I have often endeavoured to make a player-piano play Chopin's First Ballade, but I have never yet succeeded in overcoming the uncompromising self-assertiveness of the mechanism. It seems to me a curious fact that while a piano-player can often play Beethoven acceptably, it fails hopelessly with Chopin, especially in works like the ballades and nocturnes. I have succeeded in getting presentable performances of the sonatas, and I had almost said of the scherzos, but the lack of flexibility of the instrument seems to make it impossible in music where differences in colour are so important as in the ballades and nocturnes.

Although I have no doubt it will be possible to devise a mechanical arrangement which will improve the player in the direction I have mentioned, yet it would seem impossible to make any mechanism sufficiently sensitive to be able to produce effects such as those which can be produced by the fingers, just as it may be possible to produce an aëroplane which is capable of marvellous evolutions, while it never attains the instinctive facility of a bird.

CHRISTOPHER W. C. WHEATLEY.

The College, Epsom, May 23.

On the Habitat of Protodrilus and the Occurrence of the Archiannelid, Saccocirrus, on the South Coast of England.

ONE habitat of Protodrilus on the English coast has already been mentioned in NATURE of March 27 (p. 85). This animal, however, has since been found in so many similar localities in the Plymouth district that there can be little doubt that it will be found on other parts of the coast when looked for in suitable situations. Protodrilus has indeed now been taken in numbers in eleven different localities between Salcombe and Looe.

In one of these situations there was found, along with Protodrilus, a species of the interesting genus Saccocirrus, which, as is well known, appears to link up the Archiannelids with the Polychætes. This genus has not apparently been taken outside the Mediterranean region except at Madeira, but, as in the case of Protodrilus, it may very likely be found on other parts of the coast when looked for in suitable places. Hence the following description of the habitat of these animals may induce some of the readers of NATURE to look for them on other parts of our coasts.

In all cases Protodrilus—and in one case Saccocirrus—has been found in gravel just below the high-water mark of neap tides where fresh water runs or percolates into the sea, and in nearly all cases the animals were taken at the lower level of a gravelly beach where the gravel passes into a rocky foreshore. Given these conditions in the Plymouth district, namely fresh water running over or percolating through gravel near the high-water mark of neap tides with rocks at the lower levels, and one is practically certain to find Protodrilus where the gravel meets the rocks, and especially under stones embedded in gravel in the pools at the junction of the gravel and the rocks.

In appearance the species of Protodrilus found near Plymouth, *P. flavocapitatus*, resembles a piece of silk thread about half an inch long, looking brownish-white to creamy-white on a dark background, and having a rosy-coloured portion just behind the head; the body is often curved in a characteristically sinuous manner, and may become rolled up into a close spiral coil if the animal is alarmed. Saccocirrus is very similar to Protodrilus in habits, but is larger, attaining a length of nearly 2 in., and having a correspondingly thicker body, which is opaque-white in colour. This species of Saccocirrus has not yet been determined, but it does not appear to be the same as the *papillocercus* of Bobretzky as revised by U. Pierantoni (*Ann del Mus. Zool. Napoli* (N.S.), vol. ii., No. 18, 1907).

J. H. ORTON

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Sub-Red Crag Flint Implements and the Ipswich Skeleton.

THE best reply to Mr. J. Reid Moir's criticism (NATURE, May 22, p. 296) on my paper in the Manchester memoirs discussing his sub-Crag flints will be the paper itself when published. The second part of his letter, dealing with the Ipswich skeleton, reveals so complete a change of ground that it is necessary to comment on it. In his original description (Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society of East Anglia, vol. i., part ii., p. 194) Mr. Moir laid very great stress on the fact that the contracted skeleton was lying partly embedded in glacial sand, and partly in decalcified boulder clay.

In a report (*ibid.*, p. 196) by Mr. W. Whitaker, F.R.S., appears the following:—"The bony cavity of the skull is filled with earth of the same kind as that beneath which the skeleton was found, a brown loam, and the filling is so thorough that a cast of the cavity has been made."

Dr. Arthur Keith, in his description (*ibid.*, p. 203) of the Ipswich skeleton, remarks "that on reaching the museum the bones were exposed by removing from them the overlying boulder clay and leaving them still *in situ*, on the underlying glacial sands," and adds, "There is the further advantage that anyone can now examine the exact relationship of the parts to the strata in which they lie."

Mr. J. Reid Moir now says "that in his opinion the skeleton was either buried in the sand, or else covered by blown sand to a considerable depth." In either case the skeleton, when found, should have lain entirely in sand and the cranial cast in boulder clay would have been impossible. Mr. Moir's present view is hence quite inconsistent with his original description of the occurrence, and, as he cannot have it both ways, he must choose which view he prefers to stand by.

W. H. SUTCLIFFE.

Littleborough, May 27.

Antennæ for Wireless Telegraphy.

I FIND that an iron bedstead with wire mattress on the top (fourth) floor of this house answers quite well as antennæ for the receipt of wireless signals. It is only necessary to connect the receiving apparatus, which includes a Brown relay, between the bedstead and the water-pipe to receive the Admiralty signals loudly, and others from various unidentified stations faintly but quite audibly.

I find also that with the bedstead antennæ it is possible to get the time signals from the Eiffel Tower. As might be expected, the signals are not very loud, but are sufficiently audible to be recognised and read easily.

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Use of a Carbon Filament Lamp to Charge Electroscopes.

I FIND that a very convenient way of charging an ordinary gold-leaf electroscope is to rub the charging rod with the glass bulb of a glowing carbon filament lamp. The leaf system becomes negatively charged. It is quite easy to charge a Braun electrostatic voltmeter to several thousand volts in this way.

There appears to be nothing mysterious in the phenomenon. The glass of the lamp is kept hot and