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### IMPERIAL BOTANICAL CONFERENCE.

THE report of the proceedings\* of the Conference, held last July, has been issued with commendable promptitude by the Executive Committee, the Hon. Secretary Mr. F. T. Brooks having acted as Editor. The book, which is published by the Cambridge University Press, reflects credit on all concerned in its production. Sir David Prain's Presidential Address forms an appropriate introduction, as it explains very clearly the origin of the Conference and its relation to the abandoned International Congress, which had been projected for 1915 in London. The greater part of the volume is occupied with reports of the discussions under their respective headings, namely, Plant

\* Imperial Botanical Conference. London, July 7-16, 1924. President Sir David Prain, C.M.G., C.I.E., F.R.S. Report of proceedings, edited by F. T. Brooks, Hon. Secretary, 8vo, pp. xv, 390. Frontisp., 2 plates, and 7 text-figs. Cambridge University Press. Price 15s.

Physiology, Genetics, Plant Pathology and Mycology, Systematic Botany and Ecology, Rules of Nomenclature, and Education and Research.

In Plant Physiology the discussions were confined to two specific problems, the Physiology of Crop Yield and the Biological Problems of the Cold Storage of Apples. In Genetics the economic possibilities of plant-breeding and the value of selection work in the improvement of crop-plants were discussed. The section on Plant Pathology and Mycology deals with the Relation of Plant Pathology to Genetics and of Forest Pathology to Sylviculture, and several obscure, but widespread plant-diseases—Mosaic and Streak Disease of Sugar-Cane, Bud-rot of Coco-nut and other Palms, and Brown-bast disease of Rubber-trees; also with Fungal attacks on Timber. The strong economic trend of the discussions is noticeable.

In the section on Systematic Botany and Ecology two closely related subjects were discussed, namely, the Botanical Survey of the Empire, and the correlation of taxonomic work at home and overseas. While acknowledging the work that has already been done—as, for instance, in India or South Africa,—it was evident that very much remains to be done, and that some areas are almost untouched. The solution of the problems would seem to lie in the direction of a closer co-operation between the home institutions and those overseas; the rendering of both more efficient to cope with the size of the task; and the economic organization in the different parts of the Empire of available sources of help. At the close of the Conference it was resolved that a Committee be appointed to consider the various proposals and to take such steps as they may think fit. The ecological subsection gave a summary of present knowledge and of outstanding problems, and discussed specially training for various aspects of field-work. The outcome was a series of resolutions and the appointment of a temporary Committee to arrange for the appointment of a permanent Committee to carry out the substance of the resolutions.

The section on Nomenclature devoted the three hours at its disposal to the discussion of certain resolutions which had been prepared by an *ad hoc* Sub-committee appointed by the Executive Committee. Resolutions were carried modifying some of the Rules of the Vienna and Brussels Codes, and at the closing meeting of the Conference the Executive Committee was asked to bring these resolutions as recommendations before the next International Congress. The Sub-committee was asked to remain in being to receive and collate additional proposals for changes in the International Rules.

The section on Education and Research discussed specially the possibility of promoting an interchange of staff and post-graduate students between the Overseas and Home Universities and Research Institutions, and the desirability of providing further facilities for botanical research in the Dominions, Colonies, and Protectorates; a resolution embodying the former proposition was carried at the concluding meeting.

The Report also contains an account of one of the three evening lectures, that by Prof. A. C. Seward on Ancient Plants within the

Empire—a *résumé* of its palæobotanical resources and an indication of the work already accomplished and of that which remains to be done. Abstracts are also given of various papers read during the Conference.

The resolutions, seventeen in number, passed at the closing meeting are set out in full. It was decided that the present Executive Committee should remain in being to consider matters arising out of the Conference, and to take action with regard to resolutions. The last resolution, proposed and seconded by two overseas botanists, expressed the desire for the formation of an Imperial Botanical Association for the furtherance of botanical work throughout the Empire.

Prof. J. R. Schramm, who was present as a guest, announced that American botanists were arranging to hold an International Botanical Conference in the United States in 1926, and extended a cordial invitation to members of the Imperial Botanical Conference to attend it.

The list of members includes 64 overseas botanists and delegates and 232 home botanists; the ten foreign visitors included nine from the United States of America, and one from Czecho-Slovakia.

A pleasant feature of the Report is the frontispiece, an excellent portrait of the President, Sir David Prain.

A. B. R.

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