of much interest to students of natural history, and the scenery equals in variety and grandeur many of the most noted localities of other countries, a fact which our

local artists are making known.

The land shells of the islands are peculiar; the only helicoid land shell found on the Anacapas, Helix Ayresiana, heretofore noted from San Miguel, Santa Rosa and Santa Cruz, is found but sparingly on the Anacapas, but the writer brought a few living specimens and planted a colony in the foothills of the Santa Ynez Range, back of El Montecito, where it is hoped they may

increase and furnish specimens of this beautiful snail for future

generations of conchologists.

Owing to the steep and rugged shores, and a lack of suitable conditions, marine mollusks are not plentiful, except a few littoral species, which attach themselves to the rugged surface of the basalt rocks.

A list of the known mollusca of the islands is also in prepara-

tion.

We did not find any ferns upon the Anacapas, but, as adverse circumstances prevented our landing upon the western extremity of the group, where the conditions seem the most favorable for their growth, we cannot state positively that no ferns grow there. An article on the ferns of the Channel Island will shortly be published.

Lorenzo G. Yates.

BRIEFER ARTICLES.

(From Demorest's Monthly Magazine.)

EARLIEST AMERICANS.—The knowledge that America was inhabited by a highly civilized people many centuries before its occupancy by the race of red men which the earliest European settlers found here, is not new. Yet it was not until lately that actual records of information concerning this people were found, and for more than four hundred years all that we have known of them was gathered from a careful study of the relics of their greatness,—the ruins of their edifices, which have been found scattered over the entire western hemisphere. But the earthen tablets found in Peru, Central America, and Mexico, engraved on plastic clay in perfect Phœnician characters, and afterwards burned to render them imperishable, extend back nearly two thousand years before Christ. According to these records, these people, the Toltecs, came from some remote country and settled in South America. They were an eminently civilized and religious people, vesting the laws of their government and their theology in the same persons, and believing in one God, the creator and ruler of all, and in a mediator (Tzuma) who was to come to guide and teach them aright. Two distinct classes existed among them, the "Olptecs," or workers, and the "Orptecs," or thinkers, the latter including not only their priests and rulers, but their architects, artisans, engineers, and nobility. The "Olptecs" were serfs with no voice at all in the government or public affairs. These people rapidly increased, and by the year 400 B. C. had settled nearly the entire South American continent and spread over Mexico, where they found an aboriginal race dwelling on the banks of the streams and living upon the natural produce of the soil and upon fish and game. For over a thousand years the Toltecs occupied the land, until in the last century before Christ, the Aztec invaders sailed up the Amazon, claiming to have come from an Oriental country which they called "Aztlan." The Aztecs soon overruled the Toltec government, and in the course of two or three centuries the Aztecs were the dominant people.

Their supremacy lasted for seven centuries, and then, through luxurious abundance, their commerce and industries became less active and extensive, and their power commenced to wane. 800 A. D. a savage horde from the north and west came down upon the Aztecs, and wiped out the primeval civilization in a savage war of extermination, lasting for years. The remnants of the stricken people fled to the mountains, where they became cliff and cave dwellers, and others became amalgamated with the destroying race, the Chicimecs. This is but a sketch of the wonderful history these long-hidden records relate. served for the progressive and enduring Indo-European branch of the Arvan race to open the pages and read for us the instructive history of these thirty forgotten centuries during which America was peopled in turn by the Hamitic branch of the Semite race, then by the Semites proper, and these finally exterminated by the flerce Turaneans from Chinese Tartary, until to-day nearly every vestige of their existence is being crushed out of the world's history by the rapid paces of an advancing civilization.

COMMUNISM IN OHIO.—In Tuscarawas county, Ohio, about eighty miles south of Cleveland, in a quaint little village called Zoar, is an obscure communistic colony of about three hundred inhabitants. It was founded in 1817, by two Germans, who selected this location, comprising some of the richest land in Ohio, and called their settlement Zoar, because it was to be to them a place of refuge from the world. The people, descendants of the pioneers who first settled there, are trugal and industrious, strongly attached to their beautiful home, and work for the community, which owns and controls not only the village proper but thousands of acres outside. The money is received into one common treasury, and the necessaries of life, including food and clothing, are furnished by the officials, consisting of three trustees and a committeee of five, who are annually elected by bal-They are Christians, accepting the Old and New Testaments, but they have no minister or ceremonies of any kind, and their place of worship is not called a church, but a 'congregationhouse.' In marriage, the contracting parties procure a license, according to the laws of the State, and the marriages are solemnized by a Justice of the Peace, who is a member of the community. Years ago their rules were very strict, and the members all dressed alike; but now, although simplicity is the rule, they They manufacture their own wool are not uniformly attired. garments, and boots and shoes, and each family raises its own produce. If any need money for any reason, they make application for it. They run a flouring mill, two grist mills, two woolen They have two good schools, and keep mills, and a tannery. a large hotel accommodating many summer boarders. gether they are a happy, independent people, content to live apart from the world. Every person in the community knows his place, is assigned to his duty, and performs his work according to his ability. Nearly all the present members were born in

Zoar, although outsiders may join if they can pass satisfactorily the year's probation which is demanded. Yet this quiet, secluded life does not seem to accord with the desires of most men and women, although the Zoarites profess to be perfectly satisfied.

