

# About Editors and Editing

DENT SMITH

Of all the useful and more necessary kinds of drudgery, editorial work is perhaps the most difficult and least appreciated.

— Talbot Shote

And also about this issue of *PRINCIPES*, which is produced during the absence of the regular editor, Dr. Moore, and for which he can rightfully disclaim any responsibility. When I told him, just before he enplaned in Miami for South America, of my intention to make it the Dirt-Gardening number and easier to read than *Mother Goose*, he replied with a look of happy indifference that he couldn't care less if it were the *Playboy* number of *PRINCIPES*, or something else equally choice. Although tempted, I suddenly recalled that we were to produce an issue devoted chiefly to the Fairchild Tropical Garden and its palms, and so that is what these pages now come to — the "Fairchild Garden number" of *PRINCIPES*.

Perhaps everyone would like to know what Dr. Moore does with all his spare time between the stints of work occasioned by turning out *PRINCIPES*. He spends most of it on taxonomic studies and many inter-related matters, corresponding, writing technical papers, occasionally going abroad to do extensive field work and mayhap to study plant material in herbaria, and, since becoming the Director of the Bailey Hortorium, in administrative conferences and duties. One may readily see from this partial summation that the demands on his time are heavy, and hence when it was suggested that an assistant editor be found to aid in the work of assembling this journal each quarter, he welcomed the suggestion. Luckily, someone able and willing was found in the person of Mr. Warren J. Dolby, of

whom more later. Just now it might be of interest to say something of Dr. Moore's present travels.

Those travels were to take him first of all, after brief visits to Miami and Nassau, to Panama for one day only, and then on to San José, Costa Rica, from where he would proceed to the Sarapiquí Valley, the type locality for some species of *Chamaedorea*, *Geonoma*, *Bactris*, other genera. Here he would collect flowers, fruits, stems, petioles and roots of the palms, and for Mr. Robert Read pollen to be used in his chromosome work. It should have been said at the outset that Dr. Moore was to be accompanied by Dr. M. V. Parasarathay, a research associate at the Bailey Hortorium, more recently engaged in working at the Fairchild Tropical Garden with Dr. P. B. Tomlinson.

After Sarapiquí, the travelers were next to spend several days with Mr. Robert Wilson, former owner of Exotic Gardens in Miami, at or near Mr. and Mrs. Wilson's home at San Vito de Java, Costa Rica. Then on to Cali, Colombia, and Buenaventura to collect some of the palms that had engaged O. F. Cooke's attention.

The next port of call was to be languid Guayaquil, where Dr. Parasarathay was to return to the States and from whence Dr. Moore would go on alone to Peru — to Iquitos in the upper Amazon basin and to Manaus in Brazil, at the confluence of the Rio Negro with the Amazon, and from thence up the Negro to the Padauri River, to learn more of a mysterious palm, *Barcelia odora*, which



1. "Before-and-after" pictures of the accomplished Swedish botanist Erik Leonard Ekman, 1883-1931. The contrast between his appearance *before* — going to the Antilles and *afterwards* as a plant collector in the Cuban hinterland, is eloquent of the rugged and even dogged kind of work the collecting botanist often undertakes in the wilds. Illustration reproduced from Hermano León's *Flora de Cuba*.

seems to have a strange affinity with the African oil palm, *Elaeis guineensis*. Afterward on to Belem, Rio de Janeiro, and then to Sao Paulo for a closer look at *Lytocaryum*, and then, if all goes according to plan, once again in Ithaca before mid-April. Then there will be the collections to sort out and file, the stacks of papers and letters needing attention, the administrative affairs, the April number of *PRINCIPES* waiting to be born, other things, per omnia saecula saeculorum. But what about Warren Dolby, up there near the Golden Gate and far away from the anacondas, head-shrinkers, hungry jaguars, piranhas and the palms of the Amazon?

Mr. Dolby, as I have been given to understand, will help to put *PRINCIPES* together beginning with the July number, thus relieving Dr. Moore of any necessity to concern himself with suitable articles on palm gardening. Such articles would have to be obtained, for the most part, by direct solicitation, but his taxonomic work does not lend itself to that approach for the sufficient reason that it does not keep him in close touch with large numbers of growers and gardeners whose chief if not sole concern is with the practical side of growing palms for either profit or pleasure. At this point, enter Mr. Dolby.

