

wished his collection sold to the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation. He had no idea of the number and importance of specimens in the other collections involved, referring the matter back to the managing director. One statement came out clearly, for the first time: "Only the Moore collection had been sold." The Gottschall collection of nearly five thousand pieces, valued by its donor at about \$50,000, the Haldeman, older and larger, and all the smaller series, containing objects of the rarest sort—perhaps twenty thousand specimens in all—were said to be sent along as of no importance.

The warning that, if this were not stopped, it would be "the greatest scandal there has ever been in the history of American archeology and ethnology" had no effect, and no alternative was left the assistant curator but to hand Mr. Morris her resignation.

May 6, 1929

Board of Trustees,

The Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia.

Gentlemen:

I hereby tender my resignation as Assistant Curator in Charge of the Department of Archeology. It is with deep regret that I sever a connection extending into the thirtieth year, but the sale of all the American Indian archeological and ethnological collections of the Academy to the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation of New York City, without the knowledge of all your Board, and certainly without full understanding of what the loss of these priceless collections will mean to the prestige of the Academy and the honor of our city, constitutes, in my opinion, a breach of faith with the past and a menace to the future of the great collections of all the departments of the Academy.

I hereby register my protest against this blanket-sale, secretly negotiated, and the proposed clandestine removal, without adequate time given for the security of deposited collections not the property of the Academy.

Respectfully,
(Signed) H. NEWELL WARDLE

Presumably, urged by public and private protest which followed this disclosure of the sale of the Indian collections, the managing director and the academy's solicitor went to New York, on May 9, and the press was requested to await an announcement. That announcement, published on the eleventh, was to the effect that the collections, other than Mr. Moore's, had "been merely loaned on the usual terms for study." This was the first intimation of a loan, which, whatever its terms, did not conform to custom.

It is said, on good authority, that, when the Heye Foundation thus lost permanent title to these unconsidered trifles, the academy's officials had to surrender a part of the ten thousand dollars received for the Moore collection.

Two truck-loads of specimens were returned to the academy, May 17 to 21, and were piled, loose, unpacked, indiscriminately, on the floor of the old museum.

A letter by the present writer addressed to the trustees and protesting against such treatment of valuable material, had for result its deportation to the cellar, where it lies in a similar heap. Most of it is perishable, and will ere long become as valueless as the trustees were led to believe.

It is obvious from this sequence of events that Mr. Moore's consent to the sale of his collection, behind which the managing director has taken shelter, was not a free choice. It was the only way he saw to save his collection from such destruction as has fallen upon this returned material. He was left in ignorance even of the price the academy took for it—a price far below its marketable value, had the wish to sell been known.

The end is not yet. The affair is not only a shame to an ancient and honorable institution which in the hundred and seventeen years of its life accepted the trust of archeological and ethnological collections. If misguided trustees, chosen for their business ability to manage the financial affairs of an institution, have the power, without asking expert advice, so to wreck a scientific department, it shakes the foundations of confidence in every institution in America.

H. NEWELL WARDLE

SHARON HILL, PA.

THE DICTIONARY OF AMERICAN BIOGRAPHY

THE following notes on the second volume of the "Dictionary of American Biography" are written, not with any desire to find fault, but rather, where a work is so good, to ask why it might not be a little better.

Human touches introduced into some of the sketches are commendable. However, the work will serve primarily a public chiefly interested in fact or judicial appraisal.

To satisfy such readers, some degree of uniformity in treatment is desirable, if for no other reason than this, that the time of the investigator is saved. The "Who's Who" method of presenting essential facts might well be considered by the editors.

It is not suggested that all such facts are of equal relevance, but surely the interest in genetics justifies the inclusion of all significant facts of inheritance. To illustrate, the reader of the sketch of Charles E. Bessey might very properly have been informed that his son, E. A. Bessey, is also a distinguished botanist.

My attention was particularly caught, in reading the sketch of B. S. Barton, by the failure to note the

reprint of his Collection towards a Materia Medica, in Lloyd's Bulletin, No. 1, in 1900. The article shows other omissions of noteworthy facts. For example, no mention is made of the honor bestowed upon Barton by Nuttall in naming a genus of plants "Bartonia." This name has been dropped, as Muhlenberg had given the name Bartonia to another genus and Nuttall's Bartonias are now Mentzelias. Barton's aid to both Pursh and Nuttall is a significant fact in the history of American botany. Barton himself took credit for the fact; see Lloyd's Bulletin, No. 1, page 3. A reference to Barton's connection with William Bartram, referred to in the article on Bartram, should certainly have been included.

A print of one portrait of Barton is mentioned, but the much more accessible reprint in *Popular Science Monthly* for 1896 (vol. 48) is not mentioned.

The bibliography is, of necessity, brief, but it might very properly have included a reference to the article in the *Popular Science Monthly*, (vol. 48: 834-40); possibly also to the reprint of the sketch of W. P. C. Barton, in his "Revised Elements of Botany," in 1836.

Some other articles in the volume are subject to similar criticism. Let this instance of Barton stand as an example. If it be urged that space is limited, it might be answered that at least the facts here mentioned are more significant than some of those in-

cluded. Nothing should be omitted from the Barton sketch as it is printed, but a little condensation would have permitted the inclusion of everything here suggested.

The omission of (*q.v.*) after the name of T. P. Barton is, of course, only an oversight. Last of all, permit a query of fact: In the article on Jacob Bigelow, should it not be B. S. Barton, not W. P. C. Barton, under whom Bigelow studied?

WILLIAM H. POWERS

LIBRARY, SOUTH DAKOTA STATE COLLEGE

PROFESSOR CONN AND THE BROOKLYN INSTITUTE

IN the note in *SCIENCE* on the celebration of the conclusion of the first quarter century of the work of the Carnegie Institution at Cold Spring Harbor, Long Island, no mention is made of the previous work carried on there by the late Professor Conn under the auspices of the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences.

I had the very great pleasure of working under his direction there during the summer of 1892 when I was a medical student, and he showed a remarkable ability to interest his students in personal research and observation.

LOUIS C. AGER

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENCE

TESTIMONIAL DINNER TO DR. MERRILL

DR. GEORGE PERKINS MERRILL, head curator of geology in the U. S. National Museum, was tendered a dinner on Friday evening, May 31, 1929, at the Cosmos Club in Washington, by friends and colleagues from scientific circles. The dinner was given in honor of Dr. Merrill's seventy-fifth birthday.

Dr. Merrill was born at Auburn, Maine, May 31, 1854, but for half a century has been a resident of Washington where he has been connected with the Smithsonian Institution. During this time Dr. Merrill has won admiration and high esteem from his many friends and acquaintances in scientific and social spheres. His career is indicated by his versatility. He is a teacher, a critic, a public speaker, an executive and a scientist. During his long and active life, Dr. Merrill has done much for the advancement of science, among his many achievements being several works which stand out as monuments, namely, "Stones for Building and Decoration," "Rockweathering and Soils," "The First One Hundred Years of American Geology," and his many highly enlightening works on meteorites, for which, in 1922, he was awarded the J. Lawrence Smith medal by the National Academy of Sciences.

Dr. Merrill received his B.S., M.S. and Ph.D. degrees at the University of Maine. In 1917 the honorary degree of doctor of science was conferred upon him by George Washington University, where he had been professor of geology and mineralogy from 1893 to 1915. He is a member of the National Academy of Sciences, Geological Society of America, Washington Academy of Sciences, American Philosophical Society, and others.

The committee on arrangements for the dinner was composed of Dr. Alexander Wetmore, chairman, Dr. Marcus Benjamin and Dr. Paul Bartsch. Dr. Charles G. Abbot, secretary of the Smithsonian, presided. The speakers of the evening were as follows.

Dr. Marcus Benjamin, editor, U. S. National Museum, gave the general report of the committee, and concluded his remarks as follows:

In a few years the Smithsonian will celebrate its centenary, and I can not but believe that when that event occurs, there will be those who will trace the history of that great institution and who will have much to say about the work of the eminent Henry, and they will review the valuable contributions made by the distinguished Baird. Those who are living in that day will learn more