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J. Rutherford Hill Ph.C.

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TRANSACTIONS

OF THE

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF EDINBURGH.

SESSION LXXIII.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS, NOVEMBER 1908.

By the kindness of the Assistant Secretary, Mr Jeffrey, I am able to submit the following state of the Roll of the Society:—

Honorary Fellows: British 6, Foreign 25. Ordinary Fellows: Resident 106, Non-Resident, 45. Corresponding Members 60; Associates 9; Lady Members 6. Total, 257.

During the past year the membership of the Society has been strengthened by the addition of:—Honorary British Fellow 1. Ordinary Fellows: Resident 7, Non-Resident 3; Lady Member 1. Total 12.

During the same period 5 Ordinary Fellows have resigned, and we have lost by death:—1 Royal Fellow (Oscar II., King of Sweden). Ordinary Fellows: Resident 5, Non-Resident 1, Corresponding Member 1. Total 8.

OSCAR II., KING OF SWEDEN.—The death on Sunday, 8th December 1907, at the Royal Palace at Stockholm, of Oscar II., King of Sweden, removed the only foreign royal name from their list of Fellows. The late king ascended the throne on 18th September 1872, and during his whole reign the feud between Sweden and Norway was acute, and ultimately resulted in the declaration of Norwegian independence. In 1899 he abdicated in favour of his son

Gustavus, but in a few months he resumed his kingship. In a position of almost unexampled difficulty he strove to preserve friendly relations between the two nations, and it is generally admitted that his personal intervention secured the avoidance of bloodshed in the revolution by which Sweden and Norway became separate kingdoms. By his actions throughout the long years of difficulty and contention he earned the enviable title of the Peacemaker.

While the late Professor J. Hutton Balfour was on a visit to Sweden, King Oscar made his acquaintance, and their common interest in natural science led to a personal friendship which resulted in King Oscar becoming a Fellow of the Society in 1877. Reference was made to the distinguished place occupied by King Oscar II. in science, art, poetry, and literature when recording his death at the December meeting of the Society in 1907 (see "Transactions," vol. xxiii., part iv., p. 306).

J. K. MILNE of Kevock Tower, Lasswade, became a Fellow in 1875, and died some time ago, no notice having reached us till recently.

FRANK C. CRAWFORD, who became a Fellow in July 1897, died suddenly at his residence, 19 Royal Terrace, Edinburgh, on 9th February 1908. He was the younger son of Adam Howden Crawford of the Hon. East India Co.'s Service, and was educated at the Edinburgh Academy. After a preliminary training in Edinburgh, he joined the London Stock Exchange, and after about twenty years he retired and came to reside in Edinburgh. He was greatly attracted by the study of natural history, and was a most assiduous collector. He devoted special attention to the genus *Carex*, and an exhaustive work by him on British sedges was in the press at the time of his death. He was at one time President of the Microscopical Society, and took great interest in the work of the Botanical Society, to which he frequently contributed.

The study of British birds was also one of his hobbies, and he possessed a very fine collection. He took great interest also in the study of shells, of which he possessed many beautiful examples. He was of a happy and enthusi-

astic temperament, and his breezy manner became contagious in any company. Genial and kind-hearted, and a lovable companion, his unexpected death in the very midst of his activities came with a shock of surprise to the many friends by whom he will be greatly missed.

JOHN ARCHIBALD, M.D., who became a Fellow in December 1866, died at his residence, "Hazelden," Bournemouth, on 23rd March 1908. He was also a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, and a Fellow of the Royal Scottish Society of Arts.

WILLIAM SANDERSON, F.R.S.E., became a Fellow of the Society in 1882 and died at his residence, Talbot House, Ferry Road, Leith, on 4th April 1908. He was an example of a very busy commercial man who found leisure to interest himself in botanical science. He took a special interest in the cultivation of orchids, of which he exhibited some fine examples at meetings of the Society. He was also a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, the Royal Scottish Society of Arts, and the Scottish Arboricultural Society.

