

PREFACE

IN the Preface to Volume II published in 1910 I rashly stated that it was my intention "to devote such space as is available within the limits of a text-book to the neglected subject of the geographical distribution of plants at different stages in the history of the earth," also that Volume III would be completed with as little delay as possible. Though nearly seven years have elapsed since the publication of the second volume it may fairly be said that the delay is not entirely due to causes which it was in my power to control. The subject of geographical distribution receives no connected treatment in Volumes III and IV for the simple reason that I underestimated the space required for the description of the Gymnosperms. The alternatives were either to insert a greatly compressed survey of the successive floras of the world at the end of Volume IV or to attempt a fuller and less technical treatment of the subject in a separate book. In choosing the latter course I am conscious that a further obligation is undertaken which it may not be possible to fulfil; but the risk is deliberately taken. Volume IV is in the press and will, it is hoped, be published before the end of 1917.

It is a pleasant duty to repeat my thanks to many friends who have helped me in various ways. Dr Kidston generously and without reserve allowed me access to his splendid collection of Palaeozoic plants, and the frequent occurrence of his name in the list of illustrations shows how freely I have availed myself

of his kindness. He has read some of the chapters and greatly assisted me by his friendly criticism and encouragement. By reading the proofs of this volume Dr Scott has further increased my already large debt to him. It is impossible to thank him adequately; he not only corrected many careless mistakes but by wise counsel and advice he rendered me a service which I greatly appreciate.

The exchange of views with Prof. Zeiller has been a constant source of profit and enjoyment, and it is hard to realise that the completed book will not receive his kindly criticism. He was a singularly unselfish and generous colleague, always ready to help fellow workers, and he had the faculty in an unusual degree of influencing those who had the privilege of his friendship by his sound advice and lovable personality.

The death of Count Solms-Laubach has deprived Palaeobotany of one of its most learned and strongest supporters. In common with all students of fossil plants I owe much to the critical treatment of the subject in the *Einleitung in die Paläophytologie*. Prof. Jeffrey has very kindly given me several photographs and sections which have been of great service, and I am similarly indebted to Prof. Zalessky. To Prof. Nathorst my thanks are due for the great interest he has taken in my work and for his generosity in providing drawings and showing to me many of the treasures in the famous Stockholm Museum. Prof. Bertrand and Prof. Lignier freely supplied photographs and drawings of specimens in their possession, and I am particularly grateful to them for the willingness with which they always responded to my requests.

Through the death of Prof. Lignier in March 1916 Palaeobotany has been deprived of another original thinker who devoted himself with whole-hearted enthusiasm to botanical research and for many years faithfully served the University

of Caen: he was a generous friend to whom one never appealed in vain for assistance. Through the kindness of the Director of the Indian Geological Survey I have been able to examine several fossils from the Calcutta Museum described by Oldham and Morris and by Feistmantel. With the Director's permission several photographs and drawings made for a forthcoming paper to be published by the Indian Survey are reproduced in this volume. I take this opportunity of thanking friends in Australia who recently afforded me facilities for examining fossil plants in their charge, and I would especially thank Mr A. B. Walkom of the University of Brisbane, who has recently undertaken an investigation of the rich plant-beds in the Ipswich district, for all that he did to enable me to make the most of a very short time available for palaeobotanical work.

For the loan of specimens and for other help I am indebted to Prof. Bayly Balfour, Prof. Bower, Prof. Margaret Benson, Prof. Oliver, Sir David Prain, Dr Smith Woodward, Prof. Weiss, the Director of the Geological Survey, Dr A. H. Church, Dr Arber, and other friends. I would also acknowledge a debt, by no means inconsiderable, to my Colleague Mr Hamshaw Thomas. Among younger friends in the Cambridge Botany School to whom I am indebted I wish particularly to thank Miss Ruth Holden, Miss Bancroft, Mr Sayers, Mr Dutt and others who have rendered me willing help.

In the List of Illustrations mention is made of Corporate Bodies and individuals from whom blocks have been obtained, and I am grateful to them for readily responding to my applications.

My Wife, though prevented by more urgent calls in the later stages of my task from giving as much time to the illustrations as in the two former volumes, has contributed several

drawings, and my daughter Phyllis Seward has also given me much help in preparing drawings from previously published figures.

In spite of the vigilance and wise counsel of many friends numerous blemishes remain and for these the author is alone responsible.

A. C. SEWARD.

DOWNING COLLEGE LODGE,
February 10, 1917.

NOTE. The letters A and B added to references in the footnotes indicate that the works will be found in the Bibliographies at the end of Volumes I and II.