

PREFACE

There are only a few things left in common to the displaced and disjointed inhabitants of this Earth; they are the things spiritual.

Among those treasures of the mind natural science has come to the fore only in the last three centuries, as a lofty and impartial principle that tends to join people instead of disrupting them. Through war, famine and pestilence the undying fire of science has remained a steady beacon.

At the inception of a great work, which shall be the demonstration of the united effort of many workers, it seems meet to remember the function of Science, apart from its beneficial or detrimental applications. In these days the adjectives 'pure' and 'applied' have lost much of their meaning, and the Masters amongst us were the least concerned with this classification. Nevertheless, as long as sentiment, politics, greed and bigotry rule this world, a purely scientific endeavour may become a binding force between individual groups, and maybe, even between nations. At the beginning of this great project we therefore see already a dark shadow cast by this unfortunate era, but rather than to dwell on darker thought let us invoke the light that is cast by those that lived and worked in these regions before us, and let us consider this work as an apotheosis of the ideals formulated by Melchior Treub who, half a century ago, became the initiator of co-ordinated scientific effort in the tropics.

His ideals are still ours.

To the General Editor, Dr C. G. G. J. van Steenis, we all want to express our gratitude for his initiative, for his boundless energy and, especially, for his faith in this project.

To discuss the project of the Flora Malesiana from the technical side would be simply borrowing materials from the scientific collaborators.

Rather than to plagiarize it seems fit to leave these matters to the specialist. But as Director of the Scientific Institutes, called 's-Lands Plantentuin' I may express the satisfaction that our Government, almost a century after the foundation of our Herbarium; after 130 years of effort of these institutes, after the publication of innumerable, chiefly disjointed contributions, has decided to further a unified effort. Amongst the many accusations that our workers have suffered in the last years, some at least have some foundation. We have plowed too deep, we were too few, we did not seek enough contact. But the greatest blight of tropical science has been the lack of continuity. Now we may plow deep, but with many to help. Now we may proceed together and, let us hope, with continuity guaranteed.

The great 'Horn of Plenty', the cornucopia of our Malaysian Flora, which was opened by van Rheedé and by Rumphius shall still flow for a long time. I wish great joy to those that shall have the privilege to examine its contents.



(L. G. M. BAAS BECKING)

Director of 's-Lands Plantentuin

1. *Systematice* plantas suas disponit verus Botanicus;
Nec absque ordine easdem enumerat.
2. *Fructificationis* principium in theoretica dispositione agnoscit;
Nec dispositionem secundum Herbam immutat.
3. *Genera* naturalia assumit;
Nec Erronea ob speciei notam aberrantem conficit.
4. *Species* distinctas tradit;
Nec e Varietatibus falsas fingit.
5. *Varietates* ad species reducit;
Nec eas, pari passu, cum speciebus obambulare sinit.
6. *Synonyma* praestantissima indagat et seligit;
Nec acquiescit in quacunq̄ue obvia nomenclatura.
7. *Differentias* characteristicas inquiri;
Nec inania nomina specifica praeponit veris.
8. *Plantas* vagas ad Genera amandare studet;
Nec rariores obvias fugitivis oculis adspicit.
9. *Descriptiones* complectentes differentias essentialis, compendiose sistit;
Nec naturalissimam structuram oratorio sermone ebuccinat.
10. *Minimas* partes attente scrutatur;
Nec ea, quae maxime illustrant, flocci facit.
11. *Observationibus* ubique plantas illustrat;
Nec in vago nomine acquiescit.
12. *Oculis* propriis quae singularia sunt observat;
Nec sua solum, ex Auctoribus, compilat.

LINNAEUS, *Philosophia botanica*