

X. PALYNOLOGICAL WORK ON MALESIAN TAXA AT LEIDEN

Since Sept. 1967 Mr. J. Muller, formerly of the Shell, has been appointed at the Rijksherbarium to pursue palynological research in conjunction with taxonomical work, in particular on the Malesian flora. This is a most fortunate situation as Mr. Muller has a very wide knowledge of tropical palynology, having worked himself in Venezuela and Brunei, partly with fossil pollen, but necessarily also with pollen of living tropical plants. We remind of his work on the pollen of the peat swamps in Borneo. See references on p. 1491 of Fl.Mal.Bull. no. 21.

Through his energy and enthusiasm he has in the two years since his appointment attracted various students and is contributing himself and finishing off certain research subjects he elaborated formerly, notably his very large work on *Sonneratia*, *Barringtonia*, *Ochnaceae*; he is working now on *Sapindaceae*.

He supervised work on *Symplocos* (R. van der Meyden), *Bignoniaceae* (Mrs. E. Buurman), *Flacourtiaceae* (Miss Pacqué).

Mr. Muller made a most valuable contribution towards the knowledge of tropical botany at a symposium of the Seattle Congress in which he surveyed the historic sequence of fossil pollen in the three main tropical sites (Venezuela, Nigeria, Sarawak) from where large-scale critical data are available, at least from the early Tertiary onwards. This 'Progress Report', as he calls it, has an extremely wide bearing on our knowledge of both the history of the tropical flora and the historical development of the Phanerogams. There are some very peculiar features which we can, anticipating the publication of this most important summary of data, only indicate approximately: the unexplained extinction of certain groups in certain tropical areas (e.g. *Nypa* in the neotropics), the high age of some very small groups which have obviously never shown much inclination towards further speciation (*Ctenolophon*), and the proportionally very young age of certain, now pantropically profusely developed families (*Compositae*, *Gramineae*, and *Acanthaceae*). An extensive review and comment on implications will follow in the next Bulletin.

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