

ment agrees with Smith's earlier statements; Bulletin 17.)

3. Typical watermelon-wilt in the pots inoculated with the watermelon-*Fusarium*. All of the ten plants growing in this autoclaved soil contracted the disease. They were watered with distilled water until the plants began to develop the wilt, and then they were watered with ordinary hydrant water.

(4) All the uninoculated plants (30 pots) remained free from disease.

Because one fungus in a group is a feeble parasite, it does not follow that all are, and especially in the absence of experimental data. The writer never maintained that all species of the form-genus *Fusarium* were active producers of disease. In fact, when he began to study this group, all of them were supposed to be saprophytes, and he was, I believe, the first one to maintain and to demonstrate that certain members of the group are among our most destructive fungi. This work has been built upon largely in certain quarters, with very scant credit to the writer. Such matters, however, even themselves up in the long run and credit finally goes where it belongs.

The moral of all this is that when one assumes the rôle of critic he ought to be reasonably certain of his facts.

ERWIN F. SMITH

August, 1907

ENGLISH AS SHE IS WRITTEN

EVER since it was authoritatively decided that "The United States is," and not "are," there has been increasing departure from what was not long ago considered good grammar, especially in the newspapers. We do not expect the "dailies" to lead in correct diction, however desirable this would be from the fact that the reading of the bulk of our population is done in their columns, and serves the younger generations as their preferred literary food. We are so accustomed to having the papers pervert the nation's English that we rather expect to see all kinds of grammatical and syntactic horrors perpetrated in our morning papers. And SCIENCE could hardly be expected to bring much pressure to bear

upon the journalistic world in inducing them, *e. g.*, to use the nominative instead of the accusative case when stating that "whom it is well known has been," etc., a form to be found in every daily for the last two or three years. But when SCIENCE, as well as some other journals of high standing, admits into its columns such statements as that "the underlying strata was a soft limestone," and that "this phenomena was closely observed by us," and that "we owe this data to the courtesy of Mr. —," it does seem that the restriction of the scientific curriculum to so much language study as is provided for in the high schools is proving unfortunate. Perhaps the inauguration of the much-needed spelling reform, which is considered by some as obliterating important landmarks, has contributed to the feeling of linguistic irresponsibility on the part of juvenile specialists in particular. But would it not be proper to consider the correction of such palpable mistakes as part of the duty editors owe to the public; if only to prevent us from being charged with illiterate perversion of the language by our cousins across the Atlantic?

E. W. HILGARD

BERKELEY, CAL.,

August, 1907.

[The proofs of SCIENCE are read each week by three professional proofreaders, and most, though unfortunately not all, grammatical errors are corrected. Errors such as those quoted by our correspondent are like infringements of the etiquette of polite society—they are especially dreaded; but they are minor matters, and may indeed be in the line of linguistic evolution. It must be admitted that the English language is used with greater correctness and skill by men of science in Great Britain than in the United States. This is probably due to the fact that English men of science come as a rule from a comparatively small class in which the use of correct English is a social tradition.—EDITOR.]

THE ARTIFICIAL PRODUCTION OF MUTANTS

IN SCIENCE for July 19 Professor T. D. A. Cockerell gives an appreciative review of Tower's "Investigation of Evolution in Beetles of the Genus *Leptinotarsa*," a recent