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in a fair way to be more amazed at their own intellectual production than at any thing that has yet happened in human history.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

* Correspondents are requested to be as brief as possible. The writer's name is in all cases required as proof of good faith.

The Hall effect.

In your account of the proceedings of the section of physics, at the Philadelphia meeting of the American association, occurs the passage: "He [Mr. Hall] used not only gold-leaf, but strips of steel, tinfoil, and other metals, and clamped them sometimes at both ends, sometimes in the middle, and sometimes only at one end; and in all cases the action was the same, with the same metal, irrespective of the clamping."

This statement is not accurate. I have subjected soft steel only to the test here described, and I did not with this metal try the experiment of clamping it at one end only.

Again, it is not quite accurate to say that Mr. Bidwell attributes the action under discussion, to "one edge of the metal strip being compressed and the other stretched." One can best understand Mr. Bidwell's explanation by examining the illustrations accompanying his article in the Philosophical magazine for April, 1884.

Cambridge, Sept. 20.

E. H. HALL.

Iroquois pronouns.

Allow me to correct the entire misconception of my Montreal paper by your reporter of the anthropological section. I did not affirm that the "missionaries and all other authorities who have heretofore written on the Iroquois languages were mistaken," etc. On the contrary, I proved that my conclusions concerning the existence of an it, and the non-existence of on, were correct by quoting the "exceptions" and so-called "idioms," resorted to by the French missionaries to sustain their adaptation of the language to the French form of two genders, etc. This adaptation, which simplified the study for the young priests, I affirmed would be folly for us to follow when writing upon Iroquois construction for English students. I proved my position by numerous examples from the best native authority, from those priests, I affirmed would be folly for us to follow. Opportunities for doing this sort of work are rare, and the men who do it still rarer.

Jersey City, Oct. 1.

ERMINNIE A. SMITH.

Classification of Mollusca.

In Professor Gill's instructive comment on mollusc classification, he unintentionally misquotes me. The review in question said that no single instance of a calcified jaw 'occurs to us,' the two words in italics (omitted by Professor Gill) making all the difference between a positive assertion and a provisional one.

The Nautilus, as Owen, Lankester, and others state, has been regarded as having a calcified jaw; and I am quite confident that it is the single instance known among recent mollusks. However, there is reason to believe that the expression of Owen was used in a less precise sense than has been supposed by later writers, and that the calcification, if actually present, is at most partial, and perhaps a mere individual trait.

Cambridge, Sept. 20.

W. H. DALL.

The primitive Conocoryphian.

Your notice of Mr. G. F. Matthews's paper, read before the British association, though complimentary, gave no idea of the contents. Part of this communication was of exceptional importance. All accurate histories of the development of single animals are now thought well of; but Mr. Matthews has traced not only the transformations of the larval, but the characteristics of the adult period, and the transformations of old age. This author has also added the general history of the evolution of some of the most ancient groups of the trilobites, and shown that the changes they pass through correspond with the changes which the individuals of one of the groups, the Ctenocoryphus Matthewsii, passed through during its growth. Opportunities for doing such work are rare, and the men who do it still rarer.

ALPHEUS HYATT.

[It was impossible for us, in the brief space at command, in reporting promptly two scientific meetings of a week each in quick succession, to do justice to any paper. Many were altogether omitted. — En.]

Book-postage in the United States.

In reference to your remarks on the expense of using libraries through the mails, allow me to point out that this expense is in America exactly double what it is, and has been for many years, in England, and even in Canada. The English and Canadian