

BOOK REVIEWS

OF PUBLICATIONS RELATED TO BOTANICAL WORK IN THE NETHERLANDS

ZEIJLSTRA Fzn., H. H.: *Melchior Treub — Pioneer of a new Era in the History of the Malay Archipelago*, 128 p., illus. Amsterdam, 1959, Kon. Instituut voor de Tropen.

Well informed as we may be about the life and work of MELCHIOR TREUB (1851–1910) through a number of obituary notices, biographical sketches, and several, often extensive historical accounts of natural science in the former Dutch East Indies (particularly the botanic gardens, the Department of Agriculture, and the various non-governmental experiment stations), hitherto we lacked a more extensive Treub biography. I think that we must appreciate it that Dr. ZEIJLSTRA did not attempt anything like a definite biography of Treub which would have been a huge undertaking involving an enormous amount of research in Dutch, Indonesian, and other archives, but that he did restrict himself to an extensive biographical memoir. This biography, the value of which is heightened by the fact that the author was associated with Treub and that he received considerable aid in the form of nine ms. essays (“Reminiscences of Melchior Treub”) from the late Dr. J. C. KONINGSBERGER (whose son, Prof. V. J. KONINGSBERGER, again was instrumental in arranging for the publication of this memoir), not only gives us a picture of Treub’s life and work, but also of the history of the Buitenzorg Botanic Gardens and manifold other activities in the former Dutch East Indies with which TREUB was concerned.

It is a nostalgic picture — TREUB made a world institution of the Buitenzorg Botanic Gardens and its directorate into the most important and most influential biological position in the Netherlands Empire of his period. He was a hard worker; the personal assistance which he gave to scientific visitors from abroad prior to their trip to Java, while they had their headquarters at Buitenzorg or its Tjibodas annex, and also after they had left (particularly in connection with the publication of the results of their work), was often very extensive.

TREUB’s contributions to the science of botany were numerous and are well known. The help given to others and his own scientific interests, however, are all facets of a many-sided policy guided by his basic idea that science (in this case, mainly biology and agriculture), as an anonymous essayist (*Gard. Chron.* 1910) once expressed it, “. . . was not an end in itself but an instrument to be used . . . to give real effect to that idea, science must lead and not be merely an occasional ally, in the practical affairs of this world. To carry out his dominating idea, he addressed himself with equal energy to two great tasks: one, to make of Buitenzorg the tropical Mecca, whither all the world’s botanists should desire to make pilgrimage; the other, to rear a great Agricultural Department for Java, based on scientific knowledge, and conducted by scientific men.”

How TREUB accomplished these tasks and became both one of the world’s

great biologists and pioneers of the "technical assistance" concept, the author outlines in 6 well balanced chapters:

- (1) Early years and university training. Leiden period. 's Lands Plantentuin at Buitenzorg before TREUB's arrival.
- (2) TREUB's first year at Buitenzorg. His own investigations. BURCK's arrival.
- (3) TREUB as promotor of scientific research in the Netherlands Indies.
- (4) TREUB's merits for the development of agriculture in the Netherlands Indies.
- (5) TREUB as founder and first Director of the Department of Agriculture in the Netherlands Indies.
- (6) TREUB's personality.

The book also includes a genealogy of the TREUB family, a list of visiting scientists who worked at the Hortus Bogoriensis, etc. We miss, however, an index, particularly of personal and place names (available at the Utrecht Biohistorical Institute), a bibliography of TREUB's writings (though most of these will be found in the terminal notes) and a picture of that intriguing liverwort genus *Treubia* (which would have made a nice vignette for the title page). The list of sources might perhaps have been extended to include such biographies as those by BOERLAGE, FAIRCHILD, GOEBEL, GUIGNARD, LOTSY, SCHRÖTER, SOLMS-LAUBACH and TISCHLER which the author will have utilized.

Inasmuch as TREUB was a pioneer of truly international standing, it would be interesting to have an analysis of the influence he exercised on other botanic gardens, biological stations, and the organization of agricultural research, questions admittedly beyond the scope of this stimulating memoir.

FR. V.

FLORA MALESIANA, series II. Pteridophyta. Edited by R. E. HOLTUM, Kew. Vol. 1, part 1. Dec. 1959, pp. i-xxiv, 1-64, 32 fig. Erven P. Noordhoff, Groningen. Dfl. 10.—, £ 1.-/-.

This represents the start of the revision of the *Pteridophyta* of Malaysia which is edited by Dr. R. E. HOLTUM, former director of the Botanic Gardens, Singapore, and lately professor at the University of Singapore. HOLTUM, who has during three decades acquired a unique field knowledge in Malaysia, has agreed to make this his magnum opus which will keep him busy for the next ten years at least, even with the collaboration of some colleagues. The present part is executed in the same way as the spermatophyte series and is entirely his work, with the exception of the *Isoetaceae*, which are by the late Dr. ALSTON. Besides the revisions of the families *Gleicheniaceae* and *Schizaeaceae*, HOLTUM has found fit to introduce the volume by general chapters, on the morphology of ferns and a bibliography on Malaysian ferns published subsequent to that in the last part of CHRISTENSEN's Index Filicum. Very important are further a modern census of Malaysian genera of *Pteropsida* and two alternative general keys which lead to families or groups of genera. Further there are keys to all genera within their family or group. As there is still no agreement as to the vast and heterogeneous assemblage *Polypodiaceae* sens. lat. HOLTUM has provisionally accepted two families, *Polypodiaceae* and *Grammatidaceae*, and has divided the rest into groups of genera which seem to him natural taxa, neither specifying their status nor giving them a name. He wishes to postpone his final system till the end of the volume. In the elaboration he keeps in close

touch with anatomists and cytogeneticists and naturally refers to fossil ferns. When completed this work will represent a major contribution to pteridology.
v. St.

PALYNOLOGIE — Bibliographie 1959. Service d'information géologique du Bureau de Recherches géologiques et minières. 74, Rue de la Fédération. Paris XV^e.

The fourth volume of this annual report contains, this time, only corrections of the list of addresses inserted in the previous volume, changes of addresses, and the names and addresses of palynologists not figuring in the three previous volumes. It opens with informations of bibliographical cards on palynology, delivered monthly to subscribers by the "Service d'Information Géologique", Paris.

F. P. J.