

BOTANY

IN READING over Mr. Frederick V. Coville's report of the Death Valley Expedition, I was very much pleased with his definition of the terms, range, locality, station and habitat. They are often misunderstood by botanists, and many have widely various meanings for them. For the benefit of those who have not access to his report, I take the liberty of quoting his remarks, as follows :

" In a discussion of the principles of plant distribution it is necessary that each term technically employed shall have a well-defined and uniform meaning. Among those words which have been used by various writers with great looseness, there are four which are of especial importance to us, range, locality, station, and habitat. One has merely to refer to our common botanical textbooks and dictionaries to find the lack of clearness in the definitions of these terms, while an attempt to use the words as defined impresses one with the necessity of reviewing their meaning.

" Of these words the one which has historic precedence is *habitat*. It has been used at various times to express the different meanings which are now conveyed by all four words, and from this fact an unfortunate confusion has arisen. Another circumstance that has contributed to the cloudy understanding of these terms is that a technical meaning, not in accord with its popular use, has been ascribed to one of them. The word referred to is *station*. This term is sometimes employed to express the kind of place in which a plant occurs; but its historic use in the language is to indicate position merely.

" The meanings that should logically be attached to these words are as follows :

" *Range*—The range over which a type spontaneously grows.

" *Locality*—The approximate geographic position of an individual specimen.