



FRANK LINCOLN STEVENS

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1871-1934

The death of Frank Lincoln Stevens, Professor of Plant Pathology in the University of Illinois, August 18, 1934, at Winnetka, Illinois, ended prematurely a life exceptional in service to mankind and great in scientific accomplishment.

The rural environment of Dr. Stevens' boyhood, spent on a farm near Syracuse, New York, fostered a love of nature which became the paramount interest of his life. After graduating from Hobart College, he spent eleven years as student or teacher at Rutgers College (1891-93), Racine College (1893-94); the high school at Columbus and Ohio State University (1894-97), and the University of Chicago, from which he received the Doctor of Philosophy, *magna cum laude*, in 1900 and by which he was granted a traveling fellowship to Bonne, Halle, and Naples for 1900-01.

He became professor of botany and vegetable pathology in the North Carolina State College of Agriculture in 1901 and remained there until 1912, when he became Dean of the College of Agriculture of the University of Porto Rico. Returning to the United States in 1914, he was appointed Professor of Plant Pathology in the University of Illinois, a position which he maintained with honor and distinction until his untimely death.

Early in his career, Dr. Stevens came in contact with three botanists, David G. Fairchild, Byron D. Halsted, and J. J. Davis, each of whom exerted a profound and lasting influence. Fairchild introduced him to the new science of plant pathology; Halsted gave him especially that fastidiously scientific attitude that characterized all his work; Davis imparted the enthusiasm for mycology which, in his last years, was his transcendental interest.

Dr. Stevens' contributions were many and varied. As plant pathologist in North Carolina, he made important studies in plant disease aetiology and was among the first to attack the still vital problems of soil sterilization for disease control and the selection and breeding of disease-resistant crop varieties. He wrote, with J. G. Hall, the first comprehensive handbook of plant diseases printed in America, advocating vigorously the adoption of a distinctive terminology, and collaborated in the preparation of elementary arithmetic, reading, and agricultural textbooks. In Porto Rico, he prepared the manuscript of his best known book, "The Fungi Which Cause Plant Disease."

The twenty years spent by Dr. Stevens in Illinois were notable, as well. Those students who earned degrees under him have borne, in their achievements, unfailing testimony to the excellence of his instruction. Especially important among his many researches are studies of insect and wind transmission of the apple fire blight disease, of the causes of foot- and root-rots of wheat, and of saltation and the effect of irradiation upon fungi. He was largely responsible for the organization of a state plant disease survey and directed much of its early work.

In later years, Dr. Stevens' interest turned to the intensely intellectual problems of taxonomic mycology, which he regarded as fundamental to plant pathology, and he became the outstanding American in this field. He made trips to Trinidad, British Guiana, Panama, Hawaii, and the Philippines, whence he returned with copious collections. The tropical genus *Meliola* was the subject of two monographs, and he had nearly completed a monographic study of the *Microthyriaceae*.

The Academy of Science has lost a distinguished member whose teaching brought able workers to the service of science, whose researches have been of large practical worth, and whose far-sighted appreciation of fundamentals had placed him in the forefront of scientific achievement.

L. R. TEHON