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MISCELLANEOUS.

Discovery of the Animal of the Spongiadæ confirmed.

By H. J. CARTER, F.R.S. &c.

MY DEAR DR. FRANCIS,

Just a line to tell you what you will be glad to learn, viz. that I have confirmed all that Prof. James-Clark, of Boston, has stated about the sponge-cell, and much more too.

It is, after all, only what was published and illustrated in the 'Annals' in 1857. Indeed I am astonished now at the accuracy and detail of that paper ("Ultimate Structure of Spongilla" &c.), now all confirmed by an examination of a *marine* calcareous sponge.

I have not only fed the sponge with indigo, and examined all at the moment, but the sponge so fed was put into spirit directly afterwards, and now shows all the cells (monociliated) with the *cilium attached and the indigo still in the cells*.

This, I think, will break down Hæckel's hypothesis, which is as imaginative and incorrect as it is beautiful.

His "Magosphæra," too, is figured in the 'Annals' (1856), and described *in extenso* as the amœboid cell which inhabits the mucus of the cells or internodes of the Bombay great *Nitella*.

But there are no people in England, if on the Continent, who seem to be able to show this, if even they be cognizant of it.

Ex oriente lux used to be the old phrase; the light is now being reflected back from America. It is from there that we must expect novelties now.

Yours &c.,

H. J. CARTER.

"The Cottage," Budleigh-Salterton,
May 22, 1871.

On Testudo Phayrei and Scapia Falconeri.

By Dr. J. E. GRAY, F.R.S. &c.

Dr. J. Anderson read a communication to the Zoological Society on the 2nd of May, accompanied by "some drawings of and notes on the original specimen of *Testudo Phayrei*, Blyth, in the Indian Museum. Having examined the skull in the British Museum upon which *Scapia Falconeri*, Gray, has been based, and re-examined the small example of *Testudo Phayrei* at Calcutta, Dr. Anderson had come to the conclusion that Mr. Theobald's account of the history was strictly accurate."

Taught by former experience, I have consulted Dr. Anderson's original paper, and find,—1st, that the official minute above copied is inaccurate in most of the statements it contains. Dr. Anderson states first that the sternum shows that the animal is a *Testudo*, and the figures only refer to this part, and consequently both Mr. Blyth and Mr. Theobald were wrong, according to him, in referring it to the genus *Manouria*; secondly, that Mr. Theobald has falsely described the state of the specimen in the Indian Museum, in his printed catalogue of that collection; and, thirdly, the almost incre-

dible statement* that Mr. Theobald referred the two original specimens of *T. Phayrei* in the catalogue above mentioned to two different genera. "The perfect typical one" he confounded with the common *Testudo indica*; and the smaller carapace, wanting a few shields and having no other bones, he referred to *Manouria emys*. This specimen, being without the head, can give no authority for Mr. Theobald's assertions about the skull in the Museum.

The paper contains no attempt to prove that the head of the perfect specimen is like the skull I described, much less to identify it as being the same species; and this is the first step that is wanting to support their hypothesis. Indeed, unless we are to believe that Mr. Theobald is a much more untrustworthy observer than I am inclined to think, his having placed the imperfect specimen of *Testudo Phayrei* as a specimen, with a short broad-headed *Testudo indica* goes far to disprove its being the same as the long narrow-headed *Scapia*.

The various statements on the minor points given about that specimen by Messrs. Blyth, Theobald, Blanford, and Anderson are so conflicting, and sometimes absolutely contradictory, that one can draw no conclusion from them. It is quite a mystery to me why Mr. Blyth, Mr. Theobald, and their friends are so anxious to prove their improbable hypothesis, which would only throw discredit on the two former. If I erred in considering the skull, which I had received without habitat or history, to belong to a new species, I had compared it with all the skulls of the large tortoises I knew, and believing, on the authority of Mr. Blyth and Mr. Theobald, that *Testudo Phayrei* (which I had not) was the same as *Manouria* (which I had, and which differed from the skull under examination), I took all the proper precautions before describing it as new; indeed, if I erred, I only did so in putting too much faith in my friends and fellow-labourers.

1. I did not suspect, and I do not now believe, that Dr. Falconer had a skull in his possession that belonged to the Indian Museum, knowing as I do that those he did borrow were returned by his brother at his death. 2. I never suspected that Mr. Blyth, the paid curator of the museum, would allow a skull to be removed from the collection without informing the officers of the institution and taking a receipt for it; but the then secretary informed me that no acknowledgment of the kind was to be found in any of their journals. 3. I did not suspect that Mr. Blyth did not know the species which he had named *Testudo Phayrei* when he stated that *Manouria emys* was the same species. 4. I did not suspect that Mr. Theobald's accuracy was not to be trusted when he placed the specimens and bones of *T. Phayrei* in the Indian Museum under the name of *Manouria emys* in the catalogue of the reptiles of that collection. But it appears that I should have suspected and believed all these circumstances, in order to escape making the mistake which I am

* I see Mr. Theobald acknowledges this mistake, and refers it to "culpable haste" (Proc. Zool. Soc. 1870, p. 675).

accused of having made; and I would rather repeat the error than be so suspicious and incredulous of the accuracy and trustworthiness of my fellow-labourers in science; and I hope some unprejudiced Indian zoologist will kindly examine and compare the head of *T. Phayrei* with the figure of the skull, or send to the British Museum, that we may make actual comparison, and I should be very glad to adopt the result.

Note on the Habitat of Diadema octocula.

By A. G. BUTLER, F.L.S. &c.

In the 'Annals and Magazine of Natural History' for Jan. 1869 (p. 19, pl. 9. fig. 5) I described and figured a new species of *Diadema* under the name of *D. octocula*: the locality, roughly scribbled on a label attached to the insect, appeared to be "Island of Toloya or Tologa;" and though this locality was new to me and I could not discover it on any map, I supposed it possible that it might be the name of some obscure islet, and therefore published it as "Island of Tologa."

Subsequently, in a paper on the genus *Diadema* in the 'Trans. Entomological Society,' Mr. Wallace suggested that the correct locality might be Gilolo; he, moreover, differed from me respecting the sex of the insect, which, notwithstanding its female aspect, he stated to be a male.

In the 'Stettiner Entomologische Zeitung' for January to March 1869 (p. 71. n. 16, pl. 4. fig. 17), Dr. Herrich-Schäffer described and figured a new *Diadema* under the name of *D. formosa* *; it differs from my *D. octocula* only in its smaller size, more slender body, and in the presence of three marginal spots towards the apex of the front wings, and can therefore scarcely be a different species; it may, I think, be the male of my insect. The habitat given is "Vanua Valava."

Whilst examining some of the smaller Crustacea in the British-Museum collection, I have stumbled upon a small crab bearing a label with the locality "Totoya, Fiji Islands," which, I think, must be the correct reading of the habitat attached to the type of *D. octocula*.

Note on Chlamyphorus truncatus. By Dr. J. E. GRAY, F.R.S. &c.

Mr. Edward Gerrard, jun., has lately procured for the Museum a specimen, in spirits, of the Pichiaco from Mendoza. He has pointed out to me that they vary in the extent of the attachment of the dorsal shield to the middle of the back. In one specimen it is attached along the whole length of the dorsal line; in the one in the Museum it is only attached in two places, about a quarter of an inch long—one over the shoulder and the other in the middle of the back.

* This species seems to have been overlooked by Mr. Wallace.