

dence. That its existence forms the most simple explanation of the peculiar features of the Martian landscape is probably doubted by most astronomers. Indeed, the objective reality of many of these peculiarities can not be said to have been established beyond doubt. It can at least be safely stated that nothing amounting to a demonstration of the existence of intelligent life on Mars has yet been accomplished.

S. I. BAILEY

BOTANICAL NOTES

THE COMING BOTANICAL MEETINGS IN CHICAGO

IN a short time the annual gathering of botanists will take place in Chicago in connection with the meetings of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Through the persistent efforts of disinterested and patriotic men we do not now have a divided body of botanists in this country, all the botanical societies now having merged in the one organization—the Botanical Society of America. This merging has consolidated American botanists in a most satisfactory manner, and has done much to bring them together in a compact, harmonious working body. This is quite as it should be. Botany is not so large and wide as to make it necessary that it should be parceled out among a number of groups of workers.

But the merging of these affiliated societies does not wholly settle the question of the meetings, for we still have officially two bodies of botanists, namely the Section of Botany (G) of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and the Botanical Society of America. Last year there was not a little confusion in the meetings of these two bodies, and on at least one occasion both were in session at the same time. It is to be hoped that the plans that are now being talked over by the officers of both organizations will result in avoiding such conflicts in the future. There is time enough, certainly, for all of the papers to be read that are worthy of taking the time of the botanists of the country, without having simultaneous sessions.

The writer has on more than one occasion urged that there should be a differentiation in

the work of the section, and the society. Perhaps the easier plan is to make the meetings of the society "program" meetings, in which papers are read by invitation, while in the section we still allow practically any one to read almost any kind of a paper on nearly any subject in any way connected with botany. It is quite absurd to have two botanical organizations with no other difference than that of name and presiding officers. The writer holds that the section should always be maintained as a democratic body of botanists, before which one may volunteer to bring a paper. It must be maintained for the benefit of the young men who are constantly joining the ranks of the botanists. Here is where as strangers they may appear with papers which show their ability, or lack of it. Here, too, the older and more experienced men may read their less technical papers, and those whose purpose is more that of instruction, and the promotion of general discussion. Methods of teaching, the popularizing of botany, its applications in the arts and industries, and in fact anything which may advance this department of science, may certainly be included in the work of the section.

Possibly a practicable method for beginning the differentiation of section and society would be to have a joint committee on papers, to which all papers for either organization should be submitted. Such committee should be given the power to sort the papers, and to assign them to section, or society, for reading, in accordance with an agreed plan. The difficulty with this proposal is that such a committee can not meet personally before the meetings, and that the papers (or abstracts) are not to be secured long enough in advance of the meetings for the matter to be attended to by correspondence. However, if for the coming meeting every paper (or a good abstract) could be in the hands of such a joint committee by Monday morning, December 30, at 9 o'clock, it would not be a difficult task to make such an assignment as would differentiate the two organizations quite sharply.

For the present the society is preparing programs for at least a part of its sessions, and participation in these programs is by invi-

tation. This is a good beginning, and should be followed by action on the part of the society and the section which will continue and extend it.

SHORT NOTES ON RECENT PAPERS

AN interesting and useful hundred-page pamphlet entitled "London Botanical Gardens," by Pierre E. F. Perrédès, is published by the Wellcome Chemical Research Laboratories, of London. In addition to the descriptive text it includes thirty-one full-page plates, mostly reproductions of photographs.

Among recent papers by Professor Doctor A. J. Ewart, the government botanist for Victoria, Australia, are "The Function of Silica in the Nutrition of Cereals," "Contributions to the Flora of Australia" and "The Movements of the Soluble Constituents in Fine Alluvial Soils."

J. G. Luehmann's "Dichotomous Key to the hitherto known Species of Eucalyptus," although read before the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science nearly ten years ago, is worthy of mention now, as being most useful to persons interested in this genus of trees, as must be the case especially with our Pacific coast botanists.

"The Leguminosae of Porto Rico," by Miss Janet Russell Perkins, published as Part 4 of Volume X. of the Contributions from the United States National Herbarium, is a well-written and very interesting paper of almost ninety pages. The "local names" given for most of the species, must prove very useful to American residents or others who are interested in the botany of the island. A complete manual prepared after this model would be a most useful work.

Shortly after the death of Dr. Otto Kuntze a catalogue was made of his extensive herbarium, which is now offered for sale. It is contained in 467 cardboard boxes, and probably includes between twenty and thirty thousand specimens. Further information may be obtained by addressing "Villa Girola, San Remo, Italy."

Six papers have been received in advance of their publication in the Eighteenth Annual Report of the Missouri Botanical Garden, viz.: "The Literature of Furcraea with a Synopsis

of the known Species," by J. R. Drummond; "Branch Cankers of Rhododendron" and "Frost Injuries of Sycamore Buds," by Hermann von Schrenk; "Plantae Lindheimerianae, part III.," by J. W. Blankinship; "Additions to the Genus *Yucca*" and "*Agave macroacantha* and allied Euagaves," by Dr. William Trelease. Most of these are contributions to our knowledge of Mexico and southwest United States botany, in continuation of similar work which has hitherto come from the Missouri Botanical Garden.

While there is no formal botany in the "Proceedings of the Iowa Park and Forestry Association" attention may be called to it here on account of its interest in the planting and preservation of trees, and the unusual beauty of illustrations, paper and presswork shown in this state report.

In the November number of the "Journal of Botany" there appears a portrait and an appreciative sketch of the life and work of the late Edward A. L. Batters, an English botanist, and well-known student of the marine algae.

In the number of the "Berichte der deutschen Botanischen Gesellschaft" for August 28, A. B. Reagan publishes a list of plants observed on the Rosebud Indian Reservation of South Dakota, which contains so many obvious errors and omissions, as to give a wholly erroneous idea as to the flora of the country. This reservation is in the extreme southern portion of the state, adjoining Nebraska on the south, and lying on both sides of the one-hundredth meridian west of Greenwich. The flora of this part of the Great Plains has been pretty well known to western botanists for a decade or more, and yet we are asked to believe that *Vitis aestivalis*, *Rhus copallina*, *Rosa humilis*, *Rosa rubiginosa*, *Fraxinus americana*, *Quercus obtusiloba*, *Populus heterophylla* and *Pinus banksiana* occur in the region. These are certainly erroneous determinations. In passing we may enter a protest against such a nomenclatural monstrosity as *Prunus rosebudii*, which is proposed for what the author takes to be a new species of sand cherry.

CHARLES E. BESSEY

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA