

THE STANLEY COULTER HERBARIUM AT PURDUE UNIVERSITY

C. L. PORTER and J. N. PORTER

Herbaria constitute one of the assets of the state. They are of value to the community as well as to the institutions that house them because they are available to any interested persons who may seriously seek information concerning plants. Every herbarium is a center from which the knowledge and love of plants is disseminated.

The herbarium was considered to be such a necessary adjunct to the teaching of science that the Purdue herbarium originated simultaneously with the establishment of the University in 1874. The first "register" for the years 1874-75 makes mention under "equipment" that an herbarium and cabinet of woods is available for students in botany. Also, this same "register" states that herbarium work is required of all students in Botany.

The Rev. John Hussey was the first professor of Botany. He took an active interest in the work of the herbarium and the number of specimens were increased as a result of his efforts.

The second "register" under date of 1876-77 states "The herbarium contains about 1,000 species of mounted plants and the collection is constantly increased by field work and exchanges. It is specially full in ferns, grasses and sedges; the sets of each being nearly complete."

The register of 1878-79 states "the herbarium contains over 2,000 specimens of mounted plants. The botany collection has recently been increased by a valuable donation of about 1,200 species of plants, many of them foreign, by G. W. Clinton, Esq., of Buffalo, N. Y., a collector and botanist of wide reputation." It is to be noted in these quotations from the earlier records that "species" and "specimens" are words used loosely and interchangeably.

In 1880 illness forced the retirement of Professor Hussey. A young instructor from the Lafayette High School was drafted to fill the vacancy at Purdue. Thus, Charles R. Barnes, the great botanist became instructor in Botany, Zoology, and Geology. Under his direction, and by means of his industry, the herbarium prospered.

The Purdue Catalogue of 1891 shows the growth of the herbarium in this statement, "The herbarium consists of 5,000 species of plants and is particularly rich in the flora of the state. It is arranged in accordance with the most approved methods, and by means of a card catalogue and case indexes, is easily accessible and unusually valuable for instructional purposes."

By 1902 the number of recorded species was 7,000. After 1907 there is no further mention of the herbarium in the annual catalogues. The authors are unable to determine if this omission was due to loss of interest or for purposes of economy.

The herbarium after its brilliant inception did fall on lean and evil days. The old science building which had formerly housed it was torn down, the specimens were stored in boxes and moved in this condition to the basement of the new

"Coulter Hall." Here they remained for years, a prey to dust, mice and vandalism. Dean Coulter strove manfully to remedy this condition making repeated appeals to the authorities for aid to restore the herbarium to its former usefulness. In the President's Report under the date of 1925, Dean Coulter made the following appeal. "The most obvious need is the reequipping of the museum and herbarium rooms. Proper cases for the care and display of excellent collections now owned by the University should be provided in the immediate future if these collections are to be preserved. The original plan interrupted by the World War, provided for the re-establishment of these adjuncts to the research and instructional facilities of the department."

The inaccessibility of the herbarium at this period placed a decided handicap on the study of taxonomy, which subject must ever be fundamental to all branches of botanical knowledge, no matter under what name it may masquerade itself.

Following Dean Coulter's retirement, Dr. Howard E. Enders, new head of the department, continued actively to press these demands. He has been very successful in having his requests honored. President Elliott and Comptroller Stewart should be commended for their vision and whole hearted support of this project.

Steel cases, dust, vermin and fire-proof, have been provided to house the herbarium collection. A large room is dedicated to herbarium purposes. This room is equipped with tables, etc., for the convenience of students using the herbarium. Cases at present make space available for our collections of Angiosperms and Fungi but will not permit expansion of these collections. Large collections of mosses and ferns are not yet provided for. Additional cases have been promised for the near future and we may hope that shortly the entire collection may be made available and that provision may be made for the rapid expansion that is planned. The need of a curator is obvious and requests have been made for such a man to devote his entire time to museum and herbarium work.

Following the provisions thus made for the proper care of collections, the plant specimens were unpacked and arranged in the cases following Gray's system of classification. New collections were mounted and labeled and many old specimens had to be remounted. This work has now been completed for the Angiosperms. It reveals that at the present time we have a small but very interesting collection of flowering plants. Of the Angiosperms 81 percent of the families are represented; 79 percent of the genera and 62 percent of the species. This is a small collection as compared to that of neighboring institutions but with the facilities now being made available at Purdue we may hope to increase with rapidity the number of our collections.

