21st April 1887. — Mr. P. Geddes read a paper »On the Nature and Causes of Variation in Plants and Animals.« The fact of organic evolution is no longer denied, but its physiological factors have not yet been adequately analyzed. Even those who regard natural selection as at once the most important and the only ascertained factor of the process admit that such an explanation being from the external standpoint, --- the adaptation of the organism to survive the shocks of the environment - stands in need of a complementary explanation which shall lay bare the internal mechanism of the process, i. e. not merely account for the survival, but explain the origin of variations. The relative importance of the external and internal explanations will moreover vary greatly in proportion as variations are found to be »spontaneous«, i. e. in some given direction continuously. Avoiding any mere postulation of an »inherent progressive tendency« common to both pre- and post- Darwinian writers, the definite analysis of the problem starts with that conception of protoplasm which is the ultimate result of morphological and physiological analysis, viz: - to interpret all phenomena of form and function of cells, tissues, organs and individuals alike in terms of its constructive and destructive (»anabolic and katabolic«) changes. While the external or environmental explanation of evolution starts with the empirical study of the effect of human selection upon the variations of animals and plants under domestication, the internal or organismal one as naturally commences with the fundamental rhythm of variation in the lowest organism in nature. It also investigates the nature of the simple reproductive variation upon which the origin of species as well as individuals must depend, before attempting that of individual variation. The interpretation of all the phenomena of male and female sex as the outcome of katabolic and anabolic preponderance is shown largely to supersede the current one of sexual selection, and in some cases at least that of natural selection; e.g. the specially important one of the origin of such polymorphic communities as those of ants and bees. In such cases natural selection acts not as the cause of organic evolution, but as the check or limitation of it, and acquires importance rather as determining the extinction than the origin of species. The process of correlation, especially that between individuation and reproduction is mooted by the author, and its application to the origin and modification of flowers etc. outlined. A discussion is given of the embryologial and pathological factors of internal evolution, with an application of the whole argument to the construction of genealogical tree of plants and animals. - A report was read »On the Gephyreans of the Mergui Archipelago«, by Prof. Emil Selenka of Erlangen; this communication dealing chiefly with a technical description of the species, a few being new. - J. Murie.

3. Linnean Society of New South Wales.

 23^{rd} February, 1887. — The following papers were read: — 1) Botanical. — 2) Miscellanea Entomologica No. III. Revision of the Australian Scaritidæ. By William Macleay, F.L.S., &c. This paper deals only with one section of the Scaritidæ, those with more or less straight and blunt pointed maxillæ, though the numbers are given of the other section, and one new genus described. Several species of the first section (the Sub-family

Carenides) are described, and the entire number now known in Australia (179 species) is divided into the following 14 genera: - Monocentrum, Teratidium, Carenidium, Conopterum, Neocarenum, Eutoma, Carenoscaphus, Carenum, Calliscapterus, Platythorax, Laccopterum, Philoscaphus, Euryscaphus and Scaraphites. Of the other section only the number of Australian species known is mentioned-50-distributed among the four genera, Geoscaptus, Dyschirius, Scolyptus and Clivina, to which is added the new genus Steganomma. The genus Gnathoxys hitherto ranked with the Scaritidæ is omitted as belonging to a distinct group. — 3) Botanical. — 4) Notes on some Australian Fossils. By Felix Ratte, M.E. (i.) On *Jeanpaulia* or *Baiera pal*mata, Ratte. The author remarks from the evidence given by de Saporta (Tome III., Flore Jurassique in Paléontologie Française), that this plant ought to be placed in the coniferous group Salisburiaceæ. (ii.) On the muscular impression of the genus Notomya (Mæonia) from the carboniferous sandstone of New South Wales. The remarkable denticulated muscular impressions presented by this genus, which were not represented by Prof. de Koninck, are well illustrated by some specimens in the Australian Museum, of which the author gives figures. --Dr. Ramsay exhibited a collection of insects from New England, containing some rare and choice specimens, among which were noticeable two new species of Heteronympha, Epinephile Joanna, (Butl.), Heteronympha phalarope, and Xenica lathoniella, and several apparently new Cicade. Among the Coleoptera were some interesting species of Schizorhina, S. Bakewellii, atropunctata, Bassii, palmata, Phillipsii, ocellata, frontalis, Bestii, dorsalis, and a fine new species quite distinct from any other kind. Among the Buprestidæ were a bright blue and green Curis, a fine Melobasis, and some beautiful and rare Stigmodera, also two specimens of an apparently new form. Of longicorns there were Tragocerus lepidoterus, and a fine specimen of Bimia, which latter appears new. - Mr. Masters exhibited specimens of the common opossum (Phalangista vulpina) from New South Wales, and several specimens from other parts of the country of opossums which have been generally looked upon as local varieties of that species. Mr. Masters pointed out the marked differences in three of those exhibited, leaving little doubt of their being distinct species. 1) A specimen from King George's Sound of rather smaller size than P. vulpina, and with the tail shorter and the apical third white. 2) A Port Darwin Opossum, less than half the size of \hat{P} . vulpina with the tail long, slender, and without conspicuous brush. 3) One from the interior of King George's Sound, much smaller than P. vulpina, of much softer fur, darker and more uniform colour, and with the tail brushy along its whole length. - Mr. Macleay exhibited, in connection with the paper read by him, a drawer of Australian Scaritidæ containing as he announced the largest and most complete collection of that group of insects in the world. — The President exhibited for Dr. Ramsay a block of Shale from the Gosford Cutting, on which there appeared, besides Phyllotheca and two fine examples of Cleithrolepis, a tadpole-like form about one inch long, and a quarter in greatest width. The head is remarkably similar to that of Platyceps Wilkinsonii from the same cutting, as described at a recent meeting, though it is not distinct enough for absolute identification. There are evident indications of a dorsal fin extending backwards from the head; and the posture of the animal compared with that of the accompanying fishes corresponds exactly with that of

