

alone to furnish them with the science of one-sided and therefore false somatology.

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THE BOTANICAL WORK COMMITTEE.\*

A BLUE-BOOK (205) of 247 pages has been issued containing the report of the committee on botanical work and collections at the British Museum and at Kew. The Committee was appointed by the Treasury on February 1, 1900, 'to consider the present arrangements under which botanical work is done and collections maintained by the Trustees of the British Museum, and under the First Commissioner of Works at Kew respectively; and to report what changes (if any) in those arrangements are necessary or desirable in order to avoid duplication of work and collections at the two institutions.' The chairman of the committee was Sir Michael Foster, M.P., and the other members were Lord Avebury and Mr. F. D. Godman, representing the Trustees of the British Museum, Mr. S. E. Spring Rice, C.B., Mr. H. A. D. Seymour, C.B., Professor I. B. Balfour, Queen's botanist for Scotland, Mr. F. Darwin, reader in botany in the University of Cambridge, and Sir John Kirk. Mr. B. D. Jackson, secretary of the Linnean Society, was afterwards appointed secretary to the committee. The report opens by pointing out the essential differences between the Botanical Department of the British Museum and the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew.

The former is a collection of such objects as can be placed in a museum, and is not concerned with the applications of botany; whereas the latter, besides constituting a public garden, is an organization which gives assistance to the government on questions involving botanic science in all parts of the Empire. Both possess herbaria with

libraries attached; and the two herbaria, though each possessing some special features, are to a very large extent duplicates of one another. This duplication of specimens entails, of course, a duplication not only of housing room, but of scientific work and of the scientific staff; and the existence of this waste is a strong *prima facie* argument against the maintenance of the collections in their present form. The report observes that the question of amalgamating the two collections has been considered by committees again and again, and after considering the arguments urged on both sides, the Committee, with the exception of Lord Avebury, pronounce in favor of their union. Their report discusses at length the possible methods of union, the relative convenience of Kew and the British Museum as sites, and the question of constituting a special advisory board, on which the Trustees of the British Museum should be adequately represented, in the event of the removal of the greater part of the British Museum collections to Kew. The recommendations on these points are summed up as follows:

(1) That the whole of the botanic collections at the British Museum now administered by the Keeper of the Department of Botany under the Trustees, with the exception of the collections exhibited to the public, be transferred to the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, and placed in the charge of the First Commissioner of his Majesty's Works and Public Buildings under conditions indicated below, adequate accommodation being there provided for them. (2) That a board, on which the Trustees of the British Museum, the Royal Society, and certain departments of his Majesty's government should be directly represented, be established in order to advise on all questions of a scientific nature arising out of the administration of the gardens, the powers and duties of the

\*From the London Times.

board, its relations to the First Commissioner and to the Director, as well as the position of the latter and the functions of the gardens, being defined by Minute of the Lords Commissioners of his Majesty's Treasury. (3) That the illustrative botanic collections now publicly exhibited at the British Museum be maintained, and, so far as it is possible and expedient, enlarged and developed with the view of increasing popular interest and imparting popular instruction in the phenomena of the vegetable world, and be placed under the charge of an officer of adequate scientific attainments, responsible to the Director of the Natural History Departments. (4) That upon the transference of the botanic collections from the British Museum to the Royal Botanic Gardens such arrangements be made both in respect to the accommodation of the collections and the staff administering them that they shall fully serve the purposes which they have hitherto served. (5) That the botanic collections consisting of fossil plants, now in the charge of the Keeper of the Department of Geology in the British Museum, be maintained for the present under the same conditions as heretofore. We desire to express our warm appreciation of the valuable services which have been rendered to us by the secretary, B. Daydon Jackson, Esq., secretary of Linnean Society. Not only has he performed his duties as secretary with great zeal and ability, but also throughout the inquiry we have repeatedly derived great assistance from his very intimate acquaintance with the botanic collections under our consideration, as well as from his wide knowledge of botanic science and literature.

