TAXONOMY AS A FIELD FOR RESEARCH

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It has been customary for the retiring vice-president of Section G of the American Association for the Advancement of Science to present at the expiration of his term of office a retiring address. I shall adhere to that established custom. However, realizing that we have a very full program ahead of us, and that an important symposium is to follow this address, I shall be very brief. Knowing also, that it would be expected of me to deal with some phase of taxonomy, I have chosen for my subject "Taxonomy as a Field for Research." I have done this with some degree of hesitation, but with the profound conviction that taxonomy furnishes a fertile field for the apt student, that it has much to contribute to related sciences and therefore merits a place along with other botanical subjects in the domain of pure research.

That taxonomy has made marked advances during the past three or four decades, I think few would be inclined to question. Interest in this subject in recent years has been stimulated in many ways, particularly by numerous scientific expeditions, which have been concerned either wholly with botany or in which botany has taken an important place. The results of these expeditions to various and little known parts of the world have greatly added to our knowledge of the world's flora. Extensive collections of plants from hitherto little-known regions have furnished material for floristic studies on which new floras have been based, and they have also furnished material for monographic research.

New methods of attack have been brought to bear