THE SALT MOUNTAINS OF THE COLORADO.—Upon a tributary of the Colorado River, the Virgin, are situated the salt mountains which are destined to be the source of great wealth to someone. They cover a stretch of about twenty-five miles on both sides of the Virgin River, seven miles up from the Colorado. they contain is pure and white, and clearer than glass, and it is said that a piece of it seven or eight inches thick is sometimes clear enough to see through to read a newspaper. Over the salt is a layer of sandstone from two to eight feet thick, and when this is torn away the sait appears like a huge snowdrift. deep it is has not yet been ascertained; but a single blast of giant powder will blow out tons of it. Under the cap-rock have been discovered charred wood and charcoal, and matting made of cedar bark, which the salt had preserved, evidently the camp belongings of prehistoric men. The rocks toward the salt mountains are painted and carved with hieroglyphics, the meaning of which is known only to the Mojave, Yuma, Piute and other In-From the reports of recent explorers it seems that there are stretches of hundreds of miles on the Colorado River as little known as the heart of Central Africa. The walls of the El Dorado Canyon, where the river is three hundred and fifty feet wide, are so high that neither the sun nor the moon can shine in. The Colorado is the greatest field for explorers on the North American Continent beside the Arctic regions, and the wonders vet to be unearthed there will probably much more richly reward the attention of the scientist than even the unknown spaces of the frigid North.

THE CABLE CIRCUIT OF AFRICA.—The report of the United States Vice-Consul to St. Paul de Loando, concerning the district of Mossamedes, on the West Coast of Africa, practically an unknown country to Americans, includes the important information that a cable has just been laid between the Cape of Good Hope and Mossamedes, touching at Port Nolluth, and continued from Mossamedes to Loando, completing the telegraphic circuit of Africa. It is expected, since the completion of this new line, that a message can be sent via the West Coast more expeditiously than by the old route to the Cape via the Red Sea and Zanzibar. The district of Mossamedes, of which a considerable portion of territory has been lately ceded by Portugal to Germany, is situated between 13° 50' and 17° 25' south latitude. The principal port and town is called Mossamedes. chorage for any number of vessels, and good pier facilities. commerce chiefly consists of the exchange of cattle, dried and salted fish, dried beef, and agricultural products for goods and provisions that come from Europe. A line of railway from Mossamedes to two hundred miles into the interior has been projected. It will cross the Schella Mountains at a distance of one hundred and twenty miles from the coast, beyond which the country is said to be magnificent, and salubrious for Europeans, who are able to work in the fields.

MODERN CAVE-DWELLERS IN GERMANY.—Cave-dwellers in civilized Europe? It seems incredible; and yet, just above the thriving village of Langenstein, in the Hartz Mountains, and forming a part of it, are about ten dwellings hewn in the rocks. They are called the "Burg," or "castle," and here some forty persons have their home. In the face of the solid rock is to be seen a row of regular-shaped doors and windows, one door and one window belonging to each dwelling. The most ancient of these dwellings is the work of a young married couple whose extreme poverty gave them no other choice than to seek a home in the rugged mountain-side. Their work must be held deserving of respect, for it was no light task to pick away the rock bit by bit, as one workman must with no tool but his pick-ax. the doorway one enters a narrow, straight hallway, at the right of which another doorway leads into a good-sized room with a window, the only one in the dwelling. Opposite this doorway, at the left of the entry, is a shell-shaped hollow, which serves as a sleeping-room, in which, however, straw supplies the place of a bed. Back of this, at the left, is a store-room; opposite it, adjoining the living or sitting-room, is the kitchen, with fireplace and chimney; and back of the kitchen is another sleeping-room. The latter has no opening for light, yet, as the house-door is usually open the greater part of the year, there is light enough to see The walls are of the natural rock, and the apartments are perfectly dry, and not badly ventilated with the door, window, and chimney, which create a slight draft through the dwelling at all times. The place is warm in winter and cool in summer, and the inmates are rosy and healthy. Some of the cave-dwellers have whitewashed their houses, and made little gardens outside, so that the exterior does not display a forbidding appearance. At any rate, these cave-dwellings are quite as comfortable (and certainly more sanitary) habitations as the cellars of our cities. which are leased to wretched inmates, and are only caves of masonry.

