THE LENGTH OF THE SMALLEST KNOWN SIRENIAN FETUS; GYRE PREFERRED TO "CONVOLUTION"

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: In the October issue of the *American Naturalist,* under "Scientific Exhibits at the Seventh International Zoological Congress," on p. 633, the fetal manatee shown by me is said to be "approximately an inch and a half long." Since this is supposed to be the smallest known Sirenian fetus it is proper to state that from the root of the flexed tail to the top of the flexed head, allowing two mm. for the depression caused by the removal of the brain, the present length is 53 mm., say two and one-eighth inches. It has shrunk about two mm. since the measurements recorded in the *American Journal of Science and Arts,* August, 1875, where also various aspects are represented upon Plate VIII. In accordance with the criterion applied to the developing human being by Minot ("Embryology," p. 391) this specimen should be called *fetus* rather than *embryo,* because the tail is unmistakably that of a manatee notwithstanding the marked flexures of both ends of the body and the resemblance of the head to that of a horse or other ungulate.

On p. 662 it is said that I "exhibited photographs of human cerebral convolutions." Do not think me over-particular in disclaiming responsibility for the last word. I would no more use "convolution" for *gyre* than "conflagration" for *fire.* The choice was made deliberately in 1881, and published on page 133 of the issue for March 26 of SCIENCE, (the original periodical of that name, of which only three volumes were published). It has been declared upon several subsequent occasions. It constitutes one of many cases of identity between my neural terms and the B.N.A., although the framers of the latter had not the grace to acknowledge the priority of nearly the fourth of a century.

BURT G. WILDER

ITHACA, N. Y.,
April 7, 1908

AMETHYSTINE GLASS

IN connection with the interesting information given in SCIENCE, February 7, p. 239, it may be worth while to call attention to the fact—first pointed out to me by Mr. Irish, of the normal school at Tempe, Arizona—that ordinary bottle glass, when left exposed on the ground out-of-doors in the arid southwest, assumes a strong purple or amethystine color. This I have observed in Arizona, New Mexico and Colorado. Dr. Shedd, when professor of physics at Colorado College, examined some of this glass which I had collected at Colorado Springs, and found that the color was discharged by heat. Many years ago, Faraday made some experiments with glass, noticing a similar change of color; but I have not seen any recent literature upon the subject.

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SPECIAL ARTICLES

SOME NOTES ON MALACOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE

Two years ago I published a small paper on this matter.[1] On some points my eminent and most competent friend, Dr. W. H. Dall, does not agree with me, and I hope that these lines may contribute to concert between us. This would be the more desirable, as Dr. Dall without any doubt is actually the first among all the living malacologists whose knowledge extends to actual molluscan faunas as well as to extinct ones. Also the divergence of Dall and myself is not one of principle, but only caused by a different interpretation of the international rules.

Dr. Dall during the last years has made many efforts toward establishing names of ancient authors, more or less forgotten. The question in this case can not be that of the more or less convenience in accepting such names, but whether it is necessary to have no other rules for our manner of proceeding, than consequence and logic. Therefore we accept the most disturbing changes, but only in the case of true necessity, and this is not the case at all with such authors as Martyn, Humphrey, Link, Bolten, Mörch and others.

The international rules say in article 25:

The valid name of a genus or species can be only that name under which it was first desig-

[1] *Nachrichtsbl. der Deutsch. Malacozool. Ges.,* 1906, pp. 1–12.