CLASSIFICATION OF THE HUMAN RACE.—BY THE REV. PROF. ANDERSON, OF ROCHESTER.

This subject was introduced to the notice of the Section with a view of shewing the importance of some comprehensible classification of the varieties of the human race, in order to the correct observation of those facts upon which one school of ethnologists founded their opinion that mankind consisted of several species, or of one species planted in several centres of creation. To illustrate the difficulties in the way of classification, Prof. Anderson mentioned that Virey divided the race into two species—the white and the yellow; the black and the brown. But many difficulties interfere with the classification. Take, for instance, the Arabians—the purest of the Semitic races—and he found the Arab in one place with light hair and blue eyes, while in the hot regions of the desert the Arab very nearly approached the Negro. The same changes occurred in the Hindoos and great Iranian races, as they descended from the mountains to the hot deltas of the rivers and to the sea coast. This was also to be remarked in Africa; so that the distinction into white and yellow, black and brown, formed no really useful classification. Jacquenot spoke of three species of men; Dumoulin of eleven, of which the first was the Celto-Scyth Arab, the meaning of which he could not divine. Colonel St. Vincent made eleven species; and Luke Burke, the editor of the *Ethnologist*, made sixty-three; while Dr. Morton's posthumous works made twenty families, each of which he plainly looked on as a distinct species. These could not all be right. Again, Agassiz considered that there were at least eight, and perhaps a thousand centres of creation, though there was but one species; but there were many difficulties about that theory, as it would require a new miracle of creation for each supposed centre; and it was a good rule in physics not to allow new creations except where they were absolutely required. He concluded by saying that he thought the proper attitude for Ethnologists at present was to hold all theories as provisional, keeping themselves ready to give an unprejudiced consideration to new facts whenever they appeared.

ON THE BREAKS IN THE SUCCESSION OF LIFE IN THE BRITISH ROCKS.—BY PROF. A. C. RAMSAY.

Professor Ramsay, of the Geological Survey of Great Britain, who attended the meeting as the representative of the London Geological Society, described the physical breaks, and the breaks in the succession of life, which appear to be established by the palæontological study of the British rocks. In illustration he exhibited a chart to show the fossiliferous strata of Great Britain in their chronological order, and the number of genera and species of fossils found in each, as well as the number which pass from one series to the next above. He then discussed the probable causes at work to produce the phenomena under consideration, and expressed his belief that the extinction of the animal and vegetable species of fossils was owing to physical changes similar to those which are constantly in operation at the present time.