

terms in speaking of familiar species. In all cases where exactness is necessary, even well-known common names will not serve, for often a single plant will have several names or a single common name may be applied to several plants. In spite of the conspicuous differences that still exist between the adherents of the "American Code" and those who advocate the "Vienna Rules," the scientific names are still the safest to go by and all botanists would do well to insist upon their use. The sooner the general public discovers that even technical botany is still "the amiable science" the better it will be for all concerned.

WILLARD N. CLUTE

JOLIET, ILL.

LACEPÈDE OR LACEPEDE

IN going over "The Genera of Fishes" recently published by Dr. David Starr Jordan, assisted by Barton Warren Evermann, I discover that these authors accept and adopt the view expressed by Sherborne in his "Index Animalium," p. lvii, where, under the head of "Additions and Corrections," Sherborne says:

A letter dated 1831 is signed "b.g.é etc de lacepède." This spelling and accentuation should be adhered to.

The writer is very much inclined to think that both Sherborne and the learned authors of the recent paper on "The Genera of Fishes" err in accepting the accentuation of the name of the great Frenchman found attached to a scrap of paper bearing his name, which was evidently written in haste. "One swallow does not make a spring," and one hurriedly written autograph with the omission of the acute accent over the first "e" in the word does not prove that this was the correct way of writing the name. The writer of these lines is called upon every month to attach his signature hundreds of times to vouchers and other documents. He ordinarily puts a period after his initials, W and J; but only yesterday, having signed some two hundred vouchers, he observed that in the haste of doing so he had in a number of cases omitted the period after his initials. Personal observation shows him that just so it is not an infrequent thing for French

gentlemen in hurried writing to omit an accent.

In the judgment of the writer of these lines the existence of one letter in which the French ichthyologist signed himself "lacepède" should not avail against the fact that in all his published writings the other method of accentuation prevails, that all biographies, encyclopædias, and dictionaries, in which the name occurs, give it as "Lacépède." If he were the only person who had borne the name there might be some weight attached to the signature, which Sherborne has turned up; but there were and are others in France who bear the name, and any one who takes the trouble to consult a French dictionary or encyclopædia of biography will find that invariably the name is and has been spelled "Lacépède." The name is so spelled in Buffon, who was the friend and contemporary of Lacépède, and I think it seems "rather late in the day" to change the universally accepted spelling of the name of the well-known naturalist on the strength of the L. S. discovered by Sherborne.

To be consistent, if the acute accent is omitted on the first "e," the capitals should also cease to be employed, not only in the family, but also the Christian names of Lacépède, for in the autograph which Sherborne quotes the name is written throughout without capitals. After carefully weighing the matter the writer is of the opinion that Buffon, the authors of the "Dictionnaire Universelle," and the thousand or more Frenchmen engaged in scientific research, who have for over a century written the name "Lacépède" are more likely to know what is correct than the author of the "Index Mammalium," who, having unearthed this L. S., has on the strength of it proceeded in this particular to overthrow the usage of more than a century, and the usage of those who were the friends and acquaintances of Lacépède himself.

W. J. HOLLAND

PITTSBURGH, PA.,

October 17, 1917

FORBES WINSLOW MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: The British Ministry of Pensions has recognized and authorized for trial psychical treatment for