

dantly and to a great height, but probably the only indigenous plant of this family is the Prickly Pear (*Opuntia vulgaris*), very common on barrens and sandy shores, with a prostrate massive fleshy stem thickly studded with awl-shaped spines. Its flower is yellow, followed by an edible crimson fruit which must be peeled before eaten.

The porosity of the coral rock sublying all the islands, and retaining like a sponge a certain amount of moisture, doubtless tends to the prolific growth of shrubs and plants, many of the latter assuming arborescent conditions. Plants will constitute the subject of the next article.

H. B. SMALL.

OBITUARY.

JAMES HALL, PALÆONTOLOGIST.

James Hall, the father and prince of palæontologists in America, has passed away at Echo Hill, Bethlehem, N.H., full of years and honour. For sixty years he has been most active and constantly engaged in the field of geological research in America, and in more particular detail in the State of New York, having held the position of State Geologist since the early years of the establishment of that renowned State Survey. The accuracy of the work performed in pointing out the economic resources of this enterprising State, the indefatigable labours and numerous obstacles and prejudices which he had to encounter in the beginning only stimulated him to greater effort and more pronounced achievements. Indeed, many of the valuable geological resources which have made New York State so famous, have been pointed out by him in his reports or by the reports of members of his staff. His successes as State Geologist and as Palæontologist were both marked. In guiding the affairs of the Geological Survey of New York State he combined both economy and sound judgment, and in Palæontology, won