

of each genus. Those memoirs in which the type species is placed in the middle of a genus are, in general, systematic catalogues, not descriptions of new species. When a genus is first named, nine writers out of every ten place first a species they know and which they deem typical of the group in question.

For all these reasons, the writer thinks that the first species rule should prevail, though he would not strenuously object to the rule of the first reviser. In so far as the method of elimination sets aside both first species and first reviser, doing the work over again with every change in our views of generic limits, he feels sure that future systematists will have none of it.

DAVID STARR JORDAN

SPENCER F. BAIRD

THE following, which I have just come across in the 'Autobiography' of Moncure D. Conway (Vol. 1, p. 49) seems worth reprinting in *SCIENCE*. Conway was a student at Dickinson College, Carlisle, Pa., when Baird was professor of zoology there.

T. D. A. C.

Baird, the youngest of the faculty, was the beloved professor and the ideal student. He was beautiful and also manly; all that was finest in the forms he explained to us seemed to be represented in the man. He possessed the art of getting knowledge into the dulllest pupil. So fine was his spirit that his explanations of all the organs and functions of the various species were an instruction also in refinement of mind. Nothing unclean could approach him. One main charm of spring's approach was that then would begin our weekly rambles in field, meadow, wood, where Baird introduced us to his intimates. About some of these—especially snakes—most of us had indiscriminate superstitions. Occasionally he would capture some pretty and harmless snakes, and show us with pencillings their difference from the poisonous ones. He even persuaded the bolder among us to handle them. * * * After Professor Baird went to reside in Washington I had opportunities of seeing him and his family often. Mrs. Baird was a lady of fine culture and much wit. Baird was very lovable in his home, and to the end of his life he remained a man in whom I never discovered a fault of mind or heart. He awakened in me a love of science, to which I had previously given little thought.

MONUMENT TO MENDEL

TO THE EDITOR OF *SCIENCE*: It may not be generally known that an effort is being made to erect a suitable monument to Gregor Mendel. The movement has the support of leading biologists both in Europe and in America. It is hoped that American biologists will use their best efforts to see that this country is not behind Europe in its appreciation of the remarkable work of this pioneer in a field which at the present time occupies so important a place in biology.

According to circulars just received from Professor Tschernak, Professor C. B. Davenport, Cold Spring Harbor, Long Island, New York, has consented to receive subscriptions to the fund.

While American scientific men are, generally speaking, not wealthy, I think we all appreciate fully the service rendered by Mendel, and should not only contribute according to our means, but should endeavor to induce those who have the means and are interested in the progress of science to do so.

W. J. SPILLMAN

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

ASSOCIATED PRESS FAKES

TO THE EDITOR OF *SCIENCE*: The Associated Press cables us that Matteucci says that within a few weeks the earth is to strike the tail of Marchette's comet, with dangerous consequences to the world. Now does the Associated Press believe this, and has it made any provision against such catastrophe; or has it merely preempted the right to say 'I told you so'?

Every one recognizes the attempted scare as one of the vapid jokes of an Associated Press agent. No one is soft enough to be hoaxed, and no one has suffered from the stupid fake, except a few frightened invalids and that particular Press Association itself which allows its name to be used as guarantor for such folly. Luckily there are other press associations, whose reputations are above sending such stupid cablegrams, or making their patrons pay for such nonsense.

C. A.