small drift-wood. The accumulation was literally swarming with insects which had evidently fallen, or been blown, into the river, and had sought safety upon the drift-wood floating with them. Having floated into a haven of refuge, they were crawling upon the most elevated places and drying themselves in the sun preparatory to flight. In many instances, however, they were doomed to disappointment, as sudden changes in the current and eddy would every now and then violently agitate the accumulation, wash off many of the insects, and send portions of the drift-wood again into the current to be carried further down. Beetles were most numerous, but there were also large numbers of Diptera and some Hymenoptera and Hemiptera. The Coleoptera were principally comprised of Chrysomelidæ, Coccinellidæ, Histeridæ, Nitidulidæ, Lampyridæ and Staphylinidæ, and were generally the smaller and commoner species.

Ottawa, 18th Feb'y, 1884.

W. HAGUE HARRINGTON.

THE DUNG PELLET MAKERS.

BY FREDERICK CLARKSON, NEW YORK CITY.

The term *Scarabæus*, as applied by the ancients to the Sacred Beetle of Egypt, and afterwards by Linnaeus as comprehending the great division of the *Lamellicornes* of Latreille, is derived from *Khepra*, an African word, which means cipher or circle, and has reference to the orbicular shape of the pellet of dung that contains the deposit of ova. *Khepr* is no doubt the root word, and is analagous with the Greek word *Kapobos*, the Latin word *Scarabæus*, and the English word *Crab*. Any ordinary scholar can follow the slight linguistic change that produces one from the other. The *Scarabæus* is imaged amongst the hieroglyphics of the Egyptians, and was regarded by those ancient people as a symbol of the world and the sun. It is not improbable that the term *Scarabæus* is associated in the minds of the many with the idea of a *Crab*, not only because the Sacred Beetle of Egypt is represented under that form, as a sign in the zodiac, but also from the peculiar conformation of the clypeus and thorax of the beetle to the shell-case of that *Crustacean*. *Scarabæus* evidently means a ball. It seems to the writer that we apply this term to cover a larger class of beetles than the signification of the word will admit.

This article, however, is not intended to suggest any limitation in the classification, but merely to ascribe to these indefatigable laborers the designation which they have earned in the very infancy of human observation.

BOOK NOTICES.

Bulletin of the United States National Museum, No. 22. Guide to the Flora of Washington and vicinity. By Lester F. Ward; 8vo., pp. 264.

This is the twenty-sixth of a series of papers intended to illustrate the collections of natural history and ethnology belonging to the United States and constituting the National Museum at Washington. In the introductory remarks which precede the list proper, the author gives a great deal of useful general information relating to the Flora of Washington and vicinity. In the list the common as well as botanical names of the plants are given, with dates of flowering and localities for the rarer species. This general list is followed by a check list, including 1,384 species. The report closes with an instructive appendix in which many useful suggestions are given to beginners in the study of botany.

Proceedings of the American Society of Microscopists; 6th meeting held in Chicago, August, 1883; 8vo., pp. 275.

We have been favored by the Secretary, Dr. Kellicott, of Buffalo, with a copy of the above work, which contains a number of very interesting papers on natural history and other subjects. So energetic an organization as the American Society of Microscopists cannot fail to greatly stimulate microscopic research in all directions in this country. The volume referred to gives abundant evidence of the good work being accomplished.

The Number of Segments in the Head of Winged Insects. By Dr. A. S. Packard.

We are indebted to the author for a copy of this paper, recently published in the *American Naturalist*.