Warren Dolby grows palms as a hobby at his home in Richmond, California, across the bay from San Francisco. He was one of the earliest members of The Palm Society, and his interest in it and in the palms has never flagged. He is one of that zealous band of Californians who have kept alive that interest with far more zest and sparkle than anyone can detect in Florida — if a Floridian may say so without fear of tar and feathers. We theorize in Florida that the zest is maintained at a higher pitch in California because the difficulties of successfully growing

many kinds of palms there are much greater than in Florida, wherefore the challenge provides all the incentive needed. But it matters little what the reason for this keener zest; what matters is that it does exist, and in a sense Warren Dolby typifies it, and thus it seems not too sanguine to hope that his efforts will stimulate the interests of the gardening readers, help to resolve some of the problems of publication and be of distinct benefit to the Society by helping to fulfill its avowed purpose of catering to all interests in the palms; be they sacred or profane. Varied does not mean at variance, and of course a little more attention to gardening subjects will not mean the neglect of the technical matter upon which the high reputation and worldwide recognition of *PRINCIPES* so largely depend. More accurately, even, its reputation is owing to the guidance given to it by Harold E. Moore and the recognition accorded him in relation to the palms. The Palm Society owes this accomplished man a tremendous debt of gratitude for his labors on behalf of *PRINCIPES*, now entered upon its eleventh year of publication. No better time to make this overdue acknowledgment than during his absence, for any other time he would be certain to expunge it with a blue pencil.

One more thing, totally irrelevant to any of the foregoing discursive matter, and there's an end on't. Lo many a year I have longed to see the before-and-after likenesses of the Swedish botanist Erik Ekman adorning a page of this journal, and now at last here he is, on p. 12 wearing a meek and innocent look on the one hand, and, on the other, looking as if fit to defy all the demons of the earth and air, and even the jaws of hell, or worse. On the long hot afternoons of summer when the cicadas screech, the bulbuls wail down in the



bulrushes and the spirits sink soddenly low, I like to gaze upon this intrepid botanist, this indomitable man radiating a kind of ferocious determination and patently capable of performing his tasks despite any odds. That is the only excuse for his presence in these pages; I have put him there just to please myself, in lieu of any cash recompense for this temporary descent into journalism, that is to say, for wheedling copy from authors and strug-

gling with typewriter, scissors and paste-pot. But at the same time, I dare hope that others will cotton to old Ekman, too. There are two ways of looking at him. One way is to admire his dogged determination so greatly that a yearning arises to emulate him and to be found in those same circumstances. The other is to thank one's lucky stars not to be in his boots. Both ways are eminently satisfactory, depending upon how one looks at it.

## A Walk through the Fairchild Garden

NIXON SMILEY

Accompanying photographs by the author.

My wife and I never tire of walking through the Fairchild Tropical Garden on a sunny day when a blue sky and a few cottony clouds form a background for the hundreds of palms in the botanical garden's large collection.

In a sense, it is like a visit to many tropical lands, for here are the palms of the world. Here an admirer of this great family of plants can see during an hour's stroll as many species as he would be able to discover on a voyage taking him thousands of miles across oceans and through the jungles, savannas and plains of the tropics.

Several years ago a visitor, inspired by the collection, referred to the palms as the "garden's crown jewels." They are that, and more. They are living jewels — if one finds it necessary to make such a comparison — of fantastic forms.

The great variation in palms never ceases to surprise you. Some are scrubby and could hardly be classed as "jewels." Some are of unusual form, even bizarre. Some are colorful — a surprise to those

who thought all palms were "green." Some are so stately, so graceful, it is difficult to find anything else in nature to compare with them.

But whatever category a palm falls into, I've never seen one that was so objectionable I wanted to dig it up and toss it out because of its ugliness. There's beauty even in the scrub palmetto (*Sabal Etonia*). If you have ever seen extensive colonies of this deep-green, trunkless palm growing on the floor of a leafless hardwood forest in north Florida during the winter you will never forget it.

Everyone who walks through the Fairchild Tropical Garden must enjoy its plant collections from his own viewpoint. The botanist will have his own interests. He classifies the palms as he strolls among them. He notes the shapes of leaves and the sizes and forms of flowers. The horticulturist is interested in how they are grown. It pleases him to see a plant grown well, displeases him to see a sickly specimen.

The landscape architect will see the