

His Grace the Duke of Portland, it has been made possible to undertake a thorough examination of the cave, and work is now in progress there. The results already achieved include the discovery of a lance point in mammoth ivory, engraved with a conventional pattern, which is assigned by the Abbé Breuil to the Middle Magdalenian period, and is identical with one found in the cave of La Madeleine itself. This implement and others associated are considered to provide the most definite evidence so far discovered at Cresswell for the precise dating of the culture and its correlation in point of time, if not in development, with the classic cave sites of France. Considerable data have also been obtained in proof of occupation in Upper Mousterian times and at a still earlier period.

At the conclusion of the paper a letter was read from Sir William Boyd Dawkins, chairman of the Committee, in which he entered a *caveat* against acceptance of the engravings on bone from Mother Grundy's Parlour as of human origin. In his opinion, they were due to the action of roots. In the discussion, Prof. W. J. Sollas said that he had no doubt that they were of human origin, while Miss Garrod stated that she was authorised to say that the Abbé Breuil, who had examined the fragments that day, was convinced that the reindeer, and some at least of the lines forming the figure which was thought to be a rhinoceros, had undoubtedly been engraved by man. The bison, however, was more doubtful and might possibly be due to root action.

The Natural History of Disease in Baltimore, Maryland.¹

THE publication before us forms one of the admirable reports issued by the Carnegie Institution of Washington, and therefore calls for attention. It purports to trace the development of public health in one of the oldest cities in the States, and to correlate, so far as practicable, the ascertainable factors bearing on the natural history of disease in that city during a span of more than a century. The attempt is made in nearly 600 pages, beset with elaborate statistical tables and a number of graphs, which have been reduced to an extent which makes them partially illegible.

The valuable portion of the work deals with the actual topography of Baltimore and with the details of the gradual development of its public health administration. In 1820 an ordinance was passed making it the duty of all practising physicians to report cases of malignant or contagious fevers to the mayor or Board of Health; and although this and subsequent but very early further ordinances of similar nature were not enforced, they are interesting as preceding by many years similar ordinances (which were enforced) in Great Britain. Similarly, health commissioners, corresponding to our medical officers of health, were appointed, antedating the appointment of the similar earliest appointed officers in London and in Liverpool. But although these appointments were made, the rapid growth of Baltimore, its increasing heterogeneity of population, and other factors, have left it far behind in subsequent sanitary practice. The reader will find, in comparing the Baltimore enactments with those in Great Britain, much of interest and of practical value; and the balance to the good does not always rest with English legislation. Perhaps, however, we may agree with Solon in his advice to the Athenians; let us have the

¹ Public Health Administration and the Natural History of Disease in Baltimore, Maryland, 1797-1920, by Dr. W. T. Howard, jun.

best law we can keep, not the best laws that can be made.

For epidemiologists and students of natural history generally, however, one looks chiefly to the history of disease prevalence as here presented. A vast amount of material has been compiled, Teutonic in bulk, and Teutonic likewise in the failure to sift out what is trustworthy and to save the student unnecessary and wearisome detail. Thus deaths and death-rates are given for all causes in the aggregate and for some single diseases from 1812 onwards; although prior to 1875, when death-certificates were first required by law, the only information available was that obtained from the sextons of the cemeteries. What proportion of deaths were buried "extra-murally" we can only guess; but the large extent to which deaths of inhabitants in institutions outside the city—which are not recorded in the city statistics—vitiate the statistics given throughout the report, may be gathered from data emerging here and there in the volumes.

When we pass to causes of death, difficulties in accepting the data laboriously collected begin to multiply. Thus on p. 193 is given a list of the causes of deaths named among the burials in the year 1819. "Consumption" is the only item of likely tuberculous nature which appears. On p. 383 the death-rate from pulmonary tuberculosis for the same year appears as 492 and from other forms of tuberculosis as nil. In 1920 the corresponding rates were 128 and 23! On such data, of which an extreme example has been given, are based discussions as to the upward and downward course of the tuberculosis death-rate, which possess very slight value. The problem in Baltimore, as in many other American cities, has been complicated by large immigration of Irish, of Greeks, of Russians and Poles, and by a large negro population. The statistics deal with these heterogeneous groups as if they formed a homogeneous whole; and on such data, extremely imperfect in other respects, we are asked to accept sweeping conclusions, as for example that the course of the death-rate from tuberculosis in Baltimore has been determined above all other factors by natural selection. On similarly imperfect data, to give one further illustration, is based the unlikely inference that although an increasing ratio of the population now attain middle life, these individuals on the whole prove to be poorer risks and less capable of survival to old age than were the proportionally smaller numbers who reached the age of 40 "when natural selection was more searching in its action." To base such a sweeping conclusion on the imperfect statistics of a heterogeneous population, affected by immigration, composed of blacks and whites, of persons of eastern and southern European as well as of British and Irish origin, is extremely indiscreet; and study of the English Registrar-General's figures would have shown its error for a country in which more stable conditions exist, and for which official mortality statistics can be regarded as trustworthy.

University and Educational Intelligence.

CAMBRIDGE.—Mr. H. Gilbert-Carter, Trinity College, has been reappointed as curator of the Herbarium. Sir John Russell and members of the staff of the Rothamsted Experimental Station are giving this term a special course of lectures on "The Chemistry, Physics and Biology of the Soil." The Linacre Lecture will be delivered on May 6 by Lt.-Gen. Sir William B. Leishman, Director-General, Army Medical