

1926. Dr. B. M. Duggar was elected chairman and Dr. H. W. Rand secretary-treasurer of the board. Papers of incorporation under the laws of the state of New York were approved, and a certificate of incorporation was filed by E. V. Cowdry, B. M. Duggar, R. G. Harrison, E. L. Mark and H. W. Rand. Subsequently, to satisfy the legal requirement that at least one of the signers should be a resident of the state of New York, the name of Mr. Lawrason Riggs, Jr., was added to the papers. Committees were appointed to draft the by-laws of the corporation and to draw up detailed plans setting forth the aims and proposed equipment of the station.

Pending the completion of the legal processes of incorporation, further steps were taken to secure the cooperation of the Bermudian government and residents, and also to elicit the approval and support of the Royal Society, the Biological Board of Canada and the National Research Council.

These efforts to secure cooperation are meeting with most encouraging responses. Under date of July 5, 1926, Dr. E. A. McCallan, director of the department of agriculture of Bermuda, writes that he is interviewing representatives of the Bermuda government with a view to ascertaining the government's attitude toward the station, and intimating that it is highly probable that the government will be willing to make some provision for the needs of the station, possibly in connection with the Bermuda Aquarium, now in process of construction. Dr. McCallan also expresses the hope that close relations may exist between the station and the department of agriculture, and he offers the facilities of the laboratory of the department of agriculture for the use of botanists who may be working under the auspices of the station.

The following is quoted from a letter, bearing the date of July 12, 1926, received from the secretary of the Royal Society:

At a meeting on the 8th July information was laid before the Council of the Royal Society of London by Professor J. H. Ashworth and Dr. E. J. Allen concerning the steps which are being taken to reorganize the Bermuda Biological Station for Research and to develop it as an international laboratory.

I am directed to express to you the Royal Society's interest in the statement which was placed before them and the satisfaction with which they have learned of the steps which are being taken thus to widen the scope and value of a station which offers such exceptional advantages of position and which, though situated in British territory, had hitherto owed its existence and development to American enterprise.

The Council of the Royal Society hope that they may be kept informed concerning the progress of the scheme.

This letter was followed by one from Professor Ashworth, explaining that the Royal Society's funds are almost entirely restricted for special uses and that the contribution proposed by the society should be regarded not as a measure of the society's approval but as a "Token grant," expressing the society's "interest in and sympathy with the proposals of the Trustees" of the Bermuda Biological Station.

Articles of incorporation were approved by the Supreme Court of the state of New York on June 28, 1926. The certificate of incorporation provides that:

The principal objects for which the corporation is formed are to establish and maintain a Laboratory or Station for scientific study in Biology; the acceptance and holding of funds, whether from bequest, devise, gift or otherwise, and the application of such funds and the income therefrom to the purposes of this corporation.

The name of the corporation shall be *The Bermuda Biological Station for Research, Inc.*

The territory in which the operations of the corporation shall be principally conducted is in the State of New York and in the Island of Bermuda.

The first annual meeting of the corporation shall be held at the City of New York and State of New York, on the 27th day of December, 1926.

The certificate of incorporation was filed in the office of the secretary of state of New York on June 30, 1926.

HERBERT W. RAND,  
*Secretary of the Corporation*

### A COUNTERFEIT COLLECTION OF MEXICAN PLANTS FALSELY ATTRIBUTED TO BROTHER G. ARSENE

A FEW years ago the U. S. National Museum was fortunate in receiving a very large collection of plants made in Mexico by Brother G. Arsène, who was engaged for several years in teaching in the schools of the Christian Brothers in Puebla and Morelia. Brother Arsène is a most enthusiastic botanist, and was enabled to devote much of his time to collecting, with the result that his collections from the vicinities of these two cities amounted to some ten thousand numbers of flowering plants, besides large quantities of mosses, hepatics and lichens. His collections of cryptogams are doubtless the largest ever made in Mexico, and no person has ever made local collections in Mexico at all comparable in size with those which he obtained about Puebla and Morelia.

In his work of collecting Brother Arsène was assisted by other members of the same order, especially

Brother Nicolás, who collected at Puebla; Brother Adole, at Saltillo; Brother Abbon, at Monterrey; and Brother Agniel, at Querétaro; while other brothers made small collections in different regions, particularly Veracruz, the Valley of Mexico and Tlaxcala.

During one of the political disturbances in Mexico the foreign clergy were expelled and compelled to leave the country with only a moment's notice. Brother Arsène's collections had to be left behind, but later, with the cooperation of the departments of foreign affairs of the Mexican and American governments, the collection was forwarded to the U. S. National Museum, to which it had been presented by the collector. Unfortunately, a part of the collection had disappeared through some unknown agency before shipment. The unmounted plants having been arranged by families in bundles, some groups are thus not represented at all in the series acquired by the National Museum.

A full set of these plants was mounted and distributed into the National Herbarium. The duplicates, comprising several thousand specimens, were sold by the writer upon Brother Arsène's account, as a small recompense for the vast work of collection and for the fine series received by the National Herbarium. All or nearly all these duplicate specimens were distributed to herbaria of the United States, and they may be recognized easily by their labels, printed in Washington and uniform with those used regularly in this herbarium ( $17\frac{1}{8}$  by 4 inches). Brother Arsène's original labels, which exist in this herbarium as well as in others of both the United States and Europe, are easily known by the fact that they were reproduced by multigraph, in script.

If the matter ended here, it would be quite simple, but unfortunately some remarkable complications have been introduced and require detailed explanation.

When Brother Arsène went to Mexico, in 1906, he was asked by those in direction in his province of the order to collect as many specimens of plants as possible, and to send them to France, where they might be sold, the funds thus obtained to be devoted to the support of superannuated members of the order who had been deprived of their properties in France. Brother Arsène states that during the years he remained in Mexico he sent to France from five to ten times as many specimens as were received by the National Museum, certainly an enormous amount of material. The plants were received in France by Brother Héribaude, who disposed of them in various ways. A set was sent to the Jardin Botanique de Montpellier, for study by Daveau; several sets were sold to Prince Roland Bonaparte; and most of the remainder were consigned to one or more continental dealers in herbarium material.

The plants distributed by Brother Héribaude were properly labeled, and so far as is known none of the specimens actually collected by Brother Arsène and his associates was ever distributed with an incorrect label.

Mexican plants are in much demand by herbaria, and apparently the supply was not equal to the demand, consequently at least one of the dealers devised a unique scheme for satisfying those who wished Mexican plants. I am informed that one lot of plants purchased by the Gray Herbarium and purporting to have been collected in Mexico by one of the Christian Brothers (Brother Adole) consisted in part of species known otherwise only from Brazil!

The first and only experience that I have had personally with fictitiously labeled plants of this collection was in preparing for mounting specimens of the Buchtlen Herbarium, which was acquired several years ago by the National Museum. This herbarium contained several thousand specimens purporting to have been collected in Mexico by Brother Arsène and other members of the Christian Brothers, which had been received by Buchtlen in exchange for Bolivian plants. To one acquainted with the flora of Mexico, examination of this "Mexican" collection was dumbfounding.

Many of the plants labeled as coming from Mexico were species of well-known range, of which it could be stated with all confidence that they did not occur in Mexico. Some were from the eastern United States, some from California, others from the West Indies, and some even of Old World origin.

Most of the specimens bearing the characteristic labels that accompanied such material were discarded and destroyed. In looking over several thousand of these plants, it was possible gradually to form some idea of their true nature and source. The results were highly interesting, but the explanation is so complicated that it may be difficult to state it lucidly.

In his desire to have for sale material which he could append to Brother Arsène's genuine collections, some dealer evidently had made use of miscellaneous collections remaining upon his hands, the demand for which had been exhausted. Some of these were from Mexico, others from the United States, and still others from Asia and Australia. All such specimens were now supplied with characteristic and uniform labels,  $5\frac{1}{4}$  by  $3\frac{1}{4}$  inches, bearing in heavy type the heading "Plantae Mexicanae"; the word Mexico, followed by "Puebla:" and "Morelia:"; and "Coll: Nicolas, Arsène."

