

antedate any distinction between plant and animal life, this is desirable. The present equivocal position of the slime moulds is not affected.

This definition is not presented with the expectation that it will prove entirely satisfactory, but rather with the hope that it will call forth a better. Possibly such a definition has already been published. If so, it has been strangely overlooked by the writers of our textbooks.

GEORGE W. MARTIN

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MUSCA LINNÆUS, 1758, AND CALLIPHORA DESVOIDY, 1830

IN accordance with the Rules of the International Zoological Congress, the attention of the zoological profession is invited to the fact that Dr. L. O. Howard, W. Dwight Pierce and twenty-one other professional zoologists have requested the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature to exercise its plenary power in the case of the Linnæan genus *Musca* 1758, and, under suspension of the Rules, to declare *M. domestica* as type of this genus, also, under suspension of the Rules, to validate *Calliphora* Desvoidy, 1830, with *C. vomitoria* as type.

The request is based on the grounds of practical utility, and an almost unbroken history of consistent usage since 1758 in the case of *Musca*, and since 1830 in the case of *Calliphora*. It is claimed that a strict application of the Rules will produce greater confusion than uniformity.

According to the premises at present before the commission, if the Rules are strictly applied, the generic name of *Musca* would take either *M. cæsar* or *M. vomitoria* as type, and the species *M. domestica* would be cited either in *Conostoma* 1801 [?] (type *Ascaris conostoma* = larva of *M. domestica*) or in *Promusca* 1915 (type *M. domestica*), thus resulting in a very regrettable change in the nomenclature of the species in question as almost universally used in entomological, zoological, medical, epidemiological and veterinary literature.

The secretary of the commission invites any person interested in these cases of nomenclature to communicate his opinion on the subject as soon as possible, and not later than May 1,

1918,¹ when the subject will be submitted to the commission for vote.

C. W. STILES,

Secretary to Commission

TWENTY-FIFTH AND E STREETS, N. W.,

WASHINGTON, D. C.

THAT CHEMICAL "CRAMMING" MATCH

PROFESSOR JACOBSON'S spelling match, a cue word device adopted by many students when cramming up for an examination, prompts me to record a remark made a quarter of a century ago by one of our greatest chemists. Said he "I once had a student who could repeat every chemical formula in all the books, but I never could teach the damned fool a thing about chemistry."

W. J. HUMPHREYS

WARNING

A MAN calling himself Walter F. Clarke and representing himself as my nephew is reported as seeking financial accommodation from my colleagues throughout the country. I have no such nephew and I know no person of that name.

JOHN M. CLARKE

STATE MUSEUM,
ALBANY, N. Y.

QUOTATIONS

THE NEW FRONTIERSMEN

THE comments received regarding the reports in the *Times* of the meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science are such as to give encouragement to those men of science who are the new frontiersmen of our civilization. They are the men of the lens and the meter, of the balance and the crucible, of the magnet and the spectrum, of the atom and the electron, of the syllogism, the equation, the theorem, the statistic. They are no less the frontiersmen, the precursors, than this republic's early pioneers of the axe, the plow, the rifle and the saddle. They who have patiently enlarged the borders of truth are as deserving sons of democracy as they who have pushed out the physical bounds between the desert and the sown.

¹ On account of delay caused by the war, final vote will not be taken until about January 1, 1924.