This report is not signed by Lord Avebury, who cannot concur in recommending a removal of the British Museum herbarium to Kew, for the following reasons:

It seems, no doubt, at first sight, an an-

omalous arrangement that there should be two national herbaria; first, on account of the expense; and, secondly, because botanists in some cases have to consult two collections instead of one. But the evidence shows that the saving of annual expense through the suggested fusion would be small, and that the initial outlay for building, cabinets, etc., would be heavy. The alleged inconvenience seems to me to be exaggerated and affects only a few of those engaged in systematic botany who are thus obliged to consult two herbaria instead of one: while, on the other hand, to those engaged in other departments of botany, the existence of the two herbaria is an advantage. I deprecate the proposals contained in the majority report for the following reasons: (1) The British Museum is the greatest museum in the world, and is justly the pride of the nation. To dismember it, by depriving it of so integral a part as the Botanical Department, would be destructive of its unique character as a fully representative museum, and specially of a natural history museum; would be vehemently opposed by many, if not most, British botanists, and, as it seems to me, would be a great injury to science. (2) To London and country botanists the British Museum is much more accessible than Kew. (3) The plan proposed would separate the fossil from the recent plants. (4) It would involve the creation of a new board. If, on the other hand, Kew Gardens and the British Museum were brought into closer relations, as recommended in the report which I have signed in conjunction with Mr. Seymour, several advantages would result; for instance, the officers of the Museum would have access to the living plants; while those of Kew Gardens would have access to the British Museum library and the collection of fossil plants.

Lord Avebury and Mr. Seymour also ob-

ject to the constituting of an advisory board. They say :

If we were starting *de novo* it seems obvious that the whole of the national biological collections in and near the metropolis would be placed under one management. The Trustees of the British Museum are established by statute, and are partly selected and partly *ex-officio* members, more than one-third being high Ministers of State. Those to whom the active duties of management and superintendence are entrusted possess special knowledge in the various subjects illustrated by the collections, and they appear to us to be more fitted both by their experience and their position in the scientific and cultured world to be the governing body of the amalgamated botanic collections at Kew than any other that can be built up in their place. If those collections form part of the British Museum, the Director at Kew would become an officer of the Trustees in the same manner as is the Director of the Museum at South Kensington. It is true that in the report it is stated, 'Were Kew placed under the Trustees of the British Museum, unless their control were a merely nominal one, a thing in itself most undesirable, the demands of the Colonial, India and Foreign Offices on the resources of Kew would be subject to the control of the Trustees, a situation fraught with difficulties and dangers.' This assertion does not appear to us convincing. No example is quoted of these difficulties, the dangers are not indicated. It is far from clear why one controlling authority is more likely to produce them than a lay authority and a scientific authority with an advisory board interposed as a buffer between them. \* \* \* We feel that the introduction of a new board such as is proposed is at least as likely to produce friction and difficulties as the present authorities, and will tend to weaken responsibility, and on this account,

as well as because we do not attach much reality to the 'difficulties and dangers' which would arise from the substitution of the control of the Trustees of the British Museum for the present control, we dissent from the second recommendation of this report.

#### THE FUNCTION OF THE STATE UNIVERSITY.

WHEREVER in this paper the word university occurs, it means State university; wherever the word college is used, it means a private or denominational institution. Let me describe the function of the State university as it appears to me.

##### I. It should be *within* :

*a.* Non-partisan, but patriotic to the State and to the Nation ;

*b.* Non-sectarian, but religious ;

*c.* Free as to tuition in all departments, academic and professional ;

*d.* Every inch a university.

*a.* While the obligation named first binds every institution of learning in our country, it binds the State universities in a peculiar degree. Their foundations are federal land grants. The funds for their maintenance come from their respective commonwealths. In the highest and broadest sense they should be nurseries of patriotism, but they should shun partisan politics as they shun death.

*b.* Non-sectarian, but religious.

The State universities have not yet realized their opportunity for developing in students a life that is religious and yet not sectarian. Freedom from denominationalism is apt to be construed as license to subordinate unduly religion in education. No good reason appears why the universities should not each maintain one professor at least to lecture upon sacred literature, natural religion and practical morals, and to serve as chaplain of the students. If, unfortunately, the law or Constitution forbids such teaching at public expense, an appeal should be made for an endowment