

work, describing a method for the reduction of certain compounds, referred to in a scientific paper, without further information, as "Ladenburg's" method. Persistent search of the indices of the journals where the paper would most probably have appeared yielded only a brief polemic note, *which made no reference to the appearance of the original paper!* The proper method was finally found as a side-issue in a paper on oximes, through the use of a very recent hand-book of laboratory methods, the author of which had very probably gone through the publications of Ladenburg until he struck this article. Had the author of the paper from which the reference (?) mentioned in the first sentence of this paragraph taken half a minute's more time and given this reference, and given it correctly, he would have saved others literally hours of searching.

Another instance. Certain important and excellent work was recently done in Philadelphia on methods of sewage disposal. As one feature of this work, a large number of determinations of the amounts of nitrates present were made by what was referred to as "McRae's narcotine test," no reference or description of the method being given. It became necessary elsewhere to find the details of this method, and it so happened that the usual chemical abstract journals had missed this paper. As a last resort, the "Index Medicus" was looked through, and finally a reference to the paper was found, though even here the citation given was not the one where the paper would usually be most easily found. Had the author of the report of the Philadelphia experiments given a half-line reference to the place of publication of this method, he would have saved an hour or more of the time of one or two men in a busy laboratory.

Fortunately, cases of the total omission of an important reference are comparatively rare, though the embarrassment and additional work such omissions cause is quite sufficient to warrant their being judiciously guarded against. More frequent, and sometimes equally troublesome, are the cases where erroneous page, volume or year numbers are given, or sometimes even an erroneous journal or

book name. A case recently shown me was that of an author who referred some eight or nine times in a paper of four pages, to the work of another author "Schreiber";—"Schreiber's" correct name was "Fleischer"!

The movement for the unification and coordination of zoologic nomenclature, although differing in many considerable respects from what a similar movement in other sciences would be, includes not a few phases which could well be studied and adopted by non-zoologic contributors to the literature of science.

F. ALEX. McDERMOTT

HYGIENIC LABORATORY,
WASHINGTON, D. C.,
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A TREMATODE EPIDEMIC AMONG ENGLISH
SPARROWS

DURING the months of June and July, 1910, English sparrows in the vicinity of the College of Agriculture of the University of Wisconsin at Madison were found to be very commonly infected with a trematode parasite which was identified as *Monostoma faba* Bremser. This parasite, which forms conspicuous cysts in the skin of the abdominal region, has long been known in Europe, but has heretofore been reported in only one or two isolated cases on this continent. Attention is called to the matter here, as it may be of general interest to helminthologists, and in order that others may be on the lookout for the parasite in this country. In this locality the parasite appeared to cause a certain mortality, and it is possible that it may become one of the means which will help to check the increase of the English sparrow in North America. Unfortunately, it attacks other small passerine birds of several families as well. A more detailed account of the present epidemic is being published in the *Bulletin of the Wisconsin Natural History Society*, Vol. 9, Nos. 1-2, pp. 42-48, pl. 5, April, 1911.

LEON J. COLE

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