A careful examination of the observation errors in a given problem ought to yield in general a fair estimate of the precision, even if the problem is the prosaic task of counting individuals, and the more imposing the array of significant figures, the greater the obligations of the computer to defend his results.

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THE NAMES SIMIA, S. SATYRUS AND PITHECUS

THE attention of the zoological profession is invited to the fact that the proposition is before the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature to reopen the case of *Simia*. In its present form the proposition is for the commission: (a) absolutely to suppress the generic names *Simia* and *Pithecus* and the specific name *Simia satyrus*, on the ground that retention of these names and the application of the rules to them will produce greater confusion than uniformity; (b) to insert into the Official List of Generic Names, *Chimpansee* Voigt, 1831, 76, for the chimpanzees, *Pongo* Lacépède, 1799, type *pygmaeus* 1760, for the orang-utans and *Macaca* Lacépède, 1799, type *sylvana* 1758, for the Barbary ape.

The argument before the commission gives an extensive historical review of the subject; this will be published in Bulletin 145, Hygienic Laboratory.

Briefly summarized, the argument maintains: (1) that because of the importance of the Primates in connection with investigations on infectious diseases, the nomenclature of certain genera has passed far beyond a status in which this subject is of importance only to zoologists in general and to mammalogists in particular; (2) that it is absolutely essential that unambiguous names be adopted internationally for experimental animals used for studies dealing with problems involving the life and death of human beings; (3) that the names *Simia, Simia satyrus* and *Pithecus* are so confused in zoological literature as to preclude hope of reasonable uniformity in their use in zoological, bacteriological, serological and public health work; (4) that the safest solution is to suppress these names entirely; (5) and that the International Commission should select thoroughly unambiguous and suitable substitutes which will preclude possibility of confusion in interpreting results as reported by bacteriologists and others in different countries—results which deal with human life.

The secretary will delay announcement of final vote until about September 1, 1927, in order to give to zoologists, bacteriologists and others who may be interested time to consult the premises formulated in Bulletin 145, and to express their views to the commission. Application for copies of Bulletin 145, Hygienic Laboratory, should be addressed to "Surgeon General, U. S. Public Health Service, Washington, D. C."

C. W. STILES,
Secretary to Commission
HYGIENIC LABORATORY, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SAND FLOTATION ON LAKES

IN connection with the articles on sand flotation which appeared in SCIENCE on April 16 and June 4, 1926, it may be stated that this phenomenon has been observed on two lakes in northern Wisconsin; it was noted on Trout Lake on July 2, 1925, and again on May 9, 1926, and on Tomahawk Lake on May 15, 1926. On July 2, 1925, some biological observations covering an area about four hundred meters long and one hundred meters wide were made along the shore of Trout Lake, and patches of floating sand were found over this entire area; no attempt was made, however, to ascertain the full extent of the water thus affected. On May 15, 1926, patches of floating sand were found along the shore of Tomahawk Lake, covering an area about two hundred meters long and fifteen to twenty meters wide; it was estimated that the floating sand covered between five and ten per cent. of the surface of the water within this area. The patches ranged from one centimeter to about five centimeters in diameter. Sand grains of various sizes were found in this material, the largest measuring 2 x 1.2 x 1 millimeter.

In both lakes the floating sand was found along sandy shores and beaches, and there was a moderate offshore wind in each instance, to which agent the phenomenon was attributed.

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SCIENTIFIC BOOKS

An Introduction to Cytology. 2d edition. By LESTER W. SHARP. New York, McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1926. Pp. xiv + 581.

A NEW edition of this widely used work will be heartily welcomed. The book has been largely rewritten and its scope has been in some respects materially extended. Especially noteworthy are the fuller consideration given to discussions of the physico-chemical structure of protoplasm and of cytoplasmic inclusions in the light of recent studies; the author's modified attitude toward the achromatic mechanism concerned in mitosis; the illuminating discussion and summary of meiosis and the more extensive review of our knowledge of animal cytology. As in the former edition, the illustrations are admirably chosen and technically excellent. An important improvement is the inclusion of the bibliography in one alphabetic list.