associate professor of agricultural engineering. Mr. F. C. Gates, who recently finished the work for his doctorate at the University of Michigan, is instructor in botany. Mr. Edgar M. Ledyard, who spent the past year at the University of Michigan where he put the entomological collection in order and left some sixty thousand Philippine insects, has returned to his work as assistant professor in entomology. Dr. H. N. Whitford has resigned as associate professor of forest botany and silviculture, and has returned to the United States.

DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE

THE VOTE ON THE PRIORITY RULE

To the Editor of Science: A brief rejoinder may be permitted to the report by Messrs. Nutting, Williston and Ward in Science for December 13, on a vote on the rule of Priority in Nomenclature.

Primarily this vote shows something quite different from what might be inferred from a superficial examination of the report.

It means *not* that the voters have studied the conditions of confusion which the priority rule was instituted to clear up, and which produce the present temporary state of which there has been natural complaint; but that the teachers (of whom the list of voters is exclusively composed) are much annoyed by the uncertainty incident to the period of transition. This is nothing new; everybody has felt it; it requires an almost Roman firmness to give up a familiar if erroneous name; and the wonder is that the vote was not unanimous. Precisely the same state of mind is the cause why we have not yet adopted the metric system, and Russia retains the old style in her calendar.

If the question had been put as to what remedy should be had, other than continuing the work of rectification as rapidly as possible, it is likely there would have been as many minds as there were voters. No teacher likes to give a name to an organism before his classes which he is not certain is up to date. Moreover, some too clever pupil may discover that Jordan, Merriam, Allen, Elliot, Gill, Richmond, and other master systematists reject that name; where then is our infallibility? It is a tearful situation.

However, a complete remedy is at hand which will harmonize all the disputants without sacrificing accuracy or rejecting necessary rules.

It is well known that nearly all the vertebrates have what are called "common" or popular names. These have been carefully preserved by the ornithologists in their check-lists, for example.

Now let the dear old familiar names of each man's particular set of text-books be given the status of "common names," distinguished by (say a plus sign before them) to avoid confounding them with the real names, and have it generally admitted that no odium attaches to the use of a "common name" for our invertebrates, any more than in ornithology, and we have the whole problem solved. Since only one in a million invertebrates has a "common name" at present, no trouble would ensue on that score.

(I expect nothing less than a statue for this discovery, from future generations of teachers.)

Wm. H. Dall

Smithsonian Institution,
December 16, 1912

THE STAINING OF PROTOZOA

To the Editor of Science: Hæmatoxylin is, so to speak, the printer's ink of protozoologists, for this stain is used by all workers in studying the morphology of the cell, and it has come into general use because it tells as much as a single stain can of the essential structures in the architecture of a cell. It is true that various mordants alter, or rather intensify the staining character of certain parts of the nucleus. For example, when "agamous" trophozoites of *Entamœba tetragena* are stained by alum hæmatoxylin, iron hæmatoxylin, or phosphotungstic acid hæmatoxylin, or if they are stained with Mallory's phosphotungstic acid hæmatoxylin after wet fixation by Merkel's and Zenker's fluids, the different structures in the nucleus—