

mock,' if that is a diminutive of hump, as seems most likely. Whether there is any connection between our hammock and 'hammock' in the ordinary sense (German *Hangematte*) perhaps some philologist can tell us. If 'hom-mock' could be universally adopted by the natives of the southeastern coastal plain, then 'hammock' could be restricted to the familiar manufactured article and 'hummock' to a heap of ice or something of that sort; but this is obviously out of the question at present.

Before dismissing the subject I should like to suggest to those botanists who believe in giving names of classical derivation to every kind of plant-habitat, that they find a Latin or Greek equivalent for the word under discussion, and thus do away with all this uncertainty at one stroke, at least as far as botanists are concerned.

ROLAND M. HARPER.

COLLEGE POINT, NEW YORK,  
June, 1905.

#### INDIAN BONE COMBS.

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: Some of your readers may receive the valuable archeological reports of David Boyle, of Toronto, annually made to the minister of education, Ontario. Mr. Boyle fully believes that the bone combs found on Indian sites in Canada and New York are a purely aboriginal idea, while I as firmly hold that this idea came from Europeans. Such differences are common and natural, but the report for 1904 mistakes my position saying:

The contention of Dr. Beauchamp is simply this, that without metallic tools it was impossible to make a comb, and the inference is that before the appearance of Europeans, the Indians had no use for any article of this kind.

The latter statement is correct, the former an error of my valued friend. If I have made such a statement I gladly retract it. I certainly do not believe this impossible in a general way, but metallic tools were used in most cases.

I have figures of forty-five of these combs from Iroquois sites in New York and they are found there on no others as yet. Ten of these are from Mohawk sites, found with glass and

brass ornaments, and there are others there. Four are from Cayuga sites of similar character. Onondaga sites have furnished seven, of which two are as early as 1600. Seneca sites have furnished twenty, mostly made about 1687, with two more which are in a sense prehistoric. Some recent ones have not been figured. From Oneida sites I remember none, though they should occur there. Two others were from Jefferson County, where they are certainly rare. One of these may be classed as early and the other recent. Some brass beads found on sites there now place these in the sixteenth century, as had been surmised. Of those enumerated forty were found with European articles, and five may be dated anywhere from 1550 to 1600. The earlier and ruder ones were made with stone tools; the more elaborate with metallic implements. The soundness of my position will thus be seen. All known New York combs of this character seem to have been made between 1550 and 1700, and may be ascribed to European contact. A few were made with stone tools, soon replaced with those of metal, and I certainly do not think it was impossible to have made the ruder forms without the later tools. Why the Indians did not think of these combs before we can not tell. It is evident they did not till after European contact.

Some of the later combs are fine in design, and Mr. Boyle has given some figures of Egyptian bone combs, furnished by Wm. Flinders Petrie, and there are curious resemblances to those found in New York and Canada, so many centuries later. One great value of Mr. Boyle's reports to those laboring in New York is in the close relations of the fields, so well shown in his long and accurate work.

W. M. BEAUCHAMP.

SYRACUSE, N. Y.,  
August 11, 1905.

#### SPECIAL ARTICLES.

##### THE SYSTEMATIC NAME OF THE JAPANESE DEER.

THAT an author himself has no more right to change a systematic name once given by him than any other person is a principle now