A Wonderful Lake.—'The 'Walled Lake,' as it is called, is the greatest wonder in the State of Iowa. It is situated in Wright county, twelve miles north of the Dubuque and Pacific Railway, and one hundred and fifty miles west of Dubuque City, and occupies a surface of two thousand eight hundred acres, with a depth of twenty-five feet in some places. The lake is from two to three feet higher than the earth's surface, and in some places the wall surrounding it, which gives it its name, is ten feet high. The stones used in its construction vary in weight from one hundred pounds to three tons, and the wall is fifteen feet wide

at the bottom and five feet wide on top. The mystery about the lake is that no one knows who built these massive walls that inclose it, or where the stone was obtained from, unless they were taken from the immediate vicinity; for surrounding the lake, to the extent of five or ten miles, there are no stones, although everywhere else in Wright county there are plenty of them. Another singular fact is that, although the water in the lake is always clear and fresh, no one has been able to ascertain where it comes from or where it goes.

AN ELECTRIC PLANT.—In the forests of India there has been discovered a very strange plant, which manifests a most astonishing magnetic power. Anyone who breaks a leaf from it receives immediately a shock equal to that which is produced by the conductor of an induction coil. A magnetic needle at a distance of twenty feet is affected by it, and near by becomes very much deranged. The intensity of this singular influence is very variable. It is most powerful about two o'clock in the afternoon, and almost without force at night or during rain. bird or insect is ever seen to alight on the electric plant; some instinct seems to warn them of the danger of sudden death. None of the magnetic metals, iron, cobalt, or nickel, are found where this plant grows, so that the electric force undeniably belongs exclusively to the plant. The mysteries of light and heat, magnetism and electricity, make the leaf and blossom of this wonderful Indian plant a rare botanical problem.

PROCEEDINGS OF SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES.

(San Diego Society of Natural History, October 4. 1889.)

The meeting was held at the residence of the Vice-President, Rev. B. F. McDaniel. Dr. C. H. Eigenmann made some remarks on his trip in the Azalene to the Cortez Banks, describing the embryology of the rock cods and the surf perches, both of which bring forth their young alive. The vice-president presented fine specimens of Indian relics from El Cajon valley, describing the locality whence they came. Tourmaline in quartz was scattered over the hillside and it was evident the Indians had mined there for flints for arrow heads.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

Malva Rotundifolia. The occurrence of this imported weed in a pasture at Trinidad, Colorado, is announced in *Field and Farm*, September 21, 1889. It is exceedingly abundant in some localities in the East, as at Niagara Falls, but we had not definite news of it before in Colorado.

T. D. A. C.

JOSEPH P. NUNN. The Fertility and Coloring of Birds' Eggs. Science Gossip, September, 1889, p. 204. Statistics are given of

various clutches of *Merula merula*, and the author concludes that "the greater the fertility, the darker the color of the eggs."

THE MAMMOTH NOT EXTINCT. In Science Gossip, September, 1889, p. 214, is quoted a clipping from the Saturday Journal, to the effect that the mammoth (Elephas primigenius) still exists in Alaska! A certain Mr. Fowler, it seems, has interviewed a man who killed two of them. But the public unkindly scoffs and makes mention of the horse marines!

DIORCHIDIUM TRACYI, DE TONI. Journ. of Mycol., June, 1889, vol. 5, p. 95 and pl. x.: Good figures are given of this species from New Mexico, which is the only North American species of its genus known. We confess, however, that we do not quite see on what grounds it is called D.tracyi, since it was apparently first described by Tracy and Galloway as Puccinia vertisepta, last year. The name ought surely to be Diorchidium vertisepta, (T. & G.), verti-septa not being preoccupied or otherwise inappropriate. Dr. De Toni's ideas of priority are, we hope, not those of most other mycologists. The same number of the *Jour. of* mycol. that contains the description of P. verti-septa has an article on Doassansia by him in which he proposes to alter D. punctiformis (Niessl, 1872) to D. Niesslii, De Toni, because an Australian species was named D. punctiformis by Winter in 1887, D. punctiformis Niessl not being at that time recognized as belonging to the genus! It is the Australian D. punctiformis, Wint., that must be changed—say to D. Lythri, as it was found on Lythrum. T. D. A. C.

- R. K. Macadam. North American Agarics. J. of Mycol., June, 1889, p. 58. Descriptions and localities are given for 11 species of Russula, only three of which are quoted from anywhere on the Pacific Slope. There is probably a great deal yet to be done among the Western Agarics. T. D. A. C.
- H. J. Elwes. Notes on genus Erebia. Trans. Entomological Society of London, 1889, p. 317. This very interesting paper deals with this genus of butterflies at considerable length, and gives a list of the species. There are also remarks on the geographical distribution of the genus, which number altogether 57 species. A new var. brucei of E. epipsodea is described from Colorado. It is smaller, without ocelli, and the red band is almost obsolete. It is possibly a distinct species. T. D. A. C.
- D. W. Coquillett. The Imported Australian Ladybird, (Vedolia cardinalis). *Insect Life*, Sept. 1889, p. 70. Of this article on the imported Australian Coccinellid, and the wonderful work it is doing in destroying that pest, the Iccrya, in California, we need only say that it is of the greatest interest, and ought to be read by all who care for the welfare of agriculture on the Pacific Slope.

 T. D. A. C.

EDITORAL.

The development of a system for the utilization of the arid lands of the west is one of the most promising of numerous projects now under consideration for the material improvement of the condition of mankind. Not only is the west interested in the numerous discussions and actions taken on this subject, but the whole nation is becoming awakened to the necessity of rendering this vast area capable of sustaining human life.

It has been estimated that within historic times some seven millions of square miles along the shores of the Mediterranean, once highly fertile, have been changed into worthless deserts, and for nearly 2,000 years the inhabitable portion of the earth has decreased at the average rate of 3,500 square miles. This has been produced by the direct agency of man, the evil being chiefly due to river floods caused almost exclusively by the destruction of land-protecting forests.

It is right that America should set the example of reclaiming desert lands and thus increase earth's capacity for supporting the human race. *Irrigation and tree-culture must go hand and hand in this work*.

The value of irrigation has been abundantly proved by the past experience of the human race and is to-day sufficiently demonstrated in Southern California to convince the most skeptic. Not only is irrigation recognized in the west as the solution of the arid lands question, but agricultural papers are already pointing out the desirability of the system for the eastern States, where it is much less vital and was long considered needless.

The necessity for tree-culture is equally imperative with irrigation, and the arid lands question will never be satisfactorily settled without the recognition of this principle in its solution. The men who advocate the construction of a vast system of storage reservoirs for irrigation purposes, refuse to recognize the value of mountain forests as natural storage reservoirs and distributors of the water supply, and hold that it would be just as well to destroy them entirely, are not the men needed in this exigency of our country. The system of irrigation proposed is well, but if left to their own devices in the latter respect, the country will have reason for regret. America can ill afford to ignore the experience of other nations in this respect and forestry should receive equal consideration with irrigation.

NOTES AND NEWS.

An event anticipated in Plymouth for more than fifty years took place there on the 1st of August. It was the dedication of the monument in honor of the Pilgrims, by the Masonic Grand Lodge which laid the corner-stone thirty years ago.

The four hundredth anniversary of the discovery of America by Columbus will be celebrated by a World's Fair in 1892. New York city is confident of being selected as a site for this great exposition, but Chicago and St. Louis are both rivals for this honor. St. Louis claims to be more centrally located than any other city of its size in the United States, and to possess a greater population and two and a half times as many miles of railroad within a radius of 500 miles, than either New York or Chicago.

- Rev. M. J. Berkeley, a distinguished English cryptogamic botanist, is dead.
- Prof. F. H. Knowlton is collecting fossil plants in Western New Mexico, Arizona and California, according to the *Botanical Gazette*.
- Prof. E. L. Greene spent the summer months in an exploration of the torests of Colorado, Montana, Oregon, Washington and California.

Dr. George Vasey has returned to Washington, D. C., from his tour through the West.

There are about 100 species of mosquitoes in the world, occurring in all climes. Eight or ten species have been known to inhabit England for more than fifty years—in fact since they were first studied—and no new species have been recorded in Britain in that time. One well-known British species has been recorded from Mexico; though no tropical species has ever visited England

Dr. Field, a celebrated physician, is reported to have used nothing but common flour of sulphur, a teaspoonful mixed with the finger in a wineglassful of water, and given as a gargle, when diphtheria was raging a few years ago. In ten minutes the patient was out of danger, and he never lost a case of this disease. Sulphur destroys the fungus in man and beast. In extreme cases dry sulphur was blown down the throat through a quill, and sulphur burned in a shovel so that the patient could inhale it, when a gargle could not be used.

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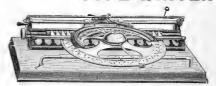
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