

of Trilobita and Isopoda, we shall find they may be, in the present state of our knowledge, so retained in classification.

I.

Pterygotus (Fossil, extinct).

1. Eyes sessile, compound.
2. Ocelli distinctly seen.
3. All the limbs serving as mouth-organs.
4. *Anterior* thoracic segments bearing branchiæ or reproductive organs.
5. Other segments destitute of any appendages.
6. Thoracic segments *amchylosed*.
7. Abdominal segments *free and well developed*.
8. *Metastoma, large*.

Limulus (Fossil, and living).

1. Eyes sessile, compound.
2. Ocelli distinctly seen.
3. All the limbs serving as mouth-organs.
4. *All* the thoracic segments bearing the branchiæ or reproductive organs.
5. Other segments destitute of any appendages.
6. Thoracic segments *amchylosed*.
7. Abdominal segments *unchylosed and rudimentary*.
8. *Metastoma, rudimentary*.

II.

Trilobita (Fossil, extinct).

1. Eyes sessile, compound.
2. No ocelli visible.
3. (Appendages partly oral, partly ambulatory, arranged in pairs).
4. Thoracic segments *variable in number, from 6 even to 26, free and movable* (animal sometimes rolling in a ball).
5. Abdominal somites coalesced forming broad caudal shield (bearing the branchiæ beneath).
6. Lip-plate, *well developed*.

Isopoda (Fossil, and living).

1. Eyes sessile, compound.
2. No ocelli visible.
3. Appendages partly oral, partly ambulatory, arranged in pairs.
4. Thoracic segments *usually seven, free and movable* (animal sometimes rolling in a ball).
5. Abdominal somites coalesced, forming broad caudal shield, bearing the branchiæ beneath.
6. Lip-plate, *small*.

Should our further researches confirm Mr. Billings's discovery fully, we may propose for the second pair of these groups a common designation (as in the case of the *Merostomata*); meantime, the above may serve as representing the present state of our knowledge.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PORTLAND WOOD, ON THE COAST OF SUSSEX.—REPLY TO MR. PERCEVAL.

SIR,—I know the Portland beds in the Dorsetshire district pretty well, and, as far as I am aware, the Tisbury *Isastræa* does not occur there at the present day. But, considering that there are fragmentary patches of Portland beds fringing the coast for a considerable distance in Dorsetshire, it is highly probable that, in not very distant times, there was a considerable area occupied by them there; as, indeed, there probably now is beneath the Channel. The Portland beds vary in character rather rapidly at places not far from one another, so that the non-occurrence of a particular fossil in those now visible, need not lead us to conclude that it may not have occurred not very far off in former times.

I would, however, recommend Mr. Perceval to obtain an accurate determination of his fossil, so as to be sure of its specific identity.

That erratics from the Portland beds have found their way into Sussex, I believe to be a fact; for I saw in 1866 a block of indubitable Portland fossil wood at Selsey, in the garden of Mrs. Pulinger. I was informed that it had been found on the beach at that

part of the shore called "The Park." It had been described to me as a petrified piece of wood from the submarine forest, which occurs along the coast; and my curiosity was raised, knowing that such wood was never petrified. I think the story was true, and certainly not improbable, because there can be little doubt that the numerous glacial erratics of that coast have travelled up the Channel from the direction of the Channel Islands. And it is quite likely that a block of silicified wood from Portland, almost as indestructible as any igneous rock among them, may have come in the same manner and from the same direction. The block was eighteen inches long and ten inches in diameter.

HARLTON, CAMBRIDGE.

O. FISHER.

LOCAL MUSEUMS.

SIR,—I am glad to see in your October number a letter from F. G. S. advocating the formation of local museums. Nothing could prove a greater assistance to the student in any branch of Natural History than to find in each town a series of specimens arranged so as to show the various products of the neighbourhood; but the chief difficulty which stands in the way of provincial museums is the uncertainty of their tenure. There is usually no dearth of specimens flowing in from all quarters when once a museum is set on foot, but money must also be forthcoming for cases; rent has probably to be paid for a room to contain them, and somebody must necessarily be employed to look after the room, keep the cases dusted, and unlock the door for visitors. Under these conditions, it will, unfortunately, too often be found that local ardour becomes cooled, the sixpence or shilling from the stray visitor will very speedily be insufficient to pay for the dusting, the room is closed, and the neglected contents are either dispersed or thrown aside as useless lumber.

In a little work entitled "Hints on Local Museums, by the Treasurer of the Wimbledon Museum Committee,"¹ as well as in a paper published in *Chambers's Journal*² on provincial museums, F. G. S. will find some most valuable suggestions for their establishment and arrangement; but, at the same time, it is as well to bear in mind that in default of local collections, a great deal of good can be done by means of local catalogues. Let each member of a Naturalists' Club undertake whatever branch of Natural History he is best acquainted with, and compile a list of the species occurring in his own neighbourhood,—one might catalogue the fossils, giving the names of characteristic species found in each quarry; another might devote himself to the minerals, and others would take in hand the Botanical and Zoological departments. Thus, by a well-organized division of labour, an immense amount of valuable information would be accumulated, and the result would be a record of the distribution of species throughout the country, more lasting perhaps, though less attractive, than that afforded by many a local museum.

PILTON, BARNSTAPLE, October 10, 1871.

TOWNSHEND M. HALL.

¹ R. Hardwicke, London. Price 1s.

² April 7, 1866.