

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

JOHN ERNEST POTZGER

1886-1955

The sudden death, on September 18, 1955, of Dr. John E. Potzger, Professor and Head of the Department of Botany of Butler University, Indiana, and past president of the Ecological Society of America, brought to a close the career of an eminent ecologist and one of the most active and staunchest supporters of the Society. Less than two weeks previously Dr. Potzger had participated in the sessions of the annual meeting of the Ecological Society in East Lansing and had delivered an interesting, inspiring, and informative address on "Pollen Profiles as Records of Lake Filling and Bog Formation" on the occasion of the annual dinner of the Society.

John E. Potzger, the son of a Lutheran minister, was born in the lumber country of Presque Isle County, Michigan, on July 31, 1886. His high school and the first years of his college education were obtained as a boarding student at Addison (Illinois) Teachers College. For over twenty years he taught in a Lutheran day school in Indianapolis and worked with the various youth organizations in the congregation. He studied music, including two summers' work at the Ithaca Conservatory of Music, and conducted a private piano studio in Indianapolis for some ten years.

While engaged in evening classes and summer school work at Butler, Indiana, and Chicago Universities, he enrolled in the late Dr. Ray Friesner's general botany course. This association profoundly influenced his future life; he dropped his plans for an English-German major and embarked on his career in botanical science. In 1927 he received his A.B. degree and in 1931 his M.A. in botany from Butler University.

During the summer of 1931 he attended the University of Michigan Biological Station where he worked with Dr. Frank C. Gates. His interest in ecology dated to this summer at Douglas Lake and to his advanced studies under Dr. Stanley Cain at Indiana University the following year. He received his Ph.D. in botany from Indiana University in 1932. Dr. Potzger then joined the staff of the Botany Department at Butler University and, after the death of Dr. Friesner in 1953, assumed the headship of that department as well as the supervision of the **Butler University Botanical Studies**.

In addition to his teaching career, Dr. Potzger worked at the Grout Laboratory at Newfane, Vermont, and in 1940 he was field botanist at the University of Wisconsin Biological Station at Trout Lake. His interest in pollen analysis and postglacial forest history took him to the Province of

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Quebec for several summers' field work—in 1952 as one of the research group at the Mt. Tremblant Biological Station, and in 1953 and 1954 as a member of a bog-boring expedition of the Service de Biogeographie of the University of Montreal and the Fish and Game Department of the Province of Quebec. At various times he held research grants from the Indiana Academy of Sciences and from the American Philosophical Society in support of his field studies in the Minnesota Lake Region, the Quetico-Superior Memorial Forest, Isle Royale, the Keweenaw Peninsula of Michigan, and in Quebec.

Dr. Potzger's deep concern with elementary and high school science instruction was an abiding interest to the end of his life. With Mrs. Potzger, a Ph.D. in zoology from the University of Michigan, he collaborated in the preparation of six nature-study work books for children on trees, birds, and insects. In this same connection he was an active member of the Central Association of Science and Mathematics Teachers, edited its "Yearbook" from 1940 through 1945 and served as president of the Association in 1948.

Although his research interests embraced such diverse fields as the taxonomy of grasses, microclimates, and forest sociology his major effort for the past fifteen years was given to pollen studies and postglacial forest succession. A bibliography of papers which he authored or co-authored includes over eighty titles. Dr. Potzger served as president of the Ecological Society of America in 1953, and was a member of many other honorary and professional organizations.

New Orleans, Louisiana
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Committee on Resolutions
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