

I. EDITORIAL

Until his retirement in September 1972, Dr. C. G. G. J. v a n S t e e n i s was director of the Rijksherbarium and professor of botany at Leiden University as well as Editor of the Flora Malesiana. In the function of professor-director he was succeeded by Dr. C. K a l k m a n, but has retained the Editorship of the Flora Malesiana.

About the same time, a change in legislation in the Netherlands established 'democracy' at all hierarchical levels of universities. It means that decisions are made by chosen committees or by voting. The merits of this system are still largely in the realms of hope. Fortunately, the Rijksherbarium people are very much of one mind, and to a man expressed themselves in favour of continuation of work on the Flora Malesiana. So it came about that, when Professor Van Steenis laid down the editorship of the Flora Malesiana Bulletin — although, as I am very glad to say, he will continue to contribute, and to compile the Bibliography — my name was put up for discussion and was approved by the members of the 'tropical staff'. Almost immediately thereupon, both Dr. Van Steenis and I went abroad (separately). This set the closing date of the Bibliography at 1 September 1973.

Among the rich results of these journeys is a touch of disorderliness in the present issue. It is late and not so well-balanced; not quite complete in Progress and Miscellaneous News, and carrying rather many Reviews, as if reflexion were prevailing over work. It would, however, be untimely to conclude that we are losing grip; all persons involved are in excellent health and proceeding on their new course with vigour. But some of the vigour will only make itself felt in the next issue when, for instance, we hope to have solved the editorial problems created by the new Indonesian spelling, also for Blumea and the Flora Malesiana.

Following Professor Van Steenis's resignation, one member of the staff was to discharge the duties now required of the head of the division of tropical botany: attending meetings, reading and producing circulars, drafting reports, making decisions, a function which under the new system required far more time than in the good old times of illuminated autocracy. Dr. W. V i n k was chosen for 3 years, and accepted. His task is to ensure the smooth flow of manpower, materials, money and manuscripts. After 1½ years, we can say that things work well.

Liberated from his administrative duties, Professor Van Steenis has directed his great energies once again to the to the Flora Malesiana. Volume 7 instalment 3 is now ex-

pected from the press in mid-1974, and it will be a fat one, containing the Cyperaceae minus Carex and Uncinia, which will appear later, to complete that volume. Also in the press, but to appear later in 1974, is volume 8 instalment 1, containing the Hypericaceae and the second supplement — also the last — of the Cyclopaedia of Collectors. It is Mrs. Van Steenis's opinion that a continuation of the Special Part of the 'Green Bible' is now less necessary, since virtually all recent labels easily can be understood. But certainly all results of exploration will be duly reported in the Flora Malesiana Bulletin if only its editor is informed.

To that purpose, the editor sends every year a letter for information to a number of persons well-placed in the meshwork of botanical communication. Several of them comply. If the pages of the present issue give the impression time and again to stress the activity of the Rijksherbarium, this is only so because several others do not send information, for whatever reason. Not long ago the head of an important local Herbarium spent a quarter of an hour in telling me that communicating news was not in the interest of his institute because he could not spare the time. On the other hand, the communications received from Kuching and Sandakan (see under Exploration) cannot have taken long to compile, give all that is essential, and thus clearly serve an interest of higher order: science international. — M. Jacobs.