

tions and conclusions previously recorded by me.

The experimental evidence concerning the identity of the *B. abortus* isolated at the Illinois Agricultural Experiment Station in 1909 has been presented in several papers,<sup>1</sup> and, in connection with the literature reviewed in the same papers, seems to me to be conclusive. Cultures of the organism have been furnished to several laboratories in various parts of the country. A culture of this bacterium was requested by Professor E. G. Hastings, of the department of bacteriology, Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station, in March, 1911, and such a culture was sent to him on April 5, 1911.

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#### THE MEETINGS OF SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: The reasons for isolating the meetings of the American Society of Naturalists, with its two affiliations, the Zoologists and Anatomists, from all other scientific organizations meeting during the Christmas recess seem to be as follows, judging from the chance statements of some of the officers of the societies: (1) Better facilities for delivering papers in the way of apartments, lanterns, etc.; (2) better living accommodations; (3) better chances for the members to become acquainted; (4) isolation from temptations to spread the interests over a wide field. If other reasons have been given, I have not heard them expressed.

Now, of these reasons, the first and second do not seem to me of any validity. A good lantern and comfortable meeting rooms can readily be obtained at any of the centers where

<sup>1</sup> MacNeal and Kerr, *Journal of Infectious Diseases*, 1910, Vol. 7, pp. 469-475. MacNeal, Society of American Bacteriologists, Ithaca meeting, 1910. Abstract in *SCIENCE*, 1911, Vol. 33, pp. 548-549; *Centrbl. f. Bakt.*, I. Abt., Ref., 1911, Bd. 49, pp. 390-391. Full paper in *Illinois Agriculturist*, March, 1911, pp. 8-14. MacNeal and Mumford, Illinois Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin No. 152 (1911, in press).

the larger association meets and in regard to living conditions, I am quite sure that the cities where the American Association for the Advancement of Science meets can offer accommodations equal to those demanded by the most discriminating members of the Naturalists, Zoologists and Anatomists.

With regard to the third reason, I believe that this too, is of minor consideration—not because I do not value the social function of the meetings, for I am under the impression that this factor is paramount. What I mean is that smokers and hotel lobbies and the meetings themselves take care of this element quite well and well enough. If the officers and members who are solicitous in making the meetings a success will present themselves at the various functions rather than seek a quiet corner where they may enjoy the company of a chosen few of their friends to the exclusion of others who would care to meet them, I am quite sure that the third reason will pale into insignificance.

The fourth question seems to me to be the one which is cardinal. I am afraid that it is born of an indifference which certain members have towards any work in zoology or in biology in general which does not have certain relationships. If one will read over the programs of the Zoologists and Anatomists, he will find that papers upon topics of nomenclature, systematics, descriptive zoology and embryology, bionomics and some other subject matter are conspicuously absent from the one and that invertebrate topics are excluded from the other. This means that the rôle of these two societies is not to cover the legitimate field of zoology, but is limited to certain aspects; this is especially true of the Eastern Branch, but less true of the Central Branch of the Zoologists.

In the case of the Naturalists, the limitation of the field is more conspicuous than in the other cases, for here we have an organization which purports to be a nucleus around which the other biological societies are supposed to convene, whose field is more limited than any of the others! I am quite well aware that

there is difference of opinion with regard to the place that genetics holds in the interest of the average zoologist, anatomist, botanist, etc., but the assumption is, on the part of the officers of the Naturalists, that the field is sufficiently broad and fundamental to embrace the interests of men from all fields of biological work. Personally, I am interested in genetics, from the general standpoint, but the minutiae are as technical and demand as close attention as any other field of biological work. The terminology and treatment of the science of genetics are changing daily and unless one take this as his special field of work he finds difficulty in following the discussions. There is another point, too, in this connection: I am not willing to admit that the data of genetics are any more fundamental than the data of other lines of endeavor, as for instance, the subject of development or of differentiation, or of metabolism, or one of a half dozen other things. Genetic development is but one group of phenomena in the ensemble we know as a living thing, even if it is an important one.

It is impossible for the Naturalists to justly solicit membership from botanists, geologists, psychologists, anthropologists and from other departments of science and expect these members to attend the meetings of the Naturalists when this organization meets in cities other than the one in which the special societies are meeting. At least it is not fair to the members of the other societies, who are at the same time members of the Naturalists. If it is the mountain and Mahommed, the mountain will not come to the prophet; of this I am quite sure.

Another point: The field of zoology is so wide and is so intimately connected with many other fields that no one cares to risk his reputation for logical thinking in fixing the limits of this science. Its devotees are not all embryologists, nor students of regeneration, nor of vertebrate anatomy; many of them are interested in animal psychology and others are interested in the physiological aspects of zoology, which stand on the border land be-

tween these sciences and zoology *sensu A.S.Z.* (!) Now meeting at Washington and in affiliation with the American Association for the Advancement of Science are several societies which yearly present papers of direct interest to our members, whose research in comparative psychology or animal behavior causes them to have this interest in the programs of the psychological associations, such as the American Psychological Association and the Southern Society. There are a number of papers presented before the Biochemists and Physiologists which are of interest to other members of the Zoologists and of the Anatomists. Now I wish to submit: Is it fair to these men to demand that they be loyal to the Zoologists and forego the pleasure and profit of attending such meetings in other departments as they desire? Do the reasons given above for isolating the meetings of the zoologists and anatomists compensate for this desideratum? I do not think they do.

It is my impression that there are a number of men whose views coincide with the ones expressed here and this is the *raison d'être* for this communication.

M. W. MORSE

#### REGARDING PAYING THE EXPENSES OF STATION WORKERS TO SCIENTIFIC MEETINGS

THE American Association of Agricultural Colleges and Experiment Stations at their meeting at Columbus in November passed the recommendation of their Committee on Station Organization and Policy, which reads as follows:

"At the request of one of the societies, with which members of the station's staffs would naturally be associated, the question of members of the staff attending the meetings of the scientific societies was discussed. Your committee believes that the leading members of the staff should, for their own sakes, so far as they are able, attend the sessions of at least one such society annually. It also believes that the station administration should be alive to the fact that there are frequently meetings and conventions at which the best