

the digestive tube of the fly, then multiplies in much the same way as it would in the culture tube. It is an interesting fact that when blood containing *Tr. brucei* is planted on a suitable culture medium an incubation period of from two to three weeks is necessary to bring about this adaptation. It is not unreasonable to believe that the changes which take place in the test-tube are not unlike those which occur within the digestive tube of the fly. The successful cultivation of *Tr. gambiense* has not as yet been realized and hence comparison of the two can not be made.

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CONCERNING NOMINA CONSERVANDA,
AND A REFERENDUM TO
ALL ZOOLOGISTS

THE *Zoologischer Anzeiger* for January 3, 1912, publishes the result of an extensive mail vote taken among the professional zoologists of Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden, for and against the strict application of the law of priority in all cases, the negative vote expressing the desire that the most important and generally used names should be protected against any change on nomenclatural grounds. The vote was taken among professional zoologists, excluding anatomists, paleontologists and amateurs. Dr. Th. Mortensen, in reporting the results, comments as follows:

The result of the vote is very striking. Of the 122 names there are two for the strict application of the priority rule in all cases, which means less than two per cent. It may perhaps not be unreasonable to conclude from this result that the number of those zoologists who swear to the strict application of the priority rule, is upon the whole very small, the great majority wishing to have the names preserved unaltered.

It is to be hoped that the zoologists of other countries will follow the example given here. When this has been done and it has been definitely proved that the great majority object to the strict application of the priority rule, it may perhaps be expected that the tyranny of that notorious law,

which has already done so much to damage science, will be thrown off.

The *Entomological News* for March, 1912, in an editorial on this subject offers to receive and print the names of any American zoologists who will send in their votes.¹ It is to be hoped that all zoologists of this country interested in the names of animals will register their votes as suggested.

Any general concurrence in the protest against the strict application of the law of priority in all cases should not be accepted as a licence for every zoologist to adopt any names that he chooses. No individual should take it upon himself to waive the rules, but in specific cases where clearly greater convenience will result from setting them aside, this should be done by such a centrally organized and authorized body as the Commission on Zoological Nomenclature. Such a body should work toward the compilation of a list of *nomina conservanda*, and the names of such a list, once adopted by the International Congress, should never be open to future change on nomenclatural grounds.

The adoption of a list of *nomina conservanda* is not without precedent. The botanists have such a list, and it appears to work well. Article 20 of the International Rules of Botanical Nomenclature reads:

However, to avoid disadvantageous changes in the nomenclature of genera by the strict application of the rules of nomenclature, and especially of the principle of priority in starting from 1753, the rules provide a list of names which must be retained in all cases. These names are by preference those which have come into general use in the fifty years following their publication, or which have been used in monographs and important floristic works up to the year 1890. The list of these names forms an appendix to the rules of nomenclature.

The next meeting of the International Zoological Congress will occur in July, 1913, and any proposed change in the rules of nomenclature must be forwarded to the commission a year in advance of the meeting at which

¹To Dr. P. P. Calvert, editor, 4515 Regent St., Philadelphia, Pa.

they are to be considered. Therefore, in order to bring the question of *nomina conservanda* before the next International Congress, we, the undersigned, have drawn up and forwarded to the secretary of the International Commission, Dr. Ch. W. Stiles, Washington, D. C., the following proposal:

PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE INTERNATIONAL CODE
OF ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE

To add to Article 26.

To avoid disadvantageous changes in the nomenclature of genera by the strict application of the rules of nomenclature, and especially of the principle of priority, the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is empowered to prepare a list of names to be retained. These names are to be by preference those which have come into general use in the fifty years following their publication, especially those generic names upon which long used family names are based, and those which have been used in monographs and important works up to the year 1890. With each generic name thus conserved is to be cited a type species, to be chosen with a view to retaining the name in its most widely known sense, even if thereby an exception must be made to the other provisions of this code.

We beg leave to suggest to American zoologists individually and to zoological societies the need that the commission be fully informed as to the state of opinion among us concerning the substance of this proposal. The commission has in times past published an invitation to all zoologists to send in proposed lists of *nomina conservanda*, and has met with little response. This was doubtless due to the form of the invitation, the data called for being far more than any of us had time to compile. It will require little effort to write a postcard to the secretary of the commission, expressing approval or disapproval of plan proposed; it will be easier still to vote "yes" or "no" to a question prepared for circulation among the members of any society having zoological interests. It is urged that in all zoological societies, such an inquiry be circulated for personal signature, and that the result of the vote be forwarded to the commission and also published in the

scientific press. We entertain a hope that the real opinion of zoologists may thus find expression, and that such expression may so influence future rule-making as to prevent the unspeakable confusion of our literature that already impends.

(Signed)

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THE RAINEY AFRICAN COLLECTION

THE final shipment of the extensive natural history collection made by the Paul J. Rainey expedition in British East Africa, numbering some fourteen barrels and thirteen cases, has been received at the U. S. National Museum, and is being unpacked in the taxidermy shops. The collection is of large size, including some 4,000 specimens, more than 700 of which are those of large game.

Mr. Edmund Heller has been the guest of Mr. Paul J. Rainey on his African hunting trip, and accompanied the expedition for the purpose of preserving the animals secured. Mr. Rainey has donated the entire collection to the Smithsonian Institution and the National Museum. While Mr. Heller had charge of the preservation of mammals in general, he paid special attention to collecting carnivores and ungulates. In a Smithsonian publication, now in press, Mr. Heller describes twenty-four new species of African rodents found in the collection. During the trip Mr. Rainey granted Mr. Heller every opportunity to make a complete survey of mammals. His assistants, twenty or thirty trained negro skinners, porters, etc., were employed by the safari.

Among the material obtained is the series of lions captured by Mr. Rainey's American bear-hounds, as described in his well-known lectures. There are also many specimens of different kinds of antelopes, including the hartebeestes, wildebeestes and waterbucks, as well as buffaloes, zebras, cheetahs, monkeys and rodents. A few hippo skulls and rhino