

tion; the example might then be worked out in this manner:

35.....	42—
12.....	126
4.....	378 +
1.....	1134 +
378 + 1134 — 42 = 1470 ;	

but the possibility of constructing similar processes throws no light on the origin of such a method among the Russian peasants.

C. A. SCOTT.

CAMPHOR SECRETED BY AN ANIMAL.

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: Mr. O. F. Cook's article in a recent number of SCIENCE recalls some observations by the late E. D. Cope. Cope wrote (*Trans. Amer. Entom. Soc.*, Vol. 3, May, 1870, pp. 66-67), as follows: "The species of *Spirobolus* and *Julus* discharge a yellowish juice having much the smell of aqua regia and a very acrid taste. The *Spirostrephon lactarius* exudes from a series of lateral pores a fluid which has in its odor a close resemblance to creasote. The *Polydesmus virginianensis* is defended by a fluid which has almost exactly the smell of hydrocyanic acid and is fatal to small animals. *Petaserpes rosabius* secretes a considerable quantity of a milky substance, which has the perfume of gum camphor."

Quite possibly there are other references to the subject, but I have not examined the literature of the Myriapoda very carefully.

NATHAN BANKS.

EAST END, VA.

A CORRECTION.

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: In the issue of SCIENCE for October 19th I notice your statement under 'University and Educational News' of my appointment as acting president of Wells College. Permit me to say that a misspelling of my name completely changes it into that of another person. Instead of *Feeley*, it should be *Freley*.

J. W. FRELEY.

BOTANICAL NOTES.

PROLIXITY IN BOTANICAL PAPERS.

WHAT botanist has not groaned in spirit in these recent years over the increasing prolixity of American botanical writers? There was a time

when it was the exception for a botanist to write a paper of great length, and some of us were a little ashamed of what appeared to be the inability of botanical writers to prepare papers whose length, at least, would suggest profundity. Doubtless at that time there were fewer men who could write anything better than short notes, and perhaps there was some need of a change. But now, alas, we have learned the lesson only too well. One takes up journal after journal and finds that many of the papers are drawn out through pages and pages until in very weariness he turns to the 'conclusions,' hoping to obtain a summary of the author's results, often to find that here, too, there is such prolixity as to suggest the need of a 'summary' of the 'conclusions.'

Is it not time that botanical teachers gave some instruction in conciseness of statement, while they are making investigators out of the raw material which they find in their classes? Paper and ink do not cost much, and the long-suffering editors of botanical journals have not made, as yet, any audible protest, but we speak for the readers of these long-drawn out papers whose time is too valuable to be given to the absorption and assimilation of the vast mass of excellent but uncondensed matter which now-a-days finds publication. Many a good paper would be much more readable if condensed to half its length, while at the same time it would lose nothing in clearness of statement of all essential facts.

THE STUDY OF PLANT DISEASES.

AN instructive paper by Mr. Galloway, in the 'Yearbook of the Department of Agriculture' for 1899, gives a brief history of the development of the study of plant pathology in the United States. Little has been done by American botanists previous to 1875, and practically nothing at all by the Government. With the establishment of the agricultural experiment stations, an impetus was given to the beginnings made by Professors Farlow, Burrill and Arthur, and about the same time in the Department of Agriculture a beginning was made of what eventually developed into the Division of Vegetable Physiology and Pathology. This was done by the appointment of Professor