

Preface

The 50th volume of *Progress in Botany* appears in new guise.

In cooperation with Springer-Verlag we have changed from the less attractive typewriter composition to the direct reproduction of a manuscript which was written by means of a text editing system and produced by a laser printer.

We, the editors, should like to take the appearance of Volume 50 as the occasion for a few short remarks. Our younger readers are perhaps not aware that our Book Series was founded in 1931 by Fritz von Wettstein, based on the following thoughts and considerations, aptly formulated by him in the Preface to the first volume.

"One of the greatest dangers threatening progress in the science of botany is the absolutely unbelievable growth in volume of the literature. The quality of journals, books and individual works that are daily sent to us makes it impossible for any one person to maintain a general view of the progress made in botany in all the specialized fields, let alone to find time for results from associated subjects. For varying reasons, every botanist must find this state of matters insupportable. Let us endeavor, in the general interest, to retain a wide background of knowledge, and not become limited specialists. The vitally necessary connections between the specialized fields can only flourish, or even exist, if the general view of botany as a whole can be maintained. Teaching can only be good and comprehensive if lecturers retain an insight into the annual progress made in all aspects of botany.

The aim of "*Fortschritte der Botanik*", the first volume of which we here present to our colleagues, is an attempt to avert this danger. Realizing that it is no longer possible for the individual scientist, however intensive his literature research, to maintain a general view without becoming nonproductive in his own specialized field, we have, together with a number of like-minded colleagues, ventured the attempt to collect in one short volume reports of the most important progress. Our intention is to issue a similar volume each year, which will briefly present the most important latest knowledge".

After a short interruption in the last years of the war, the Book Series appeared again under the editorship of Ernst Gäumann (Zürich) and Otto Renner (München), then later of Ernst Gäumann and Erwin Bünning (Tübingen) and Erwin Bünning and Heinz Ellenberg (Göttingen). From Volume 27 (1965) on, a reorganization took place. The original single field of botany was divided into five subgroups that still exist today; corresponding to this, an editorial team of five assumed the responsibility. This conception proved successful; it has been retained to the present, and will continue in this form.

Despite a few alterations in the cover design, the Book Series' conversion into the English language from Volume 36 (1974) on is expressed fittingly in the new title, "*PROGRESS IN BOTANY*".

We hope that with this Book Series we can continue to give our readers the best possible comprehensive overview on progress made in botany, whereby of course, especially in the realms of molecular research, we must look beyond the immediate boundaries, just as we also report on results with organisms which cannot be ordered as plants.

We should like to take the opportunity, also in the name of our readers, to thank the numerous contributors who have undertaken the painstaking work of reporting on genuine progress for their colleagues, in a light, easily understandable form, and have thus contributed to realizing the aims of Fritz von Wettstein.

Like every book or book series, we live from constructive criticism from our readers. We, the editors, will also be grateful in the future for your opinions and suggestions, the readers' contribution to "progress in PROGRESS".

The Editors
January 1989