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On Selaginopsis, Polyserias, and Pericladium

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cerceity is more distinct; and, finally, in the genus *Dipterus* the heterocercal character becomes strongly marked.

The parallelism between the fossil genera and the embryonic stages of the existing osseous fishes is still more striking if we examine forms such as *Phaneropleuron* and *Tristichopterus*, in which the tail is lobed, the dorsal column penetrating into the dorsal lobe, as in the young *Pleuronectes*. The genera *Acanthodes*, *Diplacanthus*, *Cheirolepis*, &c. of the Old Red Sandstone represent the stages of *Pleuronectes* in which there is a first indication of the separation between the true caudal and the embryonic caudal.

In the subsequent modifications of the tail in fossil fishes there is a tendency to the gradual diminution of the embryonic or superior lobe, and to the predominant development of that which is to become the caudal lobe proper.

On comparing the most ancient forms with the genera *Platysomus*, *Semionotus*, *Lepidotus*, and, lastly, *Pachycormus*, we recognize, as in the development of the Teleostei of the present epoch, a gradual approach to an externally homocercal tail.

To these facts, demonstrating the parallelism that exists between the embryonic and the palæontological development of the tail, Mr. Agassiz adds others derived from characters of ancient Ganoids which recur in the embryos of the Teleostei.

If we wish to formulate the conclusions of Mr. Agassiz in Hæckelian language, we may say that they supply a fresh proof in favour of the law according to which "ontogenesis is the abridged and rapid recapitulation of phylogenesis."—*Proc. Amer. Acad. of Arts and Sci.* vol. xiii. October 1877; *Bibl. Univ.* March 15, 1878, *Arch. des Sci.* p. 368.

On *Selaginopsis*, *Polyserias*, and *Pericladium*.

By M. C. MERESCHKOWSKY.

According to Mr. Norman's "Note on *Selaginopsis* (= *Polyserias Hincksii*, Mereschk.) and on the Circumpolar Distribution of certain Hydrozoa," which appeared in the 'Annals' for March 1878, my genus *Polyserias* had been previously described by Prof. Allman under the name of *Selaginopsis* (*Journ. Linn. Soc.* vol. xii. 1876); hence the species that I described in the last number of this Journal must be named *Selaginopsis mirabilis*, Verr., and *Selaginopsis Hincksii*, mihi. However, I am not yet quite certain of this: and unfortunately it is impossible for me at present to verify Mr. Norman's opinion; for in the whole Russian empire there does not exist vol. xii. (1876) of the Journal in which Prof. Allman has published his diagnoses. The Academy of Sciences of St. Petersburg does not receive this journal at all; and the Public Library only possesses it down to the year 1875.

It seemse specially doubtful to me whether the genus *Pericladium* is really distinct from *Selaginopsis*; and perhaps it would be better to retain under the name of *Polyserias*, proposed by me, a genus which would combine Allman's two genera, and more particularly

because this name better expresses the characters common to all the species which would fall under it than either of the other two names.

On a new Gorilla from Congo. By MM. ALLIX and BOUVIER.

MM. Lucan and Petit have lately sent from Landana (Congo), as part of the results of their hunting on the banks of the Kouilo, near the village of King Mayema, the skeleton and skin of an adult female gorilla, which possesses peculiar interest, both from its own nature and because it serves to confirm the recent discovery of this anthropoid in the above region.

Although Battell, about 200 years ago, noticed the presence of great apes, apparently gorillas, in Congo, and in 1851 Dr. Ford maintained that this animal was met with from the Camaroons to Angola, Geoffroy St.-Hilaire in 1858 regarded their existence as demonstrated only on the shores of the Gaboon and the banks of the Moundah or Danger River. Since that date the researches of Du Chaillu, Marche, and the Marquis of Compiègne have carried the habitat of this great ape further south, as far as the Fernand-Vaz. In 1877 Dr. Falkenstein brought to Europe a young living gorilla, which he had purchased in the region of the Kouilo (4° 35' S. lat.); and one of the authors quite recently received the skin of a young female from the same locality.

"At that time," they say, "we did not think of separating this species from the type; and, indeed, its youth could not allow of its furnishing satisfactory characters for specific separation. This, however, is not the case with the adult specimen which forms the subject of the present communication.

"This female, which is aged, is remarkable as being of smaller size than the *Gorilla gina*; and its head is proportionally still smaller. It also differs in numerous characters, which we purpose to give in detail in the 'Bulletin' of the Zoological Society of France, and which consist principally in the depth of the temporal fossæ, the narrowness of the cranium behind the orbital arches, the narrowness of the interorbital space, and a greater prominence of the keel which rises in the middle of this space, the length and flattening of the zygomatic arches, and also a very noticeable diminution of the height of the spinous apophyses of the first cervical vertebræ.

"Its coat, grey and brown on the body, black on the limbs, with red parts on the head and pubis, does not differ essentially from that which several authors have rather vaguely described, except by a very sharp separation on the flanks between the brown of the belly and the grey of the back, and by the red tint of the pubic regions; but it presents this remarkable peculiarity—that the back is thickly covered with long hair, contrary to what is seen in the other gorillas, in which the skin of this region is denuded and simply covered with short and worn hairs.