



Dr. JOHANNES HENDRIKUS KERN

(photo Ding Hou, 1963)

### IN MEMORIAM DR. J. H. KERN

On 29 July 1974 dr. J. H. Kern died at the age of 70. At the occasion of his official retirement from the Rijksherbarium staff (January 1969) Van Steenis and Van Ooststroom gave due recognition to his achievements in tropical botany and to his share in the progress of the knowledge of the Dutch flora. There is no need to repeat here what was written at that time (*Blumea* 17, 1969, 1—3 and *Gorteria* 4, 1968, 69—72).

After his retirement he was appointed honorary collaborator of the Rijksherbarium and at first he continued his work more or less as usual. However, his health soon became worse and his deteriorating eyesight prevented him from working with the microscope. Consequently, he could not finish the revision of *Carex* and *Uncinia* for Flora Malesiana, the only genera which still were missing from his manuscript. It was decided that the family would be published without these genera; the unfinished manuscript will be left to another botanist to be put into final shape. Together with professor Van Steenis he made the manuscript ready for the press, but only some days after a first copy had been received from the printers, Jan Kern suddenly died.

It was a very sad thing to him that his plans for finishing the Malesian *Cyperaceae* could not be carried out. To us it was very sad that, although he read the proofs, he did not see in actual print his *magnum opus* in which he summarized so much of the knowledge he had gathered during many years of labour on the family so dear to him.

One major event, which took place after his retirement and which gave him great satisfaction, must be mentioned. On 11 September 1970 he was appointed *doctor honoris causa* by the University of Nijmegen, the town of his birth. This was done at the occasion of the celebration of the 125th anniversary of the Koninklijke Nederlandse Botanische Vereniging (Royal Botanical Society of the Netherlands) of which he was a member since 1937. The speeches of his promotor, professor V. Westhoff, and of Kern himself, were published in the Society's *Jaarboek* for 1970, p. 95—99.

We at the Rijksherbarium will remember him not only as a good botanist and as a dependable colleague, but above all as a gentle man who was friendly to all around him.

C. KALKMAN