

Cisidæ with others. Personally, I would much prefer the latter as the permanent form for the word.

THOS. L. CASEY

RESEARCH PROBLEMS "ASSIGNED TO" UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS AND THEIR STUDENTS

A PAPER on North American Forest Research¹ has recently been issued, giving a résumé of the "Investigative Projects in Forestry and Allied Subjects Conducted by National, State and Provincial Governments, Schools of Forestry, Scientific Schools and Private Interests in Canada, Newfoundland and the United States for 1919-20."

More than five hundred projects are enumerated, nearly half of them under investigation by persons in departments of the United States government. Many of the remainder are concerned with the activities of various state agencies and institutions, while a number represent research undertaken by professors and their students in various colleges and universities.

The compilers of this list have very carefully indicated in connection with each project, by whom it is being investigated, nearly always stating that it is "assigned to" some individual or group of persons. For example, under certain universities and colleges, we find numerous projects "assigned to" various members of their faculties and in certain cases secondarily to their students.

I think we may legitimately inquire by whom these problems have been assigned to the persons named. Certainly not by the National Research Council, not by the Society of American Foresters, not by our colleagues, and usually not by any of the governing boards of the universities and colleges.

Such wording, like the repeated use of "control" and "direction," conveys the imputation that men of science do not select and elaborate their own lines of research, and

it is very unfortunate that it should appear in such a journal as the *Bulletin* of the National Research Council. Let us hope that the council does not stand sponsor for it, for it does not seem likely that it will aid in attaining the closer cooperation which independent workers hope to see as a result of the operations of the Research Council. It is better to believe that the printer or the proof-reader has inserted this stereotyped phrase as it appears quite regularly, and no doubt properly so, in connection with many of the bureaus and governmental agencies. In view of the increasing extension of the bureaucratic spirit into scientific work, perhaps all research must be assigned by some one other than he who performs it, and possibly problems should not be outlined by those who investigate them. Until such comes to pass, however, it seems unjustifiable that research in forestry or in any other subject should be thrust into the lime-light with such carelessly worded captions attached.

C. T. BRUES

THE LAWS OF HYBRIDIZING DISCOVERED BY RICHARD DIENER

THE above is the title of a booklet of some sixteen pages, dated (with a rubber stamp) as issued July 1, 1920, and coming, appropriately, from California, the home of plant wizardry. The discoverer states that it has taken thousands of crosses and fifteen years of time to perfect the laws which he is now giving to mankind—for a consideration. Their presentation is a delightful example of simplicity; the reader is not troubled with tiresome descriptions of methods or measures taken to check the results; the pages are not rendered unsightly by arrays of tables, nor is the intellect taxed by incomprehensible statistics, as is so often the case in present-day treatises on this subject. On the contrary the author has not needed all of his sixteen pages for the exposition; besides the title page he is able to spare one for a full-page portrait of himself, five pages are given to photographs of results of his labors, while a double-page diagram sets forth his laws so clearly that

¹ Compiled by the Committee on American Forest Research, Society of American Foresters, and published as Vol. 1, Pt. 4, of the *Bulletin* of the National Research Council, August, 1920.