

to prove that they belonged to the Rajpoot-Jat stock of N. W. India.

As to the language of the Khmers, M. Moura, judging from the fact that it contains many Sanskrit or Pali words, supposes it to be of Sanskrit or Pali origin, which agrees with the Indian origin of Cambodian civilization and religious ideas, but not with Mr. Keane's statement that the language of the Khmers is "radically distinct from the Indic (Sanskritic branch of the Aryan), but closely allied to the untuned polysyllabic Malayo-Polynesian linguistic family." M. Moura affirms that "one of the distinctive features of the genius of the Khmer language" is its monosyllabic form. How far this is consistent with its supposed Sanskrit or Pali affinity I am not concerned to say, although it is noteworthy that words derived from Pali have been reduced by shortening to the monosyllabic form. From a comparison of the vocabularies given by M. Moura, I much doubt whether there is so close a relationship between the Khmer and the Malay languages as Mr. Keane supposes. The latter is more nearly related than the former to the primitive Cham, and while Malay has derived certain foreign elements from the south, the Khmer has obtained its foreign elements from the north. On this subject I would refer to a paper by myself on "The Asiatic Affinities of the Malay," published in the Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society, Vol. XXVIII., June 3, 1890. In any case, I cannot see how the fact of the Khmers having untuned polysyllabic speech could be evidence, as supposed by Mr. Keane, that they were aborigines, nor is this proved by the existence of allied so-called wild tribes.

C. STANILAND WAKE.

Chicago, Aug. 12.

#### OREGON WAX.

If Mr. C. D. Hiscox will refer to the letter of Mr. James Wickersham, in *Science* of July 7th, he will find that the wreck origin of the Oregon wax is not an "absurdity." Having examined specimens of the wax in question I beg to state that it has nothing in common with ozocerite, with which I am perfectly familiar, but is apparently beeswax, pure and simple. It is of a yellowish-brown color,

with granular fracture, and is lustrous on cut surfaces, but not resinous. Its odor is honey-like and characteristic. A hasty chemical examination for cerotic acid showed 6.7 per cent in a sample cut from near the surface of one of the lumps, this figure being low for pure wax and yet rather higher than is usually the case in the impure, so-called, beeswax of commerce. Mr. Hiscox will remember that ozocerite yields no free acid on treatment with alcoholic potash.

CHARLES PLATT.

Buffalo, July 25.

#### BACTERIA IN HENS' EGGS.

In *Science* of August 4, Mr. Brannon asks for some information in regard to the decay of eggs.

Some two years ago a student in the hygienic laboratory was given the problem to determine whether the putrefaction of eggs was due to bacteria entering the egg as it passed through the oviduct or through the shell after the egg was laid. The results obtained were not satisfactory or conclusive, but as they may throw some light on the subject they are given (from memory) for what they may be worth. Many cultures were made from stale eggs in order to determine whether the putrefaction was due to a specific germ or to a number of different germs. Several species were found.

A healthy, laying hen was obtained and after repeated washings in a solution of bichloride of mercury, followed by sterile water, she was placed in a sterilized cage. The hen continued to lay regularly every other day. The eggs were obtained as soon as possible after being laid, and a portion of them were placed in sterilized cotton and then in an incubator. If my memory is not at fault, all of those eggs decayed and swarmed with bacteria.

The remaining eggs were taken as soon as laid, and cultures were made from their contents. Some of these culture tubes developed; others remained sterile.

After some days the hen was killed, and with proper aseptic precautions culture tubes were inoculated from various portions of the oviduct. Most of these tubes developed. It would seem from this one case that the

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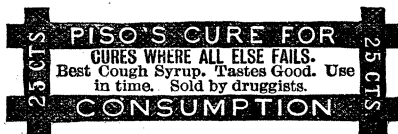
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