by another, it matters not from a nomenclature standpoint whether
the *J. megacephalus* of 1834 be treated as distinct or as identical with
some older species. To go a step further: a variety *paniculatus* of
Engelmann, 1868, must be erected into a species. The name *Juncus
paniculatus* is already twice preoccupied by European plants, both
now referred to other species. Who is to decide whether either of
these is likely to prove valid? Are not different decisions likely to
be rendered by equally reputable botanists, whose conceptions of these
species may differ? The committee has answered these questions, as
well as all the other questions which logically follow them, by saying,
"We will reject not merely those homonyms which we know to be re-
vertible and those which we suppose may perhaps be revertible, but
we will reject all homonyms and thus make revertibility impossible."
Considered from the standpoint of stability the wisdom of this deci-
sion is, it seems to me, incontrovertible. I am well aware, however,
that the considerations I have just mentioned will have no weight
with Dr. Robinson if he really believes, as I can hardly bring myself
to think he does, that a stable nomenclature is impossible. If having
reviewed the whole Botanical Club principles adversely and with crit-
ical care, he finds in them only one possible chance of instability, and
if from a list of four thousand species he does not cite a single case in
point, one surely cannot ask for a more favorable commentary on the
stability-producing capacity of the system.—FREDERICK V. COVILLE,
Washington, D. C.

Decapitalization.

Mr. Sheldon's open letter in the June number of the Gazette af-
foords me another opportunity to speak against the tendency of many
botanists to follow a bad example set by our friends the zoologists:
that of decapitalization of specific names derived from proper names.
If Mr. Sheldon writes his specific name *bajaensis* then Prof. Greene
is right in his claim that it is a trivial and meaningless combination of
Spanish and Latin. *Bajaensis* on the contrary leads us to the know-
ledge that the species came from Baja, a town in Mexico. His co-
reference to *nevadensis* as a good Latin specific name is another in-
stance. *Nevadensis* claims the species to have been found in the state
of Nevada, while *nevadensis* leads us to the belief that the species is
of the whiteness of snow, and would be at the same time again a
Latino-Spanish "jumble."—C. F. MILLSPAUGH, Field Columbian Mu-
seum, Chicago.

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