Another matter that deserves attention is the pronunciation of the terms and symbols. Who has not heard the word "centimeter" pronounced with a French beginning and an English ending? The writer as a student thought from the class-room pronunciation that Joule was a Frenchman until his biography chanced to come into view. The pronunciation of Greek symbols runs all the way from the Doric to the Attic. The writer recently ran across a text in which it was explained that "micro" was Greek for "millionth."

It is most unfortunate in mathematical discussions that the letters of the English alphabet have no distinctive names. It is troublesome enough over the telephone, but when the letters C and Z come through the filter of a professorial full beard the probability of distinction is fifty-fifty. The English have of course avoided this confusion by calling the latter letter "zed."

The importance of taking immediate action in the matter is well illustrated by Professor Uhler's reference to the present usage of the word "battery." It is probable that "battery" has been used incorrectly in place of "cell" for at least thirty years. It is doubtful indeed that a present attempt to revert to the proper usage would have any measure of success.

R. G. HUDSON

MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

SCIENTIFIC BOOKS

The Elements of General Zoology. A Guide to the Study of Animal Biology Correlating Function and Structure with Notes on Practical Exercises. By WILLIAM J. DAKIN. Oxford University Press, London (American Branch, New York) VII+1—496 pp., 252 figs. 1927.

ZOOLOGY is so rapidly becoming an experimental science that the need for an elementary text stressing the physiological rather than the morphological aspect has been keenly felt by many teachers. Professor William J. Dakin has attempted to meet this demand by writing a text-book of physiology illustrated by numerous examples from all fields of zoology. Among the topics considered in this very attractive volume are: the composition of the animal body, nutrition, respiration and the respiratory organs, the blood and its circulation, temperature and animal life, movement of animals, nervous system and sense organs, excretion, growth and reproduction, etc. The book affords an excellent outline for those teachers desiring to change the usual course in general zoology into a more physiological one.

It must be admitted, however, that the title is somewhat misleading, for only a few of the elements of general zoology are included in the work, while others are treated very inadequately. Such is particularly true of the brief chapter on heredity and evolution. The shortcomings of the physiological approach to a general course in zoology are all too obvious in the chapter on the skeleton, where various parts are considered as so many distinct types of machines and no suggestion is given as to how one type has evolved from another. To-day, when function is being emphasized, frequently to the exclusion of form, beginning students should be made to realize that many structures, such as the thyroid, for example, may assume totally new functions in vertebrate evolution without losing their morphological identity. It is evolution which makes zoology a unified science and the student of zoology at the outset of his career should be given the opportunity of glimpsing the whole edifice of animal life before being called upon to analyze the functions of its various parts.

Professor Dakin's book is splendidly illustrated and the many original diagrams will be welcomed by all teachers of zoology. Some teachers, however, will consider the scattering of laboratory directions throughout the body of the text a decided disadvantage from the pedagogical standpoint. Further, one can not help but wonder how long a book without head bands will last in the hands of the average college student.

G. KINGSLEY NOBLE

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

SCIENTIFIC APPARATUS AND LABORATORY METHODS

A NEW DEVICE FOR FILING MICROSCOPE SLIDES[1]

THE usual difficulties in filing microscopic preparations mounted on glass slides are: (a) They are inaccessible or lost among hundreds of others filed in small boxes of one sort or another; (b) the more elaborate small cabinets designed for this purpose are relatively expensive and inelastic; (c) slides filed one against the other in drawers stick together and are easily broken; (d) bacterial smears, which are usually without coverslips and sticky with immersion oil, can not be filed one against the other; (e) it is time-consuming to hunt up slides filed in one place and notes filed in another. The device to be described is believed to overcome these difficulties.

A piece of sheet metal, preferably aluminum, three

[1] From the Department of Pathology and Bacteriology of Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland.