

SHERBORN'S GUIDE TO NATURAL HISTORY COLLECTIONS.—Whatever his particular errand in tracing collections or types, every systematic botanist makes almost daily use of Pritzel's *Thesaurus* (second edition), DeCandolle's *La Phytographie*, Britten and Boulger's *Index* (second edition), or Lasague's *Musée Delessert*. To these tools of the taxonomist has been added more recently the invaluable "Reference-list of Collectors" compiled by Barnhart and Pennell and included in Pennell's "Scrophulariaceae of Eastern Temperate North America" (1935). But the worker engaged in critical monographic revisions always welcomes another source, heretofore unnoticed. In fact, the discovery of some bibliographic bonanza may constitute the richest 'strike' of a given piece of research! Though compiled by a veteran vertebrate paleontologist of England, and, accordingly, accenting especially the zoological rather than the botanical natural history collections, Sherborn's "Where is the _____ Collection?"¹ will augment our more strictly botanical sources. In my experience such avowedly zoological guides to the literature as the *Zoological Record* have proved of critical assistance in the tracing of some obscure citation.

The collections of the following botanists—selecting better known names—are located and often briefly commented upon:

Duke of Argyll, William Barbey, Hugh Cuming, Charles Darwin, Benjamin Delessert, A. Milne Edwards, Claudio Gay, H. B. L. Guppy, Robert Kidston, J. B. P. Lamarck, Carolus Linnaeus, C. P. von Martius, Thomas Nuttall, Thomas Pennant, and W. Roxburgh.

Of the construction of the 'guide' Dr. Sherborn writes: "This book contains facts accumulated over sixty years in answer to enquiries: 'Where is the _____ Collection?' It is not exhaustive; that were too much to expect and almost an impossibility, but it contains a vast deal of information now brought together and should be of service to enquirers. The original MS. has been on my table at the British Museum (Natural History) and of daily use to the Staff or others."

There are many sentence-length sketches that will stop your pursuit of some special errand. Thus, for the geologist Charles Lyell (1797–1875) one reads of "a fossil fish type that had been blackleaded and used as a door-step but is now cleaned and in the B. M.!" When John Phillips (1800–1874), geologist of Oxford, "came to London he put up at 'La Belle Sauvage Inn' and in the night the whole of his fossils, which were packed in boxes, were stolen by thieves, who suspected the boxes contained plate. On discovering their error the thieves threw the collection over Blackfriars Bridge into the Thames, where they remain." There are many records of collections lost by fire or other causes—bitter losses that must forever impede science! "Rheims Museum. Destroyed by the Germans in 1916. Lemoine and Melville colls. gone." (Now we must add "Botanical Museum, Berlin-Dahlem . . .") And Asa Gray chronicled its already historic collections in 1841!).

Sherborn's 'guide', alphabetically arranged, is conveniently interleaved for the addition of matter by its user. So many random clues are given, moreover, that a running reading of the catalog will repay the effort; clues, for example, on where information may be found on 'French missionary collectors', 'French voyages', etc. etc.—JOSEPH EWAN, University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado.

¹ *Where is the _____ Collection?*, by Charles Davies Sherborn. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1940. 149 pp. 3s. 6d.



Ewan, Joseph. 1944. "Sherborn's Guide to Natural History Collections."
Rhodora 46, 199–199.

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