The dealer who created these false specimens possessed no high degree of ingenuity, else it would not be so easy to expose his system. In some instances

the Buchtien Herbarium contained two specimens of a given rare species lying in a single cover, one being improperly labeled as collected in Mexico by Arsène, the other a correctly labeled specimen of the collection from which the "Arsène" specimen had been fabricated. Any one experienced in the preparation and handling of herbarium specimens will understand how easy it was to recognize the fact that the apparently unrelated specimens had a common origin, since they were alike in every detail of size, shape, discoloration, etc., and in those intangible but quickly perceptible characters which mark all the specimens of a series of one species that have been collected and dried by one collector upon a certain date.

For instance, in one cover was a specimen of *Zinnia integrissima* Turcz., Pringle 8438, from Sierra de Tepoxtlán, 7,500 feet, September 11, 1900; and along with it a specimen obviously of the same collection, but labeled as collected by Arsène with the data "S. María. 2200. X. 1909." In another cover, Pringle 55, *Serjania atrolineata* Wright, from Cuba, collected in 1903, had been divided, and part of it labeled as collected by Adole at Jalapa, Veracruz, January, 1910. Such illustrations could be continued indefinitely.

Part of a specimen of *Arctostaphylos canescens* Eastwood, collected on Mount Tamalpais, California, had been ticketed as collected by Arsène at Rincón. Among the United States collections from which these supposed Mexican collections were segregated are C. F. Baker's "Plants of the Pacific Coast," and his plants of Cuba; plants of the Southeastern States distributed by the Biltmore Herbarium; and various collections distributed by G. L. Fisher. There are many specimens of whose source I have no information, but they include such well-marked species as *Camptosorus rhizophyllus*, *Woodwardia areolata*, *Euphorbia ipecacuanhae*, and similar plants that are confined to the eastern United States and do not approach the Mexican border; West Indian plants found by no other collector in Mexico; and California species that reach Mexico only in Lower California, if at all. The only thing retained from the true data is the name of the plant—locality, name of collector, altitude and date of collection all have been changed.

The Old World species attributed to Mexico are rather numerous, but I do not know from what collections they were taken. In the case of these species the distributor had at least the grace not to label them as native Mexican plants, but their origin is indicated usually as in "parcs." Imagination did not fail him, either, for numerous specimens of *Juniperus* and *Cupressus*, of presumably funereal aspect, are indicated as having come from cemeteries! If the clerk who prepared the labels had a sense of humor,

he must have smiled when he wrote this. Most of these Old World plants belong to species not known to be in cultivation in Mexico, and the writer has no doubt that the specimens were made in some region thousands of miles away.

The distributor of these plants was not content with ascribing specimens wrongly to Brother Arsène, but his ingenuity was equal to the creation of a new and fictitious collector, Herrera. This is a common Spanish family name, but I have no hesitation in asserting that this particular Herrera never existed. The name selected is not above criticism; Munchausen would have been a better choice.

"Herrera's" collections were manufactured from those of Pringle. In many instances the type collections of Pringle's new species were thus divided. Here, too, only the name of the species was invariably retained. The date of collection is sometimes earlier and sometimes later than Pringle's. The locality is usually the same, but often the altitude (given in feet on Pringle's labels and in meters on those of "Herrera") has been altered.

There are probably other complications that have escaped me, but those mentioned are sufficient to indicate their general nature. The facts of the case are such that no one understanding them can doubt that the labels were falsified with the intent to deceive. I know of no other instance in which similar deceit has been practiced in the distribution of herbarium specimens, and fortunately so, since such deception can result only in chaos. Some of these wrongly labeled collections have reached the United States. Here the result is likely to be bad enough, although in most cases an American botanist will at least question the new records of distribution introduced. In Europe, where knowledge of American geography is naturally less intimate, the results are likely to be extremely unfortunate. Certainly students of "discontinuous distribution" will find much to interest them in the study of these collections. The thousands of specimens included in the Buchtien Herbarium comprise only a small portion of the collection distributed with these worse than misleading labels, for thousands of others were distributed to the larger herbaria of Europe and America.