GEORGETT WILSON BROWN, Victoria, British Columbia, became a non-resident Fellow in 1857. He appears to have become a Fellow at a time when he was brought into touch through lending some botanical drawings or paintings to the Society. For many years no communications had been received from him, and only recently word had been received of his death, which took place in May 1904.

WILLIAM PAXTON became a Fellow in July 1889, and died on 14th June 1907. He took great interest in the propagating of mistletoe, and introduced it in the garden at 11 Lauder Road, Edinburgh, in 1868. He also successfully introduced it at the Dean Cemetery, Edinburgh, and many plants of his introduction still flourish there. He also succeeded in flowering *Lilium giganteum* in the open at Lauder Road. He took a great interest in the cultivation of herbaceous plants, of which he had an intimate and encyclopædic knowledge, and he had gathered a very fine collection.

Professor D. CLOS, M.D., director of the Jardin des Plantes at Tolouse, and correspondent of the section of botany of the Paris Academy of Science, died in September 1908. He had been a corresponding member since 1865.

The President proceeded :—

I must ask you to excuse any formal address on the present occasion, owing to the pressure of official duties. It has been a great honour to me to fill the high office of President, and I desire gratefully to acknowledge the great kindness and consideration which I have uniformly experienced and the very loyal support given to me by the Council. I have especially to acknowledge my indebtedness to Professor Balfour for his unfailing courtesy and help. In my present dilemma I consulted him, and was encouraged to hope that the Society would overlook any shortcoming on my part in failing to give such an address as I should have felt incumbent upon me in ordinary circumstances. I desire also to acknowledge the admirable manner in which the business of the Society has been conducted by the Assistant Secretary, Mr. Jeffrey, from whom I have received invaluable and indispensable assistance.

THE BUCHAN FIELD CLUB AND REGIONAL RESEARCH.

An interesting event took place at Peterhead on the 10th October, the coming of age of the Buchan Field Club, founded in November 1887. It was celebrated by a large meeting in the Music Hall, Peterhead, and was attended by delegates from many learned Societies and other institutions, including the Royal Society of Edinburgh, the Botanical Society of Edinburgh, the Royal Physical Society, the Royal Scottish Geographical Society, the Senatus of the University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen Anatomical and Anthropological Society, the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, the New Spalding Club, Aberdeen Philosophical Society, Edinburgh Geological Society, and many others.

The Botanical Society was invited to send a representative, and this duty was undertaken by one of our Life Fellows, Mr. Charles S. France of Aberdeen, who discharged his commission with conspicuous ability and to the great satisfaction of the Buchan Field Club.

It has been suggested to me that this event might have a little notice at this first meeting of our Society, and, indeed, it had already occurred to me to say something on the subject as a fitting part of that Presidential address which has been lying heavy on my conscience during the last few weeks.

Having been brought into rather intimate contact with the workers and the work of the Buchan Field Club, I have been greatly impressed by the high and permanent value of the work which the Club has already accomplished.

The objects of the Buchan Field Club are :—

1. The Study of Natural Science and of the Archæology, Folklore, History, and Literature of Buchan.

2. To interest the young in such studies.

3. To co-operate with the managers of the Arbutnot Museum, Peterhead, for the improvement of that institution, which embraces the following departments :—1. Topography and Folklore ; 2. Antiquities ; 3. History ; 4. Biography and Literature ; 5. Geology and Mineralogy ; 6. Meteorology ; 7. Agriculture and Cattle Rearing ; 8. Botany ; 9. Zoology.

A glance at the nine portly volumes in which their twenty-one years' labours are recorded is most instructive. There are several notable articles in botanical science, the most conspicuous of which is a very exhaustive paper by Professor Trail of Aberdeen on "The Flora of Buchan: Its Distribution, Origin, and Relation to Man." It is a perfect example of what may be called "regional research," and is a model of what might well be done for other districts of Scotland by local workers.

