

extensive with that of all the other parasitic diseases rolled together. Whilst one can but admire the energy displayed by our Transatlantic brethren in turning every scientific discovery to practical account, we must at the same time observe that only a very few of the voluminous reports received by us from the various States contain matter sufficiently novel to demand extended notice at our hands. Dr. Sutton's report, admirable as it is in many respects, forms no exception to the general rule. By European helminthologists the recognition of Trichinosis in the human subject is no longer spoken of as a "recent discovery," seeing that Zenker, whose merit in this relation is supreme, diagnosed the "loathsome disorder" in 1860, whilst the antecedent steps in the chain of evidence were long previously established by Leuckart and Vichow (1859), Herbst (1850), and so on backwards, until we come to the date of the original discovery of the worm as a nematoid by Paget, and its subsequent description by Owen (1835). We may go even further back than this, and point to Wormald and Hilton's previous and independent recognition of the calcified trichina capsules, and also to their still earlier detection by Peacock (1828), to say nothing of the evidence in favour of Tiedemann (Froriep's *Notizen*, 1822). We must dissent altogether from the view expressed by Dr. Sutton, that Trichinosis probably caused "the ancient Jew to prohibit the use of pork" as food. On the other hand, we are glad to perceive that our author adds his testimony to the view previously taken by ourselves and others, that there is no connection between trichinosis and the so-called "hog cholera." In this regard Dr. Sutton would have done well to have consulted Prof. Verrill's various papers (*American Journal of Science and Arts*; *Report of Connecticut Board of Agriculture*, 1870), and, if possible to him, also, our own subsequent contribution on *Stephanurus* (NATURE, vol. iv. p. 508). Lastly, we can only remark that if Germans will not abandon their habit of eating "smoked sausages" they must expect to be trichinised. Clearly, the fault is their own.

T. S. COBBOLD

The Sea. By Jules Michelet. (London and Edinburgh: Nelson and Sons, 1875.)

MICHELET, as our readers know, wrote a number of works on subjects which suggest a scientific treatment—"L'Oiseau," "L'Insecte," "La Mer," and "La Montagne." The present volume is a translation of the third mentioned, and we believe that at least one of the others has been put into an English dress. These works can hardly be regarded as scientific, except in so far as Michelet seems to have taken laudable pains to acquaint himself, before writing, with some of the principal and especially the most interesting facts which science has discovered in connection with his various texts. For really the titles of his quasi-scientific works are only texts, or rather themes, round which he accumulates a vast variety of more or less appropriate facts, reflections, and word-pictures. He might indeed be regarded as the rhapsodist of science, a man of distinctly poetic or imaginative temperament, excited to enthusiasm by reflections on the facts furnished to him by science. Of course no one would think of resorting to Michelet's works to study any of the subjects he thus treats, but nevertheless his works have their uses from a scientific point of view, uses which we have often referred to in speaking of popular scientific works. "The Sea" will no doubt attract many English readers now that it is translated, and notwithstanding its rhapsodical nature it contains a very fair amount of really useful and trustworthy information concerning marine physics and marine life. But, as in his other works, Michelet skips about his subject on all sides, poses it in every possible attitude, sings about it from every possible point of view. The illustrations are charming, and the book as a whole is got up with great taste. The Messrs. Nelson have done well in publishing such a translation.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

[The Editor does not hold himself responsible for opinions expressed by his correspondents. Neither can he undertake to return, or to correspond with the writers of, rejected manuscripts. No notice is taken of anonymous communications.]

The Dresden "Gorilla"

It is a mere chance that I did not see the numbers of NATURE from Sept. 30 till to-day, and I therefore missed the note (vol. xii. p. 482) about the female chimpanzee of the Zoological Garden of Dresden, said to be a young gorilla. In my opinion there can be no question that this ape is not a gorilla. It is only a very fine specimen of a chimpanzee with a darker face than usual, it is true, but this is by no means sufficient in the present state of our knowledge to separate it specifically from *Troglodytes niger*. I only mention here the one characteristic referred to in NATURE—"the slight webbing between the fingers." There is no webbing at all between the fingers which deserves to be called so, and there is a fundamental difference from the hand of a gorilla, not only in respect to this characteristic, but also in respect to the proportion of the fingers to each other. The hand of the Dresden specimen is very long and slender; the hand of the gorilla, even of the young one, is known to be broad and short fingered. But there is a long series of reasons which clearly speak against the supposition that this specimen is a gorilla, and I really do not perceive how anyone can advance this opinion after a very insufficient inspection. It is not enough to say, "I take the specimen for a gorilla;" scientific reasons are needed, and that, too, from some one who really understands the question; it was at least very rash to come out with this gorilla. As soon as anyone of the supporters of the opinion that this chimpanzee is a gorilla shall have published scientific reasons, I will take occasion to report about it, and to discuss these reasons. Till then there is no reason whatever to go deeper into the matter, and to regard this ape as anything other than a *Troglodytes niger*.

The two specimens of Birds of Paradise, about which I wrote to you some time ago (vol. xii. p. 434), are now in the Zoological Garden of Berlin.

A. B. MEYER,

Director of the Royal Natural History
Museum of Dresden

Dresden, Dec. 3

Dr. Stoliczka's Collection of Mammals

I SEND you an extract of a paper lately published in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* by Mr. W. T. Blanford, on the mammals collected by the late Dr. Stoliczka in Yarkand, &c., and have italicised one or two of the more important sentences. These show how the value of the fine collection has been materially reduced by the appropriation of the finest heads of ruminants, &c., after Dr. Stoliczka's death. The collection before its arrival in Calcutta was known to contain some splendid heads of *Ovis poli*, and other wild sheep, all of which were carried at the expense of the Indian Government from Yarkand over the Karakoram *via* Kashmir to India, a long and costly journey. The finest of these heads, it is well known, have passed into private hands, while the Government Museum in Calcutta cannot show a specimen of decent size. The whole should have passed intact to the above museum, and would have been there examined, and the duplicate specimens sent to the Indian and British Museums here in England. The extract from Mr. Blanford's paper tells its own tale, and I think it would do good to let the fact of the partial destruction of a valuable collection of an able naturalist be more widely known than to the few readers of the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*. Every specimen in the collection was as much public property as the munitions in a Government store, and could not be disposed of by any member of the Government or mission.

Extract from the "*Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*,"
Vol. xlv. Part II., 1875.

"List of Mammalia collected by the late Dr. Stoliczka when attached to the Embassy under Sir D. Forsyth in Kashmir, Ladák, Eastern Turkistan, and Wakhan, with descriptions of new species. By W. T. Blanford, F.R.S., F.Z.S.

"The collections made by Dr. Stoliczka in Kashmir, Ladák, Kashgar, and Wakhan comprise a very fine series of Mammalia, the description of which has been entrusted to me by Mr. Hume, who has undertaken the general direction, besides a very large share in the details of a work intended to be a memorial of our