of peach trees may be delayed by injecting with saturated solutions of ether in water from an inverted bottle supported above. Etherization should be begun just a few days before the buds begin to open. In the writer's experiments blossoming was delayed eleven days. The trees were not injured by the treatment. Ripening was retarded by two or three days, but the fruit was materially increased in size.

Leafy shoots set in bottles of solutions are far more sensitive to the effect of ether than is the leafless tree, one half of one per cent. causing transpiration almost to cease in less than twenty-four hours. Opening flower buds are more sensitive still, being overcome by one tenth of one per cent. of ether.

V. A. CLARK

EXPERIMENT STATION FARM,
PHŒNIX, ARIZONA

AN ILLINOIS STATE ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

THE time seems ripe for the formation of a State Academy of Sciences in Illinois, which may aid scientific work throughout the state by banding together the leaders in the various departments of science, by stimulating students in the more isolated communities, and by forming a center for all scientific interests.

The demand for such an organization is great and the opportunity promising. It is hoped that every leader and every worker in science in the state will help the cause by becoming charter members.

Will those interested write to the undersigned suggesting the best time for the first meeting.

A. R. CROOK

MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY,
SPRINGFIELD, ILL.

THE UNIVERSITY OF MAINE AND THE STATE LEGISLATURE

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: There appeared in SCIENCE for March 29, 1907, the reprint of an article in the *Boston Evening Transcript* regarding the University of Maine, which contained a few misstatements that should be corrected:

First. The committee appointed by the legislature presented a *majority* report favoring the discontinuance of the liberal arts course, not retaining it as stated by the *Transcript*. The *minority* report recommended its retention.

Second. The vote in the senate was 17 to 13 in favor of discontinuing the liberal arts course instead of retaining it as reported by the *Transcript*.

As the house favored retaining the liberal arts course by a vote of 123 to 12 the result is a deadlock between the two bodies and no knowledge of a settlement has reached the writer at this date.

On several occasions during the discussion before the legislative committee the leaders of the opposition to the University of Maine resorted to personal abuse of the president of the university; on one occasion he being accused of being 'a freebooter, with an ignoble desire to be president of a university.' Such a method of procedure by the opposition certainly does not tend to increase the respect of the people of the state of Maine for the opposing institutions and for their representatives. Such political methods should be beneath the dignity of the representatives of Maine's oldest educational institution, and we hope will receive the censure of its alumni.

P. L. R.

We are informed that the senate of the State of Maine passed on March 25, the appropriation for the University of Maine without withdrawing the right to confer the degree of bachelor of arts.—EDITOR.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS AND NEWSPAPER SCIENCE

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: My attention is directed to a communication signed "C. A." in your issue of March 22. I am certainly amazed that so reputable a paper as SCIENCE should lend itself to such a statement without the slightest investigation.

The story respecting Matteucci and the Marchette's comet appeared originally in the *London Daily Mail* and was cabled to the *New York Sun* on February 22. It was denied in the *New York Sun* on February 25. The Associated Press never at any time cabled it to this country or anywhere else.

Of course you may have some ulterior purpose for publishing such a falsehood respecting this organization, but I give you the opportunity to make a correction, assuring you at the same time that I should have more respect for you and your paper if before publishing a falsehood of this sort you would make some effort to ascertain the truth.

Sincerely yours,

Melville E. Stone,
General Manager

We regret having published a communication attributing to the Associated Press the story concerning Marchette's comet. We are glad, however, to find that the Associated Press guards so carefully its reputation for accuracy in its scientific news.—Editor.

SPECIAL ARTICLES

THE FIRST SPECIES RULE FOR DETERMINING TYPES OF GENERA—HOW IT WORKS IN ORNITHOLOGY

As a further contribution to the discussion of methods of fixing types of genera in zoology, an exposition of how the first species rule works when applied in ornithology may be of interest to other zoologists.

It is evident to every one familiar with the intricacies of nomenclature that the uniform enforcement of this rule would result in eliminating many generic names that have become, through a long period of nearly universal and unquestioned use, almost household words in the current literature of zoology, or in their transference to wholly new and more or less repellant associations. So frequently would this happen in the case of Linnæan genera that the promoters of the first species rule are obliged to make, as one of their first conditions for its adoption, an exemption clause for Linnæan genera. It can readily be seen that such an exemption clause would work charmingly in the case of North American birds, and many American ornithologists may be persuaded to swallow the sugar-coated pill thus so thoughtfully prepared for them; but it is hardly probable that such action would be followed by ornithologists at large, and quite improbable that it would meet with approval in other departments of zoology. But no way has been suggested for saving many other genera, equally as well established and as universally current.

As an illustration of how the first species rule would work when applied without restriction, a few Linnæan genera may be cited. Of the seventy-five valid Linnæan bird genera, fourteen are fortunately monotypic, and the type of some thirty-four others is by common consent (in nearly all cases by elimination) the first species. This leaves about one third of the total number with the currently accepted type some other than the first, ranging from the second to the thirty-fourth. To take the first species in these cases would create nomenclatural chaos. For example, the type of the genus *Fringilla* would be *Dolichonyx oryzivorus,* the bobolink, a bird of a different family, thus transferring the family name Fringillidæ from the finches to a wholly different group, rendering a new name necessary for the finch family; the type of the genus *Psittacus* would be *Ara macao,* a large long-tailed American species instead of the familiar gray parrot of Africa, and involving also the transference of the family name as well; the type of *Anas* would be *Cygnus cygnus,* a swan instead of a duck; the type of *Scolopax* would be an ibis instead of a snipe; and so on through the list. The same confusion would result in the case of mammals, fishes and reptiles, and doubtless in other classes. As, however, Linnæan genera are tabooed in this connection, non-Linnæan genera will be considered later on in this communication.

In Mr. Stone's second paper on this subject[1] he states that in my reply[2] to his former article[3] I relied 'mainly upon general state-

[1] 'The First Species Rule versus Elimination,' Science, N. S., Vol. XXV., No. 630, pp. 147–151, January 25, 1907.

[2] "The 'Elimination' and 'First Species' Methods of Fixing the Types of Genera," Science, N. S., Vol. XXIV., No. 624, pp. 773–779, December 14, 1906.

[3] "The Relative Merits of the 'Elimination' and 'First Species' Method in Fixing Types of Genera—with Special Reference to Ornithology," Science, N. S., Vol. XXIV., No. 618, pp. 560–565, November 2, 1906.