

of Plants of the U. S. National Museum. A correspondent writes: "She retired with the expectation of working intensively on the grasses of Brazil, but has scarcely done anything on this major enterprise because the continuing demands of the herbarium and the constant calls for help and advice on agrostological problems, many related to the war, require all her time. Her life-time association with this rich collection, a part of the U. S. National Herbarium, has developed an affection which prevents her neglecting the opportunities it presents of serving the cause of

science. No one has yet been appointed to carry on even the minimum of routine work in this the world's finest grass herbarium."

THE National Live Stock and Meat Board of Chicago have made a gift of \$7,200 to the School of Medicine at Galveston of the University of Texas for the support of work in fat metabolism under the direction of Dr. Arild E. Hansen, professor of pediatrics and director of the child-health program of the William Buchanan Foundation of Texarkana.

## DISCUSSION

### THE NOMENCLATURE OF THE Rh BLOOD TYPES

IN a recent issue of SCIENCE<sup>1</sup> Wiener suggested a modification of the nomenclature for the Rh blood types. The original Rh is now to be designated as Rh<sub>0</sub>, the original Rh<sub>1</sub> is to be called Rh<sub>0</sub>', and the original Rh<sub>2</sub> as Rh<sub>0</sub>". The corresponding anti-sera are to be called anti Rh<sub>0</sub>, anti Rh' and anti Rh". This is a great improvement over the original ambiguous designations of the various Rh blood types and the alleles forming them, but it still leaves one thing to be desired from the genetic viewpoint.

It is customary in naming genes to use subscripts for genes having similar effects but belonging to different pairs, but to use superscripts for different alleles of the same set. Therefore the use of Rh' and Rh" is consistent with modern genetic terminology, but the use of Rh<sub>0</sub> is not. The inconsistency could be avoided by using Rh<sup>0</sup> instead of Rh<sub>0</sub>. The various Rh alleles would then be Rh<sup>0</sup>, Rh', Rh", Rh<sup>0</sup>', Rh<sup>0</sup>" and rh. The types would be as given in Table 1:

TABLE 1

Type	Reaction with antiserum		
	anti-Rh <sup>0</sup>	anti-Rh'	anti-Rh"
Rh- .....	-	-	-
Rh' .....	-	+	-
Rh" .....	-	-	+
Rh'Rh" .....	-	+	+
Rh <sup>0</sup> .....	+	-	-
Rh <sup>0</sup> ' .....	+	+	-
Rh <sup>0</sup> " .....	+	-	+
Rh <sup>0</sup> 'Rh <sup>0</sup> " .....	+	+	+

In a recent article<sup>2</sup> Race *et al.* have used the simple designations R and r in preference to Rh and rh. This seems to be a desirable simplification in line with the older antigens, A, B, M, N and P, and should be adopted. If it were adopted, the "h" would be dropped from all designations in the table above.

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<sup>1</sup> A. S. Wiener, SCIENCE, 99: 532-533, 1944.

### THE THREAT TO PURE SCIENCE

I CAN not but feel that Eugene V. D. Robin is wrong in his assertions published in your issue of December 8 regarding the motives which underlie the pursuit of pure science. The pure scientist, as I see it, is indeed seeking "intellectual . . . satisfaction," but by no means merely "personal satisfaction"—rather, the satisfaction of the irrepressible intellectual curiosity of *mankind*. It is because all truly rational beings are interested in knowledge for its own sake, as well as in its practical applications, that pure science survives and advances.

Furthermore, the analogy of the chess game is certainly beside the point. Chess *is* played for the merely "personal satisfaction" of the players, but science is pursued to increase man's knowledge of the universe. That is why any threat against freedom of investigation is so much a matter of concern to scientists, as well as to mere philosophers like the undersigned.

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### GAPS IN CURRENT FILES OF SCIENTIFIC PERIODICALS

FROM the standpoint of research the destruction of libraries, periodicals and books constitutes a serious handicap. That losses in these categories are appalling we already know. Also many volumes of important foreign journals usually complete in this country have missing issues due to losses in transit, while replacement may not be possible because foreign publishers have had to contend with such a serious paper shortage it is certain many issues are already out of print.

A Joint Committee on Importations, set up by various library associations, attempted to import a limited number of periodicals during 1942, but it was not found feasible to continue this plan. The Alien Prop-

<sup>2</sup> R. R. Race, G. L. Taylor, E. W. Ikin and A. M. Prior, *Annals of Eugenics*, 12: 206-210, 1944.