

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY
WASHINGTON

ECONOMIC AND SYSTEMATIC BOTANY

October 18, 1926.

rec'd " 20, "

Mr. Walter Deane,
29 Brewster St.,
Cambridge, Mass.

Dear Mr. Deane:

Your letter with inclosure has just been received. The grass is *Festuca rubra* v. *subvillosa* Mert. & Koch, as you named it. How to handle such groups as *Festuca rubra* and *ovina*, *Agropyron tenerum*, *Elymus canadensis* and *E. virginicus* and numerous other "polymorphic" species is a puzzle. The Europeans tend to unite allied species under one grand *Gesammtart*, each species (in our sense) a subspecies, each divided and subdivided into varieties, subvarieties, forms, and subforms till it makes one's head whirl. St. Ives has recently revised *Festuca ovina* subspecies *duriuscula*, making nearly as big a work out of it as Professor Piper did of North American Species of *Festuca*. Vetter in Vienna has also published on this group with the result that their various new names and rearrangements of old ones makes a stack of cards more than an inch thick in the index to species etc. Pease and Moore on *Agropyron caninum* followed this method. I do not see the value of it. "A name is an expression of a taxonomic idea," as Dr. Greene said, but a name can not express the whole relationship of a given plant or it would be longer than the old phrase names. It amused me to find how Professor Hackel (whose names in his excellent Monograph of *Andropogoneae* are exceedingly complex) himself evaded the burden of these names. The name published as *Andropogon sorghum* subsp. *halepensis* var. *aethiopicus* subvar. *longearistatus*, for example, would appear in his writing on a label as "*Andropogon halepensis* v. *longearistatus*." I surmise Drs. Clements and Hall, if they have to write labels, will do the same. Here is the name in Hackel's *Monographia Festucarum europaeorum* for your *F. rubra* v. *villosa*: *Festuca rubra* subsp. *eu-rubra* var. *genuina* subvar. *barbata* (Schrank) Hackel.

Professor Hitchcock joins in best wishes to you and to Judge Churchill when next you see him. We enjoyed a short visit from him and Mrs. Churchill two or three years ago.

Sincerely yours,

Agnes Chase

Agnes Chase, Associate Agrostologist.

Office address: Smithsonian Institution.

You can return this
when we meet
Oct 27/26 W.D.



Chase, Agnes. 1926. "Chase, Agnes (née Merrill) Oct. 18, 1926." *Walter Deane correspondence*

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