

the little crustacean, laboriously designated *Brachy-uropushkydermatogammarus*, is destined to be unhonored and unsung, unless by chance it be given a convenient and satisfactory nickname. It is unfortunate to launch a species upon the scientific sea with the handicap of a "bad name" which can never be lived down or in any way altered.

There is a well-known law of evolution which operates toward the extinction of gigantic and cumbersome forms: the dinosaurs are already gone, the elephants and redwoods are much reduced in distribution, the whales are doomed, and likewise, we hope, battleships! Nature acts as though she appreciated the unwarranted expense involved in producing a huge beast, the difficulty of its establishing, the extravagance of its maintenance and finally its susceptibility to a single fatal accident which results in the destruction of tons of material.

A natural selection working in taxonomy should and doubtless will eliminate the long technical names which we frequently see, because they are not only useless to most of us but they impede the work of those who are expected to profit from their existence.

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SOIL SCIENCE

IN his note in the January 17, 1930, issue of *SCIENCE* relative to the term "pedology" as name for soil science, Dr. W. A. Hamor called attention to its use since 1896 as the name for another science, as recognized by lexicographers.

Webster gives this: "pedology; paedology . . . 1: Med. Pediatrics; 2. Child study." In contrast Webster gives this for geology, for example, which is recognized by lexicographers as a science: "The science which treats of the history of the earth and its life. . . ." The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (fourteenth edition, 1929) gives this: "Children, diseases of. The study of this subject, known also as pediatrics, is comparatively modern."

Probably most soils scientists know that in 1862 Fallou (German) published a 488-page book on

pedology. Fallou defined natural soil science or pedology as the description of the nature of soils, no matter what their relation to vegetation or industry might be.

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DR. HAMOR's objection to the adoption of "pedology" as a name for soil science¹ seems to be sound and his suggestion of "humology" for that use is excellent.

As a worker in the field of soil science I enter my protest against such a monstrosity as "chthonology," in which, I think, the public would join. Scientific nomenclature is cluttered up too much with useless letters; why not apply the principles of simplified spelling? If we must have Greek, write it "thonology," even at the risk of its being interpreted "wolf science" by some Greek scholar. But *humology* seems better.

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PRESS NOTICE OF THE DES MOINES MEETING IN IOWA

MR. T. J. EDMONDS, who had charge of the local publicity for the Des Moines meeting, has prepared a statement showing the amount of space given the meeting by the press of Iowa.

In advance of the meeting there were published 1,710 articles (including 30 editorials and 36 photographs) totaling 10,998 column inches. In addition, advance notice of the meeting was given from 15 radio stations.

During the meeting there were published 7,436 articles (including 33 editorials and 88 photographs) totaling 74,781 column inches.

The press of the State of Iowa alone therefore published in connection with the meeting 9,146 articles (including 63 editorials and 124 photographs) totaling 85,779 column inches.

In the Des Moines papers the meeting was noticed by 15 eight-column headlines.

AUSTIN H. CLARK,
Director, Press Service

REPORTS

AWARDS OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF PLANT PHYSIOLOGISTS

THE CHARLES REID BARNES LIFE MEMBERSHIP

AT the recent Des Moines meeting of the American Society of Plant Physiologists, the fourth and fifth awards of the Charles Reid Barnes life membership

were made. The two recipients of the honor were Professor George J. Peirce and Professor Charles A. Shull. Accounts of the establishment of this honorary life membership and of the first two awards are found in previous issues of *SCIENCE*¹ Each year the

¹ *SCIENCE*, 71: 70.

¹ *SCIENCE*, 65: 175-176, 1927; 67: 264-265, 1928.