



The International Association of Botanic Gardens

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When Standley went to Central America to live after retiring from the Chicago Natural History Museum he had then more than thirty years experience with the flora of Central America. His memory was prodigious and his ability to recognize the species making up the flora was almost unbelievable. It was an experience never to be forgotten to collect with him.

To many botanists Standley was an affable man who would promise to name their collections for them, and then do it promptly. To others he was somewhat unapproachable. To a few others, who knew him in the tropics, he was one who could (and did) talk endlessly about almost any subject. He was equally fluent in English or Spanish and he read for pleasure in several other languages.

It is not my plan here to evaluate Standley's work, — it is too well known to require that. Some two years ago I wrote to a number of botanists and asked that each prepare a short paper on Standley to be included in a homage to him. This modest volume, with contributions from twenty-six of Standley's contemporaries and friends, is now in press and will perhaps appear before this notice does. It gives one a clearer appreciation of Standley and his contribution to botany than could the writings of any one person. Standley did not know the work was being prepared, — we had hoped that he would live to see it, but that was not to be.

I cannot sum up so well as did Antonio Molina R. in his letter advising of Standley's death:

“El gran sabio botánico Paul C. Standley descansa en paz en un lotecito del cementerio de San Antonio de Oriente [Honduras] por voluntad de él mismo, demostrando así su gran cariño y amor para esta tierra de Morazán y Lempira. ¡Qué Dios lo acoja en su seno! El tiempo y la historia se encargarán de decir lo que fué este gran naturalista.”

THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BOTANIC GARDENS

Richard A. Howard (Cambridge, Mass.)

The International Association of Botanic Gardens was formed at the VIIIth Botanical Congress held in Paris in 1954, and met for the second time during the Botanical Congress held in Montreal in 1959. At each of the first two meetings it was noted that many representatives of botanical gardens and arboreta attended the International Horticultural Congresses held during the intervals between the Botanical Congresses and often these individuals did not attend the latter meetings. At the Montreal meeting it was proposed to hold an informal meeting of the IABG during the XVIth Horticultural Congress scheduled for Brussels in the summer of 1962. With the consent of the members of the commission and the officers of the Horticultural Congress, such a meeting was planned as a symposium on The Modern Role of the Botanic Garden. Advance registration for sectional meetings indicated a considerable interest in the program, and the 59 persons from 17 countries who attended comprised one of the largest of the sectional meetings of the Horticultural Congress. Dr. Richard A. Howard presided at a program which included the following talks and speakers: The Modern Role of the Botanic Garden, Robert Sealy, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, England; Cultivar Registration in Relation to Botanic Gardens, John Gilmour, Cambridge Botanic Garden, Cambridge, England; Methods of Labelling Plants for Public Display, Richard M. T. Pescott, Royal Botanic Garden, Victoria, Australia; Plant Iden-

tification in Botanic Gardens, Peter Yeo, Cambridge Botanic Garden, Cambridge, England; Modern Display Methods in United States Gardens, Russell Seibert, Longwood Gardens, Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, U.S.A. Three special reports were presented: Proposals of Japanese Botanists, by Misao Tatewaki, Botanic Garden, Sapporo, Japan; The Organization and Work of the Botanic Gardens, U.S.S.R., by Peter Lapin, Moscow Botanic Garden, U.S.S.R.; and L'Arboretum Géographique de Tervuren, by Ul. G. Liénard, Belgium.

The length of the program and the complications of the Congress schedule prevented discussion of the various papers or consideration of several new proposals submitted by members. Hence a special second meeting was arranged and was attended by twenty-three persons. In the course of this meeting the following topics were discussed:

The IABG should attempt to meet at both the Horticultural and the Botanical Congresses if all officials approved.

The papers presented during the present or future meetings should not necessarily be published by the IABG or the sponsoring Congress, but the publication of suitable papers by the individuals presenting them was to be encouraged.

The IABG should consider a means of communication between botanical gardens and their personnel. There was considerable discussion of the merits of establishing still another newsletter or journal. Drs. Robyns, Stafleu and Lanjouw spoke in favor of having the IABG consider affiliation with the International Association for Plant Taxonomy in such a way that individuals would be members of both organizations. The journal *Taxon* could then be used for the publication of notes, news or articles either in regular columns of *Taxon* or as a special section. It was agreed that this proposal should be considered by the officers of the IABG and then by members of the IAPT.

Ways and means should be explored to prepare more trained people for work in botanical gardens and arboreta. Proposals for the exchange of personnel among gardens and arboreta would be profitable.

The IABG should encourage work in the taxonomy of cultivated plants.

A proposal by Dr. H. G. Baker and Mr. W. Stephenson of California (U.S.A.) regarding seed lists, pro and con, was discussed. It was again agreed that several members should consult further with Baker and Stephenson and submit their suggestions for distribution or publication.

In the post Congress period, the officers of the IABG have been consulted and have approved several changes in the organization of the IABG. The group favored an association with the IAPT and directed the president to request such an affiliation. Dr. Stafleu put this request before the board of the IAPT, which approved the affiliation of the IABG with the IAPT. The members of the staffs of botanical gardens or arboreta are encouraged to join the IAPT, to indicate their wish for joint membership and to feel free to use the pages of *Taxon* for the discussion of items of interest to botanical garden operation. It should be pointed out that the only dues collected would be for regular membership in the IAPT. The annual dues suggested in the formation of the IABG were never solicited by the former officers and only a few initial voluntary contributions were received. The extremely modest account in the treasury will be used to defray a small amount of the publication cost of the directory of botanical gardens to be issued by the IAPT in August 1963 and distributed without further cost to the members of the IAPT.

The members of the commission of the IABG further agreed: that the office of treasurer could be abolished; that the secretary be elected for a term of two botanical congresses to eliminate the necessity of the transfer of files; that the posts of first

and second vice-president be established to permit the IABG to meet at the Botanical Congress and at the Horticultural Congress with reasonable assurance that either the president or one of the vice-presidents would be present to preside at any scheduled meetings. The members of the commission approved the plan for meetings at both Congresses, with the permission of the respective officials, but stipulated that officers be elected only at the Botanical Congresses to serve until the succeeding Botanical Congress. Nominations for officers are to be requested from the membership at large through an announcement in *Taxon* with provision for additional nominations during the official meeting.

The next meeting of the International Association of Botanic Gardens is scheduled to be held during the Xth Botanical Congress in Edinburgh, Scotland, in August of 1964. A request for nominations of officers along with an announcement of the program will appear in a subsequent issue of *Taxon*.

BOTANICAL NOMENCLATURE, PUNCHED CARDS, AND MACHINES - A COMMENT

S. M. Walters (Cambridge, England)

The article under this title in a recent number of *Taxon* (*Taxon* 12. 2-12. 1963) is a detailed and wholly unfavourable review of the first volume of the International Plant Index (Gould, 1962). The authors of the review, C. E. Wood, R. S. Cowan and G. Buchheim, are members of the Subcommittee for Family Names appointed by the IX International Botanical Congress, and speak with obvious authority. Yet their pronouncements are depressingly sterile. The tone is set by the opening sentence: "The use of machines . . . has been highly publicised as a sort of panacea for many of the difficult or tedious problems of science".

This condemnation of Gould's Index is said to be based on three main criticisms: 1. the inadequacy of the 80-column card for nomenclatural citation, 2. the "ignoring of internationally accepted nomenclatural practices" and 3. the confusion of nomenclature with taxonomy. Let us consider each of these in turn. The authors are shocked that because the standard 80-column punched card is being used . . . "the method appears to be dictating the subject-matter, rather than the other way round". They are apparently insensitive to the fact that their own bibliographic researches on the basis of a legal Code could be — and indeed are being — criticised in very similar terms by the ordinary botanist who has to use plant names. The Code, after all, aims at *stability* of nomenclature, and in the eyes of most botanists, must be judged by its success or failure in this respect. The "subject-matter" of Botany consists of plants, to which names are given for convenient reference. The activities of professional nomenclaturists look suspiciously like "the method dictating the subject-matter". We must accept that if a convenient mechanization using a standard card will achieve a 95% satisfactory system of data-processing, we should be prepared to "cut our coat according to the cloth". In any case the criticism of inadequate bibliographic citation is surely met by the existence of the set of "bibliography cards" which carry the *full* information in typewritten form, and only the publication code number punched. (A specimen sheet of the projected Bibliography is included in "Family Names".)

The present "system" of data-processing for taxonomy is really so archaic and in parts so chaotic that even an imperfect system could quickly effect a revolutionary