

citing in the case of specific names the man who transferred the name into the proper genus, not the original authority. He also states that zoologists have picked the wrong man for their citations, since they cite "*the original authority, who first described the species.*" It is urged that the one-man citation would make citing authorities less complex, thereby saving hours for those who use botanical nomenclature, but the important advantages of citing the original authority are mostly overlooked. In reality, Peattie has built an argument for scientific names with no authorities, which is entirely reasonable for popular, literary or horticultural usage, but botanists should not regulate their precise practices to these ends.

The original authority is the most important authority because it is: (1) The one which stands for a type and an original description. Some workers seem to fail to appreciate the importance of the type-concept in systematic botany. (2) The one with which our knowledge of the species begins. From the citation of an original authority, it is immediately possible to gauge the length of time that the organism has been known to science. (3) The one which best affords us some opportunity to estimate the validity of a species. By the citation of the original authority, a conservative worker's species, transferred to a small segregate genus by a "splitter," still remains recognizable, while in the one-man citation, as proposed by Peattie, the original authority is obscured.

That the double citation has great practical advantage is evidenced by an actual experience which I had on the morning when the copy of SCIENCE, with Peattie's article, arrived. I am soon to visit an herbarium in South Carolina and desire to know what types of an early author, representing species, recognized to-day, in certain families in which I am interested, may be expected to be found there. Reference to Small's "Manual of the Southeastern Flora," recognizing many segregate genera, but fortunately employing the double citation, revealed in 15 minutes all the information that I wanted to know. Had this manual followed Peattie's proposal, it would have been necessary to indulge in endless library investigation, looking up

references by people who had transferred names, trying to determine from the old author's descriptions to what modern genera his species would have been transferred and then whether or not they are to-day valid. The slight inconvenience to the man who wrote this manual thus saved me hours of thankless drudgery, simply because he employed the double citation. It might be suggested that I could have obtained my information by reference to the writings of the original authority himself, but from them I would have no way of knowing which are recognized to-day, nor could I readily have obtained this information from Index Kewensis.

Let popular writers discard all authorities, but let systematists continue to follow their slowly evolved, meticulous practice. Authorities are not part of a name, but for accurate systematic work their careful citation becomes an absolute necessity.

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BACTERIAL-PLANT GROUP OF DHAINCHA

THE names of the genus "Sesban," "Sesbana," "Sesbania," are synonymous.¹ The plant worked by me and published elsewhere,² viz., *Sesbania aculeata* Poir, commonly called in India "Dhaincha," and the two species mentioned by Briscoe and Andrews,³ viz., *Sesban emerus* Aubl and *Sesban exaltata* (Raf.) Rydb., belong to the same genus "Sesbania."^{4,5}

Briscoe and Andrews (*loc. cit.*) confirm the writer's earlier and more elaborate observations, save a few minor points. The writer, therefore, claims priority in its nomenclature as "Dhaincha Bacterial-plant Group" instead of that tentatively proposed by Briscoe and Andrews as "Sesban Inoculation Group."

Further work conducted by the writer on three other species of Sesbania, *S. speciosa*, Taub ex Ebg.⁶ *S. grandiflora*, Poir,¹ and *S. macrocarpa*, Mohl ex Rafin,¹ indicate that they all belong to the "Dhaincha bacterial-plant group."

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SCIENTIFIC BOOKS

A BIOGRAPHY OF CLAUDE BERNARD

Claude Bernard, Physiologist. By J. M. D. OLMSTED, Professor of Physiology, University of California. Foreword by ALEXIS CARREL. Harper and Brothers, New York and London, 1938. xvi + 272 pp. \$4.00.

CLAUDE BERNARD died on February 10, 1878. A few days later Michael Foster, then Trinity praelector in physiology at Cambridge, met his senior class and, putting his prepared lecture aside, remarked: "The

recent death of a great physiologist, Claude Bernard,

¹ J. D. Hooker and B. D. Jackson, "Index Kewensis Plantarum Phanerogamarum," Tomme II, p. 890, 1885.

² M. S. Raju, *Zentralblatt für Bakt.*, etc., II Abt., 94: 249-262, 1936.

³ C. E. Briscoe and W. B. Andrews, *Jour. Am. Soc. Agron.*, 30: 135-138, 1938.

⁴ A. W. Hill, "Index Kewensis Plantarum Phanerogamarum," Supl. VI, pp. 193, 1916-1920.

⁵ A. W. Hill, *Ibid.*, Supl. VII, pp. 223, 1921-1925.

⁶ T. Duarand and B. D. Jackson, *Ibid.*, Supl. I, pp. 385, 1886-1895.