

"Persistently obnoxious on cultivation areas" may cover the most common use of the term, but it does not cover the majority of species. It fails to account for two large groups: (1) Coarse unsightly plants, and (2) those of pastures, lawns, etc. Still other exceptions might be mentioned, water hyacinth, for instance. If these are not to be called weeds, we shall need some other name for them.

An attempt to arrange the different species of weeds in order of their importance shows an intergrading series which terminates indefinitely among such plants as goldenrods, wormwoods and numerous other native and introduced plants of minor importance. It would be no easier to decide which ones should be classed as persistently obnoxious than it is to locate the dividing line between weeds as commonly understood and other plants of less importance.

The writer's list of weeds of his state includes over twenty per cent. of the species of seed plants found in the state, and probably not over one third of them could be called persistently obnoxious on cultivated areas. Among the specimens received during a single season were fourteen species not included in this list and others are continually being added. Thus it appears that there are few wild plants which are not at least likely to be suspected of being weeds. The word seems to serve a purpose in common use and might be said to refer to a plant which is detrimental to man's interests, displeasing to the eye or of no evident value.

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QUOTATIONS

THE NAPLES ZOOLOGICAL STATION

BIOLOGISTS all over the world will be interested in the news, of which we have just received official confirmation, that Dr. Reinhard Dohrn, the son of the founder of the Zoological Station at Naples, has once more taken up the post of director. As Dr. Dohrn is a German subject (although half-Russian by birth and Italian by upbringing), he was forced to leave Italy when it became clear that she was going to enter the war on the side of the Allies. During and since the war the Naples Station was under the Italian government and the Municipality of Naples, with Professor Monticelli, head of the Department of Zoology in the University of Naples, as director.

After the war a number of questions arose, and the legal status of the station under the peace-treaty was gone into at the instance of Dr. Dohrn. He claimed that it was for many reasons not liable to sequestration, while the Naples Municipality asserted it to have been private property, and therefore to have

passed legally to them as landlords. These points and many others were decided in the courts, the case eventually going to the highest court of appeal. On all the essential counts Dr. Dohrn gained his point. Finally, government decrees were issued establishing the status of the station and defining its organization. Briefly, we may say that, while Dr. Dohrn goes back as director, the control is vested in a board of seven members, all except the director Italians; further, the heads of the separate departments of the station (at present two—zoological and physiological) are to be Italians. The position is therefore not the *status quo ante*, but this modified by a measure of Italian control and Italian share in the internal administration.

From being private property, the station has become a special form of public corporation known in Italy as an *ente morale*. The board is of seven members. The Mayor of Naples is *ipso facto* its president, while the other members are nominated quinquennially by the Minister of Public Instruction. The detailed direction and administration is reserved to Dr. Dohrn.

Plans for the future of the station will, of course, be determined by financial considerations. Several foreign governments and institutions have rented or have promised to rent "tables." The income under this head, however, will for the present not be so great as before the war. The income from the public aquarium is considerable, and grants are also to be made from the Naples Municipality and the Italian government. Finally, a certain amount of Dr. Dohrn's private property, which was sequestered during the war, is to be applied to the use of the station. With these funds the new director hopes to be able to make an immediate start on a sound footing. He intends to appoint, besides the Italian *chefs de laboratoire*, several assistants of various nationalities on the staff.

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The Naples Station, we may be sure, will have as important results to its credit in the future as it has had in the past. Once alone in its field, it has become the parent, or at least the prototype, of a whole crop of similar institutions elsewhere. Many of these are now flourishing and well organized; and some, like Plymouth and Woods Hole, rival their original. Nevertheless, we sincerely hope that both financial support and a stream of biological workers will flow to the reorganized "Stazione" at Naples. In the past, as all who have worked within its precincts will testify, the full international spirit of scientific cooperation has always reigned. Under Dr. Dohrn we are sure that it will continue to do so in the future; and that spirit, in these difficult days, is worthy of all encouragement.—*Nature*.