

A MEMORIAL VOLUME TO CYRUS GUERNSEY PRINGLE.—Some of the older members of the New England Botanical Club may remember Dr. Pringle—one of the best collectors of all time, a man of uncompromising uprightness, an earnest devotee of science in his field. He is said to have phrased tersely the ultimate justification of all work in pure science. Once, the story goes, a farmer who had found him gathering an insignificant-looking weed, asked, with some contempt, what that was good for. "It's good" said Pringle, "to cure ignorance."

Those of us who did know him and his attitude toward his work will feel, I think, that he would have liked and would have chosen just such a plain, useful and straightforward memorial volume as that which the University of Vermont has lately issued. The book, compiled by Mrs. Helen Burns Davis, contains a brief biographical introduction; transcripts of all passages in Pringle's diaries relating to his botanical work in Mexico during the years 1885-1909; reprints of some of his own accounts of his journeys, originally published in "Garden and Forest"; two lists of all his Mexican collections, one systematic and one numerical, both giving determinations of his specimens and recording their presence or absence in the three herbaria which have his first sets—his own at the University of Vermont, the Gray and Farlow Herbaria at Harvard and the United States National Herbarium; and adequate indices. It is now possible to construct continuous and detailed itineraries of his journeys, to get various pieces of collateral information about his specimens—matter of much interest and often of importance to the taxonomist—and readily to locate any particular collection-number desired. And the diaries afford glimpses of Pringle's personality and of his methods of work which are also to be welcomed.

Mrs. Davis has done her work faithfully and to all appearances well—just how well, only use of the book can fully show. It would have been more accurate to specify the Farlow Herbarium as the place of deposit at Harvard of Pringle's lower cryptogams, instead of assigning everything to the Gray. And one could wish that his early journeys to the Pacific states in 1880-1884 and those to Cuba in his last active years might have been included. Perhaps the data in regard to them does not exist. In any case, Pringle's name will always be chiefly associated with the exploration of the Mexican flora in which he stands so high; and of that, we have the story here.<sup>1</sup>—C. A. W.

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<sup>1</sup> Davis, Helen Burns. *Life and Work of Cyrus Guernsey Pringle*. Burlington, Vermont. 1936. 756 pp., 2 portr. Paper. For sale at the Pringle Herbarium, Williams Science Hall, University of Vermont, Burlington, Vermont; price \$1.50.



Weatherby, Charles Alfred. 1936. "A Memorial Volume to Cyrus Guernsey Pringle." *Rhodora* 38, 455–455.

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