Incidentally it shows with what regularity these birds resort to certain chosen roosting places. J. H. Comstock and J. G. Needham bring to a conclusion the fourth chapter on 'The Wings of Insects,' which treats of 'The Specialization of Wings by Addition,' and terminates that portion of the series devoted to furnishing data for determining the homologies of the veins. Arnold E. Ortmann discusses 'New Facts lately presented in opposition to the Bipolarity of Marine Faunas,' stating that they do not at all support the theory of bipolarity and that we must wait for further investigation to show whether bipolarity as a relic of older times is realized in the distribution of any marine animals. The first of the promised 'Synopses of North American Invertebrates,' by C. B. Davenport, is devoted to the 'Fresh-water Bryozoa.' A brief sketch of the habits and habitats of these animals is given, followed by a key for their specific determination and a bibliography of literature on Fresh-water Bryozoa. W. E. Praeger presents some 'Notes on the Habits of Bascanion Constrictor,' which contains good evidence as to the climbing abilities of this snake. Leonhard Stejneger, under the title 'A New Name for the Great Crested *Anolis* of Jamaica,' shows that there has been a curious unanimity in misnaming this reptile *Anolis edwardsii* and proposes for it the name of *Anolis garmani*.

The June number of the *Journal of the Boston Society of Medical Science* brings the third volume of this periodical to a close. The index shows that it contains sixty-five papers contributed by forty-five investigators. While there is a greater tendency towards pathological subjects than formerly, there is yet very much of interest to the comparative anatomist. In the present number Calvin G. Page has a 'Study of Streptococci isolated from Throat Cultures from Patients Ill with Scarlet Fever,' and a 'Preliminary Report on the Diplococcus of Scarlet Fever.' Theodore Hough and Bertha G. Ballantyne give a 'Preliminary Note on the Effects of Changes in External Temperature on the Circulation of Blood in the Skin,' and S. A. Hopkins presents a preliminary report on 'Bacteria and Dental Caries,' stating that he has not yet been able to deduce from his experiments any definite laws or positive results. Theobald Smith describes and figures 'Some Devices for the Cultivation of Anaërobic Bacteria in Fluid Media without the Use of Inert Gases.'

DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE.

ABOUT A REFORM IN NOMENCLATURE.

In the 'Nomenclator Zoologicus' of Scudder 80,000 genera are mentioned and there are 7,585 genera of phanerogamia. Human memory is unable to retain all these arbitrary names (languages have from 20,000 to 30,000 words each) and the result of it all is that "the language of science is more difficult than science itself." Even professed naturalists cannot guess what the *Mormops megalophylla* or the *Ceroplastes psidii* is. It is high time to repair this mischief by introducing the reform following:

1. The generic names of animals shall end in *us*, those of plants, in *a*, and those of minerals in *i*.

2. Minerals shall have a genus formed with the abbreviations of their components. Thus *Sulphurzinci sphalerita* indicates a mineral (i), a Sulphur (Sulph.) of zinc (zinci), of the species *sphalerita*.

3. Plants shall have their genus preceded by the abbreviation of their family. Thus *Rosaspiræa limbata* indicates a Rosacea (Rose), of the genus *spiræa* and the species *limbata*, plant (a).

4. The genus of animals shall be relegated to special lists, substituting for those in common use the abbreviations of their class and family or order. Thus *Inscoccidus psidii* indicates an animal (us), insect (ins.), coccidæ (coccidus) belonging to the species *psidii*. The family (Cocciceroplastus psidii) is more difficult of interpretation, since at least 1,000 families of animals have been accepted.

5. In case there be two similar species in the same family of animals their genus shall be cited.

The reform proposed does not alter or change anything, but facilitates research, as well as the applications, popularization and teaching of science. There are no future inconveniences in the acceptance of this reform. No Inter-

national Congress is required, since the abbreviations present no difficulties.

A. L. HERRERA.

MUSEO NACIONAL, MEXICO.

TIDES AND CURRENTS IN CANADIAN WATERS.

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: Permit me to invite your attention to the latest report of the engineer in charge of the survey of the tides and currents of the coast waters of Canada, Mr. W. Bell Dawson, M. A., M. E., etc., a copy of which has been addressed to you. This survey, commenced by the government of Canada in 1894, is of great importance, not merely in the interest of hydrographical science, but of the large and increasing trade which finds its way along the Gulf and River St. Lawrence, the greatest waterway from the north Atlantic into the northern part of the American continent, and which, like all similar tide-ways, is affected by the complex action of the tides and consequent currents.

It is much to be regretted that the economy or parsimony of the government has caused a suspension for the present of the special survey of the currents, and has restricted the work to tidal observations, which, though of great value to the shipping interests, can only be considered as preliminary in regard to the investigation of the currents themselves, which lead to so many losses of property and life, and tend to high rates of insurance, injurious to the ship owners and merchants of Canada, and, through them, to those of an empire as a whole.

The present report, in addition to what can be done with the insufficient grant allowed in the matter of tide-gauges and tide-tables, has reference to the behavior of the gigantic tides of the Bay of Fundy, when confined by the converging coasts at the head of the bay, and their relation to the smaller tides on the opposite side of the isthmus connecting Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, at Bay Verte, on the Gulf of St. Lawrence. These and the phenomena of the 'bore' at the head of the Bay of Fundy are here for the first time described, illustrated by maps and sections, and tabulated, and will be found of the greatest interest by all who desire information as to the exceptional tides of this region.

NATURAL HISTORY OF THE TRES MARIA ISLANDS, MEXICO.

THE latest publication from the Division of Biological Survey of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, being 'North American Fauna, No. 14,' bears the title at the head of this notice. It contains the result of an exploration made in the spring of 1897 by Mr. E. W. Nelson and Mr. E. A. Goldman during the month of May of that year, and adds largely to our previous knowledge of the fauna and flora of these islands. The more appropriate title to the paper would be 'Contributions to the Natural History,' etc., for no *insecta* are mentioned and *only six* species of mollusks; of these *four* had not been previously known to occur. The author, after mentioning the names of Col. A. J. Grayson and Alphonse Forrer, says 'no other naturalist is known to have visited the islands until the spring of 1897,' the season of his visit. He should have known that the islands were visited in the spring of 1876 by Mr. W. J. Fisher, previously naturalist of the Tuscarora Telegraph Sounding Expedition, directed by Commander George E. Belknap in 1873. Mr. Fisher made a large collection of molluscan forms as published in the Proc. U. S. Nat. Museum, pp. 139–204 of Volume XVII., 1894, wherein 89 species are listed.

It is not unlikely that both Grayson and Forrer collected many insect species which have been published somewhere. Only the mollusks collected by Fisher have come under my notice.

ROBERT E. C. STEARNS.

LOS ANGELES, CAL., June 26, 1899.

NOTES ON INORGANIC CHEMISTRY.

No little work has been done on the compounds of sulfur and iodin, but with no very satisfactory results. The latest contribution is by L. Prunier in the *Journal de la pharmacie et de la chimie*, and it can hardly be said that the subject is left in a much clearer condition. Prunier distinguishes between what he calls 'iodized sulfur' and 'sulfur iodid.' The former is made by adding the desired quantity of iodin to sulfur at 115° to 120°, stirring, cooling and preserving in a stoppered bottle. The iodin