It is with the hope of warning European botanists as to errors lurking in the labels of the (spurious) Arsène collections and to prevent erroneous records of distribution, which, if printed, will persist for many years, that this article has been prepared. For the benefit of European workers, the following summary of the matter may prove helpful:

Extreme care is necessary in the citation of specimens of plants supposed to have been collected in Mexico by Brothers Arsène, Nicolás, Adole and

Abbon (and perhaps others). If the labels are multigraphed and in script, there is no reason to doubt their authenticity. Labels ( $1\frac{7}{8}$  by 4 inches) issued at the U. S. National Herbarium and headed "Plants of Mexico," with printed locality, also are authentic. Beware of large ( $5\frac{1}{4}$  by  $3\frac{1}{4}$  inches) labels, surrounded by a black frame, with the heading "Plantae Mexicanae," and bearing two names of collectors, Arsène and Nicolás, one or both of which are deleted with pen and ink. Plants with such labels are almost certainly false. Either they were not collected in Mexico, or else they were collected by Pringle at another date and locality than that specified. It is best to destroy all plants bearing such labels. All labels of this type bearing the name "Herrera" as collector are fictitious and should be disregarded.

In closing, I can not state in too strong terms that no blame for this condition of affairs attaches to Brother Arsène; rather, he has been made the victim of an unfortunate conspiracy, if such it may be termed. No more conscientious or industrious collector has ever worked in Mexico, and he has contributed in a very large measure to our knowledge of the Mexican flora.

PAUL C. STANDLEY

U. S. NATIONAL MUSEUM

## SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

### THE HARVARD AFRICAN EXPEDITION

THE Harvard African Expedition began its work in Liberia early in July and left there on November 21. It arrived in Matadi, at the mouth of the Congo, on December 3.

The purposes of the expedition were to make a biological and medical survey of Liberia and to make biological and medical collections there and in the Congo. In the field of medicine the party has obtained valuable data and pathological material which will require prolonged study in the home laboratories. The zoological and botanical collections include biting and parasitic insects, birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, molluscs, flowering plants and fungi. The amphibians and the snakes among the reptiles are particularly well represented. The collections of woody plants and orchids are likewise very comprehensive.

Much of the material has been obtained from parts of the interior in which no scientific collecting has been done before and where no medical studies have hitherto been made. In the course of their work, members of the expedition traversed the country in two directions, traveling on foot more than 500 miles and reaching the eastern and southeastern frontiers.

Although some of the party were attacked by fever, all are now in their usual good health.

Dr. Glover M. Allen, having completed the zoological part of the work which was planned for Liberia, has returned to Cambridge to take up his duties at the university. The remaining personnel of the expedition is as follows: Dr. Richard P. Strong, Dr. George C. Shattuck, Dr. Max Theiler and Dr. Joseph Bequaert, of the department of tropical medicine; Dr. David Linder, botanist; Mr. Loring Whitman, photographer, and Mr. Harold Coolidge, assistant zoologist.

The expedition will proceed up the Congo and is expected to reach Mombassa, on the eastern coast of the continent, in April or May.

### THE NEW YORK STATE PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL AND INSTITUTE

CONTRACTS for the construction of the new State Psychiatric Hospital and Institute, to be built in New York on a site provided by Columbia University at 168th Street and Riverside Drive, were awarded on December 30 at the final meeting of the State Hospital Commission, which has now been succeeded by the Department of Mental Hygiene.

The institution will be a center for scientific research into causes and prevention of mental disorders and as a teaching center for the training of mental specialists. In it the research work of fourteen civil State hospitals will be coordinated.

The new building will be of eleven stories. The hospital will provide beds for 210 patients of both sexes. An entire floor will be given over to the children's department, with school rooms, work shops and play rooms.

All varieties of adult mental diseases will be studied. There will be the latest diagnostic and treatment facilities, including hydrotherapy, electrotherapy, occupational therapy, light therapy, physiotherapy, gymnastic psychotherapy and special medical and surgical procedures. Most of two floors will be devoted to the out-patient department.

The tower, rising nine stories above the main structure of eleven floors, will house the library, museum record rooms, doctors' offices, staff conference class rooms and various research laboratories designed and equipped for special studies in neuroanatomy, neurophysiology, neuropathology, clinical pathology, chemistry, bacteriology, serology, endocrinology and experimental psychology.

Being close to the Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center and medical college, the Institute will provide for psychiatric instruction in connection with virtually all its departments. Its teaching facilities will