

The **Fourth International Botanical Congress**, entitled '**International Congress of Plant Sciences**' was held at the Cornell University, Ithaca, New York State, August 16—21, 1926. The home of the Congress, on the outskirts of a small town in the beautiful Finger Lake district of New York State was in pleasing contrast with those of previous Congresses. The Campus of the University provided lodging for the members and accommodation for the various activities of the Congress within a restricted area. The headquarters were the Willard Straight Hall, the Students' Club, which formed an excellent business and social centre with a large restaurant and cafeteria. Members were lodged in the various college hostels. Another innovation was the more extensive and sectionized programme; thirteen sections had been arranged, including, besides the strictly botanical, various applications such as agronomy, horticulture, forestry, and pharmacognosy. There was in fact a feeling that pure botany had been over-sectionized and that it would have been of greater interest, for instance, if morphology, ecology and taxonomy had been grouped together. Several joint meetings and symposia were however arranged.

The papers read were in response to specific invitations to individual botanists issued early in the year.

Nearly 800 members attended, and though, naturally, Americans predominated, overseas countries were well represented. Professor L. H. BAILEY, doyen of the University, was President, and gave an

address of welcome. For the conduct of the Sections a visiting member was selected as Chairman and a member of the University as Secretary. Nomenclature, the leading feature of the two preceding congresses, occupied a subordinate place. It had been decided that no legislation should be enacted & after a general discussion, a representative Committee of twenty-nine botanists was appointed, with Dr. BRIQUET as Secretary, to receive resolutions and suggestions and to report on these to the Congress in 1930.

Excursions were arranged during the week to places of special botanical interest, and several long excursions after the meeting. The most extensive of these was a western trip conducted by Dr. GEORGE FULLER of Chicago University. A select party of 21 botanists representing twelve nationalities, went by way of Niagara to Chicago where they were entertained by the botanical Staff of the University. Thence to the Yellowstone Park, visiting Salt Lake City en route, and the Rocky Mountain Natural Park by way of Fort Collins, and thence to Denver and back to Chicago.

The Report (Proceedings of the International Congress of Plant Sciences) edited by the Secretary, Dr. B. M. DUGGAR, fills two large volumes. It is an impressive memorial of the great amount of work done at the Congress as represented by the papers submitted in the various sections, which are here published together with the President's and the two general addresses. ERWIN SMITH's address "Fifty years of plant pathology" is of special interest.

The **Fifth International Botanical Congress** was held at Cambridge, August 16—23, 1930. At Ithaca in 1926 the members had accepted an invitation to London but owing to a generally expressed feeling that one of the older Universities would be a better centre for the meeting the Executive Committee decided to approach the authorities at Cambridge who responded with a cordial invitation. Many of the members, however, including overseas visitors, met in London on August 14 & 15. The Linnean Society courteously lent their rooms at Burlington House as the temporary headquarters of the Congress and also arranged an interesting Linnaean exhibition. By the courtesy of the Royal Society their rooms were also open for inspection by members of the Congress. On behalf of His Majesty's Government the members were received by the Rt. HON. CHRISTOPHER ADDISON, Minister of Agriculture & Fisheries,

at the Imperial Institute, South Kensington, on the evening of August 15.

At Cambridge many of the members were accommodated in some of the colleges; an experience that was especially appreciated by overseas visitors. The Congress was accommodated in the various University Schools which provided ample space for meeting and reception rooms. The members were welcomed by the Vice-Chancellor of the University, who emphasised the value of Latin as an international means of communication between botanists by speaking in that language, and by the President, Prof. A. C. SEWARD, F.R.S., Professor of Botany in the University. The attendance exceeded 1000 members. There were eight Sections, namely, Bacteriology, Phytogeography & Ecology, Genetics, Cytology, Morphology and Anatomy, Mycology & Plant Pathology, Plant Physiology, Palaeobotany, and Taxonomy & Nomenclature. Sectional Presidents were mainly selected from overseas visitors; a panel of Vice-Presidents shared the work of each section which had also its own recorder and secretary.

The sectional programmes comprised mainly discussions or symposia on subjects of wide interest under which individual papers were arranged. A survey of modern Cytology was the subject of an address by the president of the section, which also discussed mutation, and, jointly with Taxonomy, "The Species Concept". Post-Glacial Changes of Vegetation in Europe were discussed by Ecology & Palaeobotany, and Geographical Distribution in relation to the Species Concept by Ecology and Taxonomy. The morphologists discussed phytonic theories, causal anatomy, floral organisation & other subjects, the programme of the physiologists included carbon metabolism, permeability, and growth & development, that of Mycology the effect of environment on disease, plant-viruses, and Palaeobotany, the origin of Angiosperms, the position of the Pteridosperms & the origin of a land-flora. Taxonomists

discussed methods of furthering the advance of their special study. A desire for standardisation in practice and terminology was generally apparent in the debates.

An important subject of the Congress was the revision of the Rules of botan. nomenclature, formulated at Vienna and Brussels, by the Nomenclature subsection of Taxonomy. The basis of discussion was a *Recueil Synoptique* prepared by the Rapporteur, Dr. JOHN BRIQUET, from the results of the work of the Committee appointed at Ithaca. Under the guidance of the Chairman, Dr. E. D. MERRILL, Dr. BRIQUET and other experts an amended code was formulated and entrusted to an editorial Committee for publication. Unfortunately owing to the lamented death of Dr. BRIQUET publication was delayed. Various sectional standing committees were appointed to act in the interim between the present and succeeding Congress. To one was assigned the preparation of an Address-book of botanists of all countries. This was published in the following year shortly after the death of Dr. T. F. CHIFF on whom the chief burden of the work had fallen. General and sectional excursions and exhibits were arranged. Pleasant functions were the President's garden party in the grounds of Downing College and a dinner in the hall of Trinity College at which the British members were hosts to a number of the overseas delegates. The University further expressed its interest in the Congress by conferring honorary degrees, Doctor of Science — on seven of the most eminent members.

Many of the members met again in London in the following week to take part in various excursions and visits which had been arranged to places of botanical interest.

The Report of the Proceedings of the Congress, edited by the joint Honorary Secretaries, Mr. F. T. BROOKS & Dr. T. F. CHIFF was published by the Cambridge University Press in 1931.