

Dr. Von Lendenfeld. According to the *American Naturalist* for June, in certain calcareous sponges this observer has detected ganglion cells, with branches connecting them with other nerve cells, which are spindle-shaped. In the *Leucon* sponges sensory cells are present, but not concentrated round the pores or so-called mouths of the sponge. These cells are scattered here and there in groups over the general ectodermal surface. Heretofore, the jelly fishes were the lowest forms of animal life in which a nervous system was known to exist.

NEW LIGHT ON THE ORIGIN OF SPECIES.—In the proceedings of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, just issued, is an account of the formation of a new species in the case of a *Cypripedium*, which normally bears a one-flowered scape, and which has produced a subspicate inflorescence, and a change of form of the flowers going in company with the departure. Similar changes, which seem permanent and are perpetuated by seed and off-sets, have been produced by the same species in locations many miles apart. *The new forms are in fact new species.* From this fact the author of the paper deduces the following propositions: First, that species may come into existence by sudden leaps. "Missing links" are not necessary in every case, and the slow modifications through ages need not be traced by the evolutionist; and secondly, that identical forms, introduced as new species, may appear in different parts of the earth, and therefore the time asked for a given species to distribute itself over the earth from a common centre, may be shortened. Well attested facts of this nature will change many theories as to land connection, in some former times, between places where similar species are found, as *e.g.*, Eastern United States and Japan, the West Indies and the North-Western coast of Africa.

THE CONSUMPTIVE PERIOD.—From the time of Hippocrates down, the period in which men are most susceptible to consumption has been fixed between the ages twenty and thirty-five years, and the natural deduction was that gradually they acquire