

clared that he was required by his chief to 'furnish at least two sensations a week.' Nearly all the more respectable and conservative magazines have yielded somewhat to this demand. The general reading public has recognized in an indistinct and uncertain way that much that is wonderful in this 'wonderful century' is due to scientific discovery, and it is apparently hungry for easy exposition of scientific work. It seems to like, at any rate it is largely fed upon, science of the 'head-line' variety, and those who can furnish this sort are in great demand. Unfortunately there are a few men, fortunately not many, who have done and are doing really excellent scientific work who are ready to cater to this morbid appetite, and there are many others, merely 'hack' writers with neither knowledge or reputation, who find it easy to imitate them. The result tends to dull the scientific sense and corrupt the judgment of the great majority of readers. What we see in print concerning what we do not understand we almost invariably accept as true unless it violently opposes our prejudices or accepted theories, and the general public, therefore, is in a very receptive mood towards announcements of scientific discoveries and accomplishments. That this is taken advantage of to reach the purse of the public no one can deny, and it is impossible not to find certain very respectable and otherwise conservative journals largely responsible for losses of thousands of dollars by comparatively poor people through stock subscriptions in schemes believed to be backed by scientific men. It is no valid defense to say that the editors of these journals were imposed upon, for if they were they need not have been. Other journals, including some daily papers, know very well how to avoid such imposition and have the courage to do it. It appears to be accepted as a fundamental principle of what is called 'journalism' in these days that any one who is gifted with a little facility in writing, a far-reaching imagination and a conscience without elastic limit may be properly 'assigned' to prepare an article on any subject whatever, and thus we are treated to weekly or monthly essays by one author covering, in fact sometimes rather more than covering, in a few months the whole area

of human knowledge. Perhaps they, too, have their orders to produce a given number of 'sensations' in a given time.

Among many other evils growing out of what may be called 'Newspaper Science' not the least is the manufacturing and maintaining of false reputations. The constant appearance of a name in connection with the development of a given art, science, discovery or invention makes an impression which it is difficult to destroy, and this is true even among the most intelligent classes. To find who is really and truly eminent in any field of human activity one must go to the specialists in that field. The popular verdict is more than likely to be wrong because it is based on fictitious, newspaper-created renown. Is there not, indeed, some danger that in spite of the carefully selected and altogether able jury, the newly created roll of American honor may, in certain cases and for the lack of this appeal to specialists, become a Hall of Notoriety rather than Fame? The selection of S. F. B. Morse for a place therein must have been due to the general belief among the jurors that he was the inventor of the electro-magnetic telegraph. Yet it was long since proved beyond dispute that his share in that invention was among the least of the many who contributed to make the telegraph possible, and that he justly deserves only a relatively very small share of the honor belonging thereto.

T. C. M.

THE DATE OF PUBLICATION OF BREWSTER'S  
AMERICAN EDITION OF THE EDINBURGH  
ENCYCLOPÆDIA.

IN commenting on a recent paper by Mr. J. A. G. Rehn (*Amer. Nat.*, XXIV., p. 575), Dr. J. A. Allen states (*Bull. Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist.*, XIII., p. 186) that the reference to "Brewster's American Edition, Edinburgh Encyclopædia, Vol. XII., Part II., p. 505, 1819," given by Mr. Rehn, "is erroneous as to date, and misleading as to the title of the work cited."

There is nothing whatever in Mr. Rehn's statement to warrant the idea that he had taken the reference at second hand, as Dr. Allen seems to have inferred, and as a matter of fact his reference is perfectly correct.

As Dr. Allen's positive statement that the

work dates from 1832 is calculated to mislead others, it seems desirable to call attention to the facts in the case.

The earliest American edition of the work, entitled 'The American Edition of the New Edinburgh Encyclopædia,' was published at Philadelphia by Edw. Parker and Jos. Delaplaine, Edw. Parker, and Jos. Parker (the firm changing twice apparently), in 18 volumes, each in two parts, making 36 volumes in all. Each has the full title printed on the outside cover, together with the date of publication, which ranges from 1812 to 1831.

This edition was probably printed directly from the Edinburgh one, as fast as the parts came out. Of this, however, I am not sure, as I have not the dates of the latter at hand.

After this publication was finished, extra copies, which were apparently struck off from the same type, as they are absolutely identical, were bound up in 18 volumes with a new title page: 'The Edinburgh Encyclopædia conducted by David Brewster, first American edition,' all the volumes bearing date of 1832.

The statement 'first American edition' probably misled Dr. Allen, though except for the title page and introduction, this edition seems to be identical with the real first American edition of 1812-1831. Both 'editions' are in the library of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia.

WITMER STONE.

#### THE SPENCER-TOLLES FUND OF THE AMERICAN MICROSCOPICAL SOCIETY.

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: At the annual meeting of the American Microscopical Society, held in New York City during the last week in June, the especial attention of the Society was directed toward the Spencer-Tolles fund. As many are unfamiliar with the movement, permit us to state its history briefly as follows:

After the death of Charles A. Spencer in 1881 and of Robert B. Tolles a few years later, it was deemed fitting that a sum should be raised to provide a proper memorial to the father of American microscopy and his distinguished pupil, as a tribute due their services to the scientific world. The first notice of the movement was sufficient to bring, unsolicited, from the Royal Microscopical Society of London a con-

tribution for this purpose. Additional sums subscribed by the members and others, together with the natural increase under the careful management of the Custodian, have brought the sum to a total at date of \$756. The recent death of Herbert R. Spencer, the last of the three famous American workers, to whose efforts toward the perfecting of microscopic objectives the entire scientific world is so deeply indebted, serves as the immediate impulse of this movement toward the enlargement of the fund to a point at which its income may be sufficient to encourage in some way the advancement of science. It is accordingly desired that this tribute to the Spencers, father and son, and to their co-worker, Mr. Tolles, should be increased at once to the sum of at least \$1,200, in order that the income therefrom may be offered each year under proper conditions as a reward for or assistance toward some scientific work or investigation of suitable character.

To this end the undersigned were appointed by the Society to secure cooperation in the effort to increase the fund, and to solicit contributions toward that end. We believe that the object will appeal to every one who is called upon to use the microscope in any capacity whatever, and contributions will be welcomed from all. Remittance should be made to Mr. Magnus Pflaum, Custodian of the Spencer-Tolles Fund, Bakewell Law Building, Pittsburg, Pa., who will at once return a proper receipt for the same.

For the American Microscopical Society.

#### *Committee:*

HENRY B. WARD, The University of Nebraska, Lincoln.

ADOLPH FEIEL, 520 East Main St., Columbus, Ohio.

HENRY R. HOWLAND, 217 Sumner St., Buffalo, N. Y.

#### *Custodian:*

MAGNUS PFLAUM, Bakewell Law Building, Pittsburg, Pa.

#### *SOCIETIES AND ACADEMIES.*

TORREY BOTANICAL CLUB, OCTOBER 9, 1900.

THE scientific program consisted of reports of summer work.