

regards the dimensions of the cranium, is prognathous, platyrrhine, and microseme in the measurements of the face. The now extinct Tasmanian race was, like the Australian, prognathous, platyrrhine, microseme, microcephalic, but in the relations of the length to the breadth of the cranium not dolichocephalic but mesaticephalic, *i.e.*, between dolichocephalic and brachycephalic. The Bushmen, whilst mesaticephalic, platyrrhine, microseme, microcephalic, are, as regards the upper jaw, not prognathous, but orthognathous. The Bush crania differ in an important manner from their near geographical neighbours the Kaffirs and Zulus, which, though platyrrhine in their nasal relations, are dolichocephalic and megacephalic in their cranial dimensions, mesognathous as regards the projection of the upper jaw and mesoseme in their orbital dimensions. The skulls of the African Negroes are dolichocephalic, mesocephalic, prognathous, platyrrhine, and mesoseme; whilst the Andamanese, of which the Museum possesses a remarkably good series, are brachycephalic, microcephalic, mesognathous, mesorhine, and megaseme. As regards the Australian and the dark races with frizzly hair dolichocephalism and prognathism, with small or moderate cranial capacities prevail, except in the Bushmen and the Andamanese. The prevailing characteristics of the races inhabiting Europe, North Africa, and South-West Asia are a moderate latitudinal index, a moderate orbital index, a low alveolar index, a low nasal index, and a high cerebral capacity. In the Mongoloid races again the orbital index is usually high, the cranial capacity variable, whilst in its dimensions the skull ranges from brachycephalism in the Siberians and Peruvians to extreme dolichocephalism in the Eskimo. The jaw may be either orthognathous or prognathous.

The study of this Catalogue is essential to all who are interested in physical anthropology, but more especially to those who may be engaged in working with the craniological collection in the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons of England.

#### OUR BOOK SHELF

*The Village Life* (Glasgow: Maclehose, 1879.)

THIS is a volume of poems intended to picture various phases of Scottish village life. It is beyond our province to criticise the quality of the poetry, but it deserves some notice at our hands for the prominence given throughout to the most recent scientific doctrines, especially that of evolution. With the latest teachings of science in this direction the author appears to be thoroughly acquainted, as is evidenced especially in the two poems on "The Schoolmaster" and "The Doctor." It seems to us a noteworthy fact in the progress of science that its latest developments should form so prominent a feature in a work so purely literary, as a series of poems. The author himself, while he has evidently a tenderness for the old beliefs and bygone customs, still, cannot help showing how strong is his leaning to the revelations of the science of to-day. We venture to think that the anonymous author's presentation of the latest results of scientific investigation ought to reassure those who dread that science and poetry cannot co-exist, that the spread of science and the increase of scientific knowledge will leave no room for the exercise of the poet's fancy. If ignorance is a necessary condition for the exercise of this function, it is quite safe to predict that there is no chance of the poet's occupation ever being gone. Let us suggest to the author of the "Village Life," as a

subject to try the mettle of his fancy and the extent of his knowledge, the "Lake Dwellers." We think the present volume is likely to afford a quiet pleasure to many readers, and as a specimen of the versification and to show how clearly and musically the author can put a puzzling problem, we give the following quotation from the poem on "The Doctor":—

"Search as we may, no trace is found  
Of how the man-ape was transformed  
Into the man with speech and creed;  
We know not how he shed his hair,  
Or shortened his fore limbs and rose  
On back-bone straight, with head thrown back,  
With arch'd foot, and supple knee;  
Or by what process came the hue  
Of his now soft and hairless skin,  
Its brown, its red, its jetty black,  
Its yellow, and the tints between;  
Or how the straight and flattened nose,  
Developed from the monkey's face,  
The jaw prognathous, square or thin;  
And above all how speech began—  
How first the inarticulate,  
Long-armed, broad-chested, roaring clan  
Of men-apes, out of shouts and cries,  
Formed syllables and meaning words;  
How, from the jarring harsh discords  
Of brutal sounds there broke instead,  
Liquid utterances, replies,  
Sweet conversation, grave debate?—  
A vast development, so great  
And splendid that the tail-less ape  
At once became the planet's lord,  
A god in reason, as in shape.

The Doctor hoped that searchers keen,  
Might find before the glacial age  
Some traces of an earlier stage—  
Man Pliocene or Miocene—  
A skull, or skeleton that showed,  
The type improving from the ape;  
Some form revealing how a broad  
Divergence intellectual,  
May come from trifling change of shape;  
That showed complete, a reason why  
The glorious art of speech arose;  
How shortened arm, and thickened thigh,  
Deepened the chest, enlarged the lung;  
The larynx and the mouth and nose  
Transforming with the breast and brain,  
Became sonorous, and the tongue  
Shaped simple words, they grew amain  
To language musical, and song.  
But though the search is deep and long,  
And evolutionists await  
With eager hope, the early 'brave'  
Emerging from the brutal state;  
He comes not from his ancient grave;  
His grave is lost; his fossil bones  
No geologic era owns."

#### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

[The Editor does not hold himself responsible for opinions expressed by his correspondents. Neither can he undertake to return, or to correspond with the writers of, rejected manuscripts. No notice is taken of anonymous communications.]

[The Editor urgently requests correspondents to keep their letters as short as possible. The pressure on his space is so great that it is impossible otherwise to ensure the appearance even of communications containing interesting and novel facts.]

#### Artificial Diamonds

THE fate of the Glasgow diamonds, as recorded in NATURE, vol. xxi. p. 203, reminds me of an adventure of my own that happened about ten years ago, and is likely to be repeated by