

Porifera or sponges. The specimens examined by Dr. Gray had been supposed to be Cirrhopoda, allied to Balanus. Minute examination satisfied him that this was a mistake, and at length led to the conviction that he had obtained a new form of Protozoa, occupying the position indicated above. This ingenious conjecture being sanctioned by Professor Busk and Dr. Carpenter, is now given to the world, and the two genera which Dr. Gray feels authorized to establish are named *Carpenteria* and *Dujardinia*, in honor of two of the most eminent observers of the allied forms, Dr. W. B. Carpenter, and Professor Felix Dujardin, of Rennes.

W. H.

ETHNOLOGY.

At the Montreal meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Lewis H. Morgan, Esq., of Rochester, N.Y., communicated some of the results of a curious investigation pursued by him, relative to the laws of consanguinity and descent of the Iroquois. Further investigation induces him to believe that the system traced out by him, in relation to one of the most important of the aboriginal nations of this continent, is by no means confined to them; but, on the contrary, it embraces such wide ramifications as to furnish a means of no slight value for tracing the connection between the Indians of America and any Asiatic or other tribes or nations of a common origin.

Following out the scheme of investigation thus indicated, Mr. Morgan sets forth his views in a letter, of which the following abstract embraces the most significant suggestions:—

“It has occurred to me, after a careful examination of the system of consanguinity and descent of the Iroquois, that we may yet be able, by means of it, to solve the question whether our Indian races are of Asiatic origin. Language changes its vocabulary not only, but also modifies its grammatical structure in the progress of ages; thus eluding the inquiries which philologists have pressed it to answer; but a system of consanguinity once matured and brought into working operation, is, in the nature of things, more unchangeable than language;—not in the names employed as a vocabulary of relationship, but in the ideas which underlie the system itself. The Indo-European nations have one system, identical in its principal features, with an antiquity of thirty-five centuries, as a fact of actual record. That of the Iroquois is original, clearly defined, and the reverse of the former. It is, at least, to be presumed that it has an antiquity coeval with the race. That of the Chippewa is the same as the Iroquois, with slight modifications; thus establishing the fact of its existence in two of the principal generic stocks. Besides this, there are traces of the same system among the Aztecs, Mohaves, Creeks, Dahcotas, Delawares, Winnebagoes, and other races, all tending to show that the system has been, and now is, universal upon this continent. Should this last fact be established, the antiquity of the system, as coeval with the Indian race upon the continent, will also become established. Upon the basis of these two facts, and assuming that these races are of Asiatic origin, we may predict the existence of the same system in Asia, at the present moment, among the descendants of their common ancestors, if any remain.