

The author, too, appears to hold views as to the fixity of mammalian species which are not generally shared, as he speaks more than once of species now living which crossed into this or that area during *Miocene* times. Yet it is surely generally conceded that no existing species extended so far back in time.

Instances of this kind could be multiplied, but we feel that it would savour too much of ingratitude to dwell on the blemishes of these pages; for, despite of them, Dr. Scharff's book is one that all must read, and all will find of very real value, inasmuch as it embraces within its scope Invertebrates as well as Vertebrates, and not a few of the more interesting plants. Moreover, the pages of the work are copiously illustrated. Maps are plentifully distributed, and each map has an "inset" figure of the animal to which it refers. If the defects to which we have referred are made good in a second edition, which in all probability will be demanded, this book will form one of the most admirable treatises on the subject which has ever appeared.

W. P. P.

#### MISCELLANEOUS.

*The Name Archæocidaris.* By J. W. GREGORY.

IN the Ann. & Mag. Nat. Hist. for November 1907, Dr. Bather advocates the substitution of the name *Echinocrinus* for the well-known and appropriate name *Archæocidaris*. This change seems unnecessary, and it will probably be admitted by all students of Echinoderms as undesirable unless absolutely necessary. The name *Echinocrinus* is misleading, as it is admitted that it was given by Agassiz under the mistaken idea that the fossils which he thus named were crinoids. No one would take the responsibility of overthrowing a well-established name because it happens to assert a wrong affinity for the genus; but when a truthful name has been well established, it is deplorable to resuscitate a misleading term from which we have been saved by the common-sense of an earlier generation.

In this case there is a sound excuse for allowing the discarded name to remain buried, owing to its close resemblance to the earlier *Echinoencrinus*. *Archæocidaris* is probably more common in the Carboniferous rocks of the west of Scotland than in any other part of the British Isles, and the name is therefore especially well known among Scotch palæontologists. Professor Bell (in the 'Annals' for 1891, ser. 6, vol. viii. pp. 106-9) showed that, according to the strict rules of priority, *Actinia* is the name of a Holothurian and that *Holothuria* is an Ascidian. That fact was pointed out sixteen years ago, but the old use of the names continues in defiance of the rules. Until these changes are accepted I hope palæontologists will retain the name *Archæocidaris*.

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Gregory, J. W. 1908. "The name Archæocidaris." *The Annals and magazine of natural history; zoology, botany, and geology* 1, 208–208.

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