

XIII. BLUME'S 'MÉLANGES BOTANIQUES' EFFECTIVELY PUBLISHED IN 1855

C.G.G.J. van Steenis

Rijksherbarium, POB 9514, 2300 RA Leiden, The Netherlands

During the preparation of a rather substantial biographical sketch of C.L. Blume intended as the Dedication to volume 10 of the Flora Malesiana which will also contain a complete bibliography of his works, there was one dubious item, the 'Mélanges Botaniques'. Although names of new taxa from it were supposedly validated by Walpers (Ann. 4, 1857, 642—644) and a rather large extract from it was published in an unsigned review in Flora 41 (1858) 254—2, no effectively printed copies of this pamphlet were known to exist.

Various comments on this enigmatic paper have been given especially with regard to the source: was the review made from a manuscript, from proofs, or from actually printed matter? As nobody had ever seen a printed copy it was concluded by Stafleu & Cowan (TL-2, 1, 1976, 241) that it had not been printed.

By chance Mr. L. Vogelenzang, the librarian of the Rijksherbarium, Leiden, found the title in Vesque's 'Catalogue de la Bibliothèque de feu M. J. Decaisne' (1883) edited by the Libraire de la Bibliothèque Nationale on p. 13, listed under no. 56: 'Blume, Mélanges botaniques (premier et deuxième numéro) Leyde, 1855, br. in-8, de 12 pp. — Envoi autogr. de l'auteur à M. Decaisne.'

I then solicited the assistance of the always helpful Dr. H. Heine in Paris, who succeeded even to trace a second copy in the Bibliothèque Central of the Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle at Paris. This was autographed to M. Brongniart.

It appears most likely that the review in Flora was also based on a printed copy probably sent to his long-time friend Prof. Nees von Esenbeck, but our efforts to trace this one, most likely present in a Regensburg library, have not yet succeeded.

It is thus beyond doubt that the 'Mélanges' were effectively published.

The 'Mélanges' were privately published and clearly sent to Blume's intimate friends. There may be, hence, more copies in existence, possibly in the libraries of Academies which had honoured Blume by distinctions.

From the photocopy I have received it appears that the 'Mélanges' were published in two instalments, the first dated 'Leyde, 1^{er} Aout 1855' (pp. 1—8), the second dated 'Leyde, 1^{er} Septembre 1855' (pp. 9—12). On both is printed 'non dans le commerce'. There is no reason to distrust these dates; novelties described here must hence date from 1855, Walpers' review having been published 2 years later.

As to the matter treated, the first instalment deals with papermaking from Broussonetia in which a new species is validly described. It further gives a chapter on 'Synonymie de quelques plantes peu connues'. Amongst the 33 listed taxa is the valid description of the genus Dirhynchosia (in the ING given as dating from 1858). The names in the list refer mostly to Cunoniaceae, Dipterocarpaceae, Moraceae and Saxifragaceae. Several reductions are made.

The second part deals largely with the Chrysobalanaceae of Malesia with several new names and taxa, and contains a list of seven species of Pygeum (Rosaceae), some new.

Photocopies have been sent to some interested botanists and institutes. A full reprint of the Mélanges has been published in Taxon 35 (1986) 272—285.