

**This month 180 years are celebrated under the birth of Francisco Manuel de Melo Breyner (1837-1903), an inevitable figure of the Polytechnic School and of the Botanic Garden of Lisbon. Son of the 2nd Marquis and 3rd Count of Ficalho, he was professor of the Agricultural Institute and the Polytechnic School and also distinguished as one of the most important literary and botanical names of his time.**

Nominated Substitute Professor of Botany of the Polytechnic School, in 1861, with only 24 years, he would ascend to Professor only 29 years later. In this scope, he promoted and guided the construction of the Botanic Garden of the Polytechnic School, planned since 1840 to replace the Ajuda Botanical Garden for teaching purposes.

In 1873, he commissioned the German Edmund Goeze (1838-1929) for the design and construction of the part for systematic botany, in the upper plane of the Garden (the Class). Ficalho dedicated himself to the selection of plants and trees, to the transplantation of species of the Botanic Garden of Ajuda and to the scientific transaction with foreign peers. In 1876, Ficalho would choose the French botanist Jules Daveau, with whom he maintained a deep friendship, for the arrangement of the arboretum, in the lower part of the Garden, to be completed in 1878.

As a botanist and taxonomist, Francisco Manuel de Melo Breyner devoted himself to the study of African flora, in particular the Angolan herbarium

collected by Friedrich Welwitsch. Of its many works, the Flora of the Lusíadas stands out (1880), here in exhibition this month; also The Memory of the Malagueta (1883); Garcia de Orta and his Time (1886), which served as preparation for the publication of a two-volume edition of the Simple and Drug Colloquiums of India (1891 and 1895).