I observe also that there is in preparation a majority volume in which the accumulated knowledge on all the points that come within the sphere of the Club's operations will be presented in a series of special articles each written by an accomplished expert in that particular department. In the department of natural science I see such names as Sir Arthur Mitchell, Professor Trail, Professor J. A. Thomson, R. N. Rudmose Brown, B.Sc., etc. This is to be written on popular lines, and cannot fail to be deeply interesting and stimulating to local workers as well as suggestive to workers elsewhere.

There are several Clubs of this kind in other parts.

One naturally thinks of the Berwickshire Naturalists' Field Club, which has done splendid work for many years. But there is ample room for more. This subject was touched upon in a most interesting way at the Dublin meeting of the British Association in September last in a paper by Professor H. A. Miers, F.R.S., in which he said, "One of the most useful functions of a body like a local society is to encourage a habit of expressing scientific results in simple and intelligible language that will appeal to the whole society. Indeed, nothing can be better or more useful for the scientific specialist himself than to attempt to explain his own work in simple language to a mixed audience."

In addition to this nothing is more wanted at the present day than books giving simple untechnical accounts of the living work by the worker himself, and this should be done not only in the newer fields of science, the popularisation of which is liable to be overdone, but in the more ordinary work of everyday science, which results in discoveries perhaps equally momentous, but at present buried beyond the reach of the amateur.

The educative work that the local societies can best perform through its members, who, though not children, have unprepared minds, is the encouragement of original research. This could be done, *first*, by inviting the trained and experienced workers to make known to them, through the medium of untechnical language, the beauty and interest of scientific work in the course of its progress, and of scientific discovery in the making; and *secondly*, by providing them with followers who will continue to prosecute, under their guidance, original observations and even experimental research. Enthusiasm has been instilled, and sincere students produced by the University extension movement; let the local societies initiate a new science extension movement by which the barrier between the professional man of science and the amateur, between the expert and the layman, will be broken down.

The Buchan Field Club impresses me as a fine example of a Territorial Association for the promotion of regional research, and their territory becomes a cosmos in the investigation of which the members qualify for work in the wide world anywhere. Mr Haldane's Territorial Army

Scheme was a splendid conception for the development of local patriotism and the association of men in the common aim of maintaining and defending our laws, our liberties, our homes, and our empire. But there are other fields for the development of patriotic action. Why not have a territorial army for regional research, a brotherhood of men of light and leading, for the attainment of a wider culture than is possible to isolated workers, a training and equipment for world-wide service? All honour to the men who give time and labour and thought to studying the art of war, and who are ready, if need be, to shed their blood at the call of duty. But no less honour to the men who give their days, and oftentimes their nights as well, to the building up of that intellectual enlightenment and culture which, after all, are more valuable and more enduring national assets than great armies or a fleet that secures the supremacy of the sea. He who can make two blades of grass grow where formerly there was only one, is a greater benefactor of his nation than the man who designs a ship of war superior to the latest *Dreadnought*. To add to the sum of human knowledge is a higher patriotism than to pile up implements of war. To unlock the treasure-house of nature and reveal the secret glories of the temple of science so that, with a fuller knowledge of his environment, man may better achieve the purpose of human life, is a worthier ambition than to be the inventor or expert manipulator of cunningly devised instruments of death. It was because I felt the Buchan Field Club, which might be widely copied, was such a Territorial Army of Regional Research for the furthering of this patriotic ambition that I, in the absence of any meetings of the Council, sent to them, as your President, by the hands of Mr. C. S. France, a letter of cordial congratulation from this Society on the celebration of their majority.

NOTE UPON SOME SEA-WEEDS FROM THE ISLAND OF DOMINICA,
BRITISH WEST INDIES. By MR. SYMINGTON GRIEVE.

In January 1906, when in London, before starting upon a trip to the island of Dominica, I was asked by my friend Mr. E. M. Holmes to try and collect some sea-weeds there.