Our collection of Angiosperms while small is interesting from the standpoint of their age, locality and the personnel of the collectors. The oldest specimen bears the date of 1831. A number of specimens under date of 1838-39 are to be credited to Dr. Clapp. Dr. Clapp was a physician of New Albany, Indiana and is famous for his collection of plants from the "Knob" region of southern Indiana. Many of the collectors are names well known to this academy including Charles R. Barnes, W. S. Blatchley, H. J. Clements, Stanley Coulter, John M. Coulter, Alida M. Cunningham, C. C. Deam, H. B. Dorner, Walter H. Evans, W. B. VanGorder. A list of the more important collectors is appended to this paper.

Geographically, the region best represented is Indiana but plants are included in considerable numbers from New England, New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, the Carolinas, Florida, Colorado, California, Mexico, South Africa and Central Europe.

Several individuals should be named because of their very active part in the rehabilitation of the herbarium. Among these are Dr. E. J. Kohl of the Botany Department at Purdue and Dr. Delmar C. Cooper of the Botany Research Staff at the University of Wisconsin.

Purdue is particularly indebted to Charles C. Deam for his many fine contributions and for his abiding interest and encouragement.

The herbarium at Purdue has been named "The Stanley Coulter Herbarium." This honor is rightfully due a man who for long years strove ably to preserve the Purdue collections and because he and his students have made so many additions to the collection, but chiefly because through the inspiration of his teaching and his research he has increased so notably the interest of the citizens in the flora of their state.

Important Collectors.

Aiton Geo. B., Minneapolis, 1890. Arthur, J. C., Purdue, Bailey, W. W., Newport, R. I., 1878. Barnes, Charles R., Indiana, 1878. Bishop, J. N., Plainville, 1879. Blatchley, U. S., Vigo Co., 1888. Canby, Wm. M., Wilmington, Del., 1862. Clapp, Dr., New Albany, Ind., 1838. Clarke, D., Flint, Mich. Clementa, H. J., Daviess Co., 1895. Clinton, G. W., Buffalo, N. Y. Congdon, J. W., East Greenwich, R. I., 1878. Coulter, John M., Hanover, Ind., 1875. Coulter, Stanley, Tippecanoe Co., 1899. Cunningham, Alida M., Tippecanoe Co., 1897. Curtiss, A. H., Bedford Co., Va., 1872. Davis, J. J., Vinton, Iowa—Racine, Wis., 1878. Deam, C. C., Indiana, 1916. Derry, C. W., Oso City, Colo., 1876. Dodderidge, B. H., Kosciusko Co., 1914. Donaldson, Black Hills, 1874. Dorner, H. B., Tippecanoe Co., 1901. Drake and Dickson, Portland, Ore., 1887. Eggert, H., St. Louis, 1876. Evans, Walter H., Crawfordsville, 1889. Farlow, W. G., Mt. Washington, N. H., 1884. Foster and Hale, Banks of Wea, 1901. Gillman, Henry, Detroit, 1867. Golden, K. E., Tippecanoe Co., 1895. Hall, E., Athens, Ill., 1864. Harris, W., Kingston, Jamaica, 1915. Hasse, H. E., Los Angeles, Cal., 1890. Hoysradt, Lyman H., Pine Plains, N. Y., 1877. Hussey, J., Tippecanoe Co., 1878. Hyanis, M. E. Ledman, O. S., St. Louis, Mo., 1908. Lloyd, C. G., Cincinnati, O., 1879. McCarthy, Geraldus, N. and S. Carolina, 1885. Osborn, Henry L., Indiana, 1880. Paine, John A., Fish Creep. Parker, C. F., Philadelphia, 1864. Pierron, P. E., St. Vincents College, Westmorland Co., Pa., 1876. Pitts, John B., Tippecanoe Co., 1909. Plummer, Dr., Richmond, Ind., 1877. Pringle, C. G., Mexico, 1890. Riddle, C., Tippecanoe Co., 1899. Ruger, M., New Jersey. Rusby, H. H., New Jersey 1877. Smith, E. P., Hubbardstown, Mich. Smith and Gates, Tippecanoe Co., 1902. Spaulding, Randall, Montclair, N. J. Steinitz, Wenzel, Flora Hungarica, 1879-80. Templeton, H. G., Kosciusko Co., 1914. Thompson, V., Van Gorder, W. B., Tippecanoe Co. Ward, Lester F., Washington, D. C., 1876. Wright, S. G., Tippecanoe Co., 1893. Young, A. H., New Haven, Conn., 1874, Hanover, Ind., 1876. Young, H. W., Northville, L. I., 1873.