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the other specimen. The whole aspect of the thing suggests the hypothesis that this is really an exceedingly early stage of some Labyrinthodont, perhaps of the very one previously described.

IV. Personal-Notizen.

Berlin. Dr. Eug. Korschelt, bisher Privatdocent und Assistent am Zoologischen Institut in Freiburg i. B. hat seine Stellung dort mit der gleichen in Berlin vertauscht.

Freiburg i/B. Assistent am Zoologischen Institut an Stelle Dr. E. Korschelt's ist Dr. E. Ziegler geworden.

Kiel. Zum interimistischen Director des Zoologischen Instituts ist Privatdocent Dr. Karl Brandt in Königsberg ernannt worden. Die definitive Besetzung der Professur der Zoologie wird erst Ostern 1888 stattfinden.

Necrolog.

Am 7. Mai 1886 starb in Leiden Dr. François P. L. Pollen, der erfolgreiche Erforscher Madagascars. Er war am 7. Jan. 1842 in Rotterdam geboren.

Am 23. September 1886 starb in Dale Park, bei Arundel, Mr. Arth. Edw. Knox, bekannt durch seine ornithologischen Schilderungen.

Am 11. November 1886 starb in Berlin Dr. G. A. Fischer, der bekannte Africareisende, welcher auch als Ornitholog einen verdienten Ruf hatte.

Im December 1886 starb in St. Andrews Dr. William Traill, ein durch malakologische Untersuchungen und Sammlungen bekannter Forscher.

Am 28. Jan. 1887 starb in Columbus, Ohio, Dr. John M. Wheaton, Professor der Anatomie am Starling Medical College, Verfasser eines umfassenden Berichts über die Vögel Ohios.

Am 11. Febr. 1887 starb in Cairo Dr. Adam Todd Bruce, Docent für Säugethier-Anatomie an der Johns Hopkins University, welcher durch embryologische Arbeiten über Limulus, Lepidopteren, Loligo u. A. reiche Hoffnungen erweckt hatte.

Am 18. Februar 1887 starb in Edinburg Mr. Robert Gray, Banquier, einer der Vice-Präsidenten der Royal Society of Edinburgh, bekannt als tüchtiger Ornitholog und Faunist.

Am 4. März 1887 starb in Hamburg Dr. Gustav Heinrich Kirchenpauer, Bürgermeister, einer der bedeutendsten Hydroidenkenner.

Am 19. März 1887 starb in Darlington John Sang, ein durch zahlreiche Aufsätze bekannt gewordener Entomolog, namentlich Lepidopterolog.

Am 14. April 1887 starb in Marburg Dr. Nathaniel Lieberkühn, Professor der Anatomie daselbst, bekannt durch seine Spongien-Untersuchungen u. v. A. Er war am 8. Juli 1822 geboren.

Berichtigung.

Auf p. 241 in No. 250 des Zool. Anz. muß die Überschrift des Aufsatzes von J. T. Cunningham heißen: »Herr Max Weber and the Sexual Organs of Myxine« anstatt » General« Organs.

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