was able to show, from curves of magnetic variation based on the records of the magnetic observatory, an apparent variation of the *rate of motion* of the north magnetic pole.

J. R. COLLINS,
Secretary.

TORONTO, December 23, 1902.

DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE.

GUESSES ON THE RELATIVE WEIGHTS OF BILLS AND COINS.

THE question raised in SCIENCE for November 7 as to whether women are capable of making closer estimates than men is an interesting one, but the comparison of results from different colleges is somewhat uncertain. Some of the errors can be eliminated by testing young men and young women from the same state who have always been educated together. The question 'How many one-dollar bills will equal in weight a five-dollar gold piece?' was asked of 76 male and 58 female students of the University of Wyoming with the following results:

Male students: Average guess, 391; median, 56; average variation from the average guess, 516; average variation from the median, 366.

Female students: Average guess, 1,324; median, 50; average variation from the average guess, 2,125; average variation from the median, 1,299.

Since the true number is 7, the guesses of the women are slightly better if we take the median, but the most noticeable point is the much greater variety in the guesses of the women, which is in accordance with the report of Mr. Messenger in SCIENCE for April 25. This agrees well with common observation. Probably most grade books of classes nearly equally divided between the two sexes would show that the highest and lowest marks were given to women.

In the West coin is usually preferred to paper and five-dollar gold pieces are more common than one-dollar bills in Wyoming.

E. E. SLOSSON.

UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING.

THE PUBLICATION OF REJECTED NAMES.

WITHIN the last few days I have received two papers in which rejected manuscript names are published in such a way as to render them valid, as I understand the rules. As there is evidently a misconception or divergence of opinion, it is worth while to discuss these cases.

1. Mr. Nathan Banks, in his most interesting paper on the 'Arachnida of the Galapagos Islands' (*Proc. Wash. Ac. Sci.*, 1902), cites on p. 50 *Filistrata oceanea* and *Loxosceles galapagoensis* Marx MS., n. spp. On p. 51 he states that these were *nomina nuda*, but that they are identical with his species of the same genera described below. On p. 55 the *Filistrata* is described as *F. fasciata*, and the *Loxoceles* as *L. longipalpis*. It is evident that the Marxian names have 'priority of place,' and it is clearly stated that they pertain to the two species described; it seems to me, therefore, that they are valid.

2. Mr. F. H. Knowlton (*Bull. Torr. Bot. Club*, November, 1902, p. 640) gives an account of a fossil fruit from Vermont which he says Lesquereux named in manuscript *Carya globulosa*. A description of the fruit immediately follows the publication of this name; but on the next page we are told that the fruit belongs to *Cucumites*, and 'in view of the fact that *Carya globulosa* was never actually published, it may be appropriate to name it in honor of Lesquereux, who first detected it. It may be called *Cucumites lesquereuxii*.' On the contrary, *C. globulosa* was just then published, and I do not see how we can avoid calling the plant *Cucumites globulosus*. T. D. A. COCKERELL.

E. LAS VEGAS, N. M.
December 6, 1902.

THE IROQUOIS BOOK OF RITES.

I HAVE before me the La Fort manuscript from which my old friend, Horatio Hale, took the text of the condolence song of the 'Younger Brothers.' It varies considerably from his version, partly from haste in copying, and partly because he made the spelling more consistent in some cases. The differences are mostly in the vowels, but some con-

sonants are not the same. I do not think the sense is changed, but intend to have a new translation made.

Another interesting Indian manuscript in my hands is the Mohawk version of the greater condoling songs. La Fort's is the Onondaga one used at the delivery of the wampum when the curtains are removed. The others are sung at the wayside meeting, and on the march to the council-house, in which they usually end. This version was very plainly written by Chief George Key, of the Grand River reservation, Canada. For mere convenience it is arbitrarily arranged in verses, and it has the valuable feature of a division into syllables throughout. The song with the names was written first, perhaps as being of first importance, but the remaining songs are in the order of Hale's book. There are slight variations from his version, but none of essential importance, except one. Those who have attended a condolence will remember the continual repetition of 'Ha-i-i-i,' much prolonged, and this hardly appears in his book. In the great song with names before me it is written nearly a thousand times. In the one he saw the writer may have spared himself the trouble of writing, knowing just where it should be used. The chiefs' names occur in the usual order, but some of those placed together in Mr. Hale's version are separated in this. The variations in sense are very slight.

The greater songs are always used in the Mohawk version, as this is better adapted to the music used. This music I hope soon to secure.

W. M. Beauchamp.
204 Maple St., Syracuse,
November 19, 1902.

SHORTER ARTICLES.

THE TORTUGAS, FLORIDA, AS A STATION FOR RESEARCH IN BIOLOGY.

The Tortugas, Florida, probably surpasses any other situation in the tropical Atlantic, in the richness of its marine fauna and in natural advantages for the study of tropical life. Until within recent years, however, the inaccessibility of the islands rendered it difficult to maintain even a temporary station upon them, and all of our knowledge of the life of the region is due to the cursory visits of the United States government expeditions in the *Bibb*, 1869; *Blake*, 1877–78, and *Albatross*, 1885–86, as well as to the explorations of Louis Agassiz, 1850–51, and Alexander Agassiz, 1881.

Certain assistants of Alexander Agassiz have also studied the fauna of the Tortugas, and several expeditions not under government control have visited the reefs, notably that of the University of Iowa under C. C. Nutting, in 1893. The latest expedition to the islands was that of the Museum of the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences in 1902, the results of which have not yet been published.

Since 1898 the United States government has established a naval coaling station upon the Tortugas, and frequent and regular communication with Key West is now maintained by means of a large ocean-going tug. The region has thus recently become accessible, and the time for the establishment of a research station upon the islands is now ripe.

The Tortugas group is composed of seven low, sandy islands and numerous reef flats irregularly disposed so as to partially enclose a lagoon about ten miles long and six miles wide, and having an average depth of about eight fathoms.

Two of the islands are inhabited, Garden Key being occupied by Fort Jefferson, and Loggerhead Key by the Tortugas Lighthouse.

The group is the most recent of the Florida reefs. Pure, deep ocean water surrounds them, and there are none of the extensive mud flats or mangrove-covered shores so characteristic of the keys along the mainland coast of Florida. The northern edge of the Gulf Stream lies about twenty-five or thirty miles south of the Tortugas, and the east to southeast breezes, which prevail during the spring and summer, drift the surface waters of the Gulf Stream upon the Tortugas, giving a remarkable opportunity to study the life of the great tropical ocean current, while at the same time enjoying all of the advantages of a land station, a combination of advantageous conditions which all who have been upon cruising expeditions will appreciate.