

**Genetics of flax.**—Miss TAMMES<sup>26</sup> has made a genetical study of the flower characters of 6 varieties of the common flax, *Linum usitatissimum*. These varieties consisted of 3 dark blue, 1 light blue, and 2 white varieties. Besides the color of the flower, with which she worked chiefly, she studied the color of the anthers, the color of the seeds, the shape of the petals, the color of the veins in the petals, and the number and viability of the seeds produced. These latter characters she finds correlated with the color of the flower and dependent upon the same factors. The several varieties are described and their genetic formulae given, after which the author presents in tabular form the expected ratios and the observed results in the second and third generations. She concludes that the blue color is the result of two complementary factors, *B* and *C*. The presence of these two factors alone produces the light blue flowers, and the dark blue is brought about by the action of an intensifying factor *A* cooperating with *B* and *C*. Unless both *B* and *C* are present the flower will be white. The factor *A* acts as an intensifier only on the light blue of the petals and has no effect on the color of the anthers, on the color of the seed, or on the color of the veins in the petals. The factor *B* is not only one of the necessary factors for the production of the blue flower color, but even without the cooperation of *C* brings about the blue color of the anthers and the brown color of the seeds, prevents the crinkling of the petals which, were it not present, would be caused by the presence of *C*, and overcomes the tendency of *C* to lessen the number and viability of the seeds. The factor *C*, besides producing, with *B*, the blue color of the flower, brings about, when in a homozygous condition, a deeper pigmentation of the veins in the petals; and causes, when *B* is absent, a crinkling of the petals and a lessening in the number and viability of the seeds. In respect to the color of the anthers, which results from the presence of *B*, it is pointed out that although the 6 varieties studied are in agreement with the interpretation given, there is a variety, which has not yet been studied, that has blue flowers and *yellow* anthers. As this is contrary to the conclusions arrived at from the 6 varieties investigated, the author suggests that the factor *B* may be, not a single unit, but a complex, with some essential part or factor lacking in the variety with blue petals and yellow stamens. On the other hand, *B* may be a unit and the blue anthers may be lacking because some other necessary factor besides *B* is lacking in that variety. An investigation of this problem is promised.—BEN C. HELMICK.

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<sup>26</sup> TAMMES, TINE, Die genotypische Zusammensetzung einiger Varietäten derselben Art und ihr genetischer Zusammenhang. Extrait Recueil Trav. Bot. Néerland. 12: 217-278. 1915.