

A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR.

My dear Henrard,

Fate has knocked at your door. It has reminded you that, as to the years of your life, you are no longer a young man, that your age will be sixty five on the day this little volume will be presented to you.

Time and fate are inexorable powers. Sometimes the question has occurred to me, whether we have any right to speak of a "Jubilee", whether one's retirement from office or the attainment of high age is something to be gratulated upon, since these events are usually not exactly welcome to the person involved. Yet, I think there cannot be any doubt as to this. For, can there be ever more reason for deep satisfaction and gratitude than when a man may without self-reproach, look back upon an honest and successful life?

Such a life has been your privilege and it may be ours to reveal it today and to congratulate you, your family and your friends upon it.

There has, no doubt owing to your pronounced personality and character, been a very firm line in your career. As early as during your high school years you prepared yourself for a university study of biology, and though you were at that time, I don't know why, dissuaded from taking that course and, being an obedient son, you let yourself be persuaded to assume a pharmaceutical career, your heart did not forget its longing for biology proper and particularly for taxonomy and floristics, to which you had been allured by such local authorities as Lako and Carmiggelt, already during your school years at Zwolle.

It is true that you dutifully terminated your imposed studies of pharmacy, but after some years of practice as a pharmaceutical chemist you came into contact with the "Rijksherbarium" and notably with the then conservator, our mutual friend Goddijn. Your frequent visits to our institution grew into regular work; in 1916 you accepted a temporary position and this was in 1921 converted into a permanent one.

It is not my intention to give a survey here of your life and your work. I will leave these things to the abler pen of W. A. Goddijn, once your senior colleague, who has been in the position of following your botanical career from the first years onward and who has been found prepared to picture your scientific activities against the background of your life in the following pages. When I assumed the directorate of the "Rijksherbarium" in 1933, I found you an "homme arrivé", a man with an established international reputation, due to your extremely accurate

work and particularly to your extensive doctor's thesis, your monograph of *Aristida*. From the beginning, you specialised in grasses in which you are, at present, generally acknowledged as one of the world's leading authorities. The collection of material belonging to this natural order extant in our institution, if not the largest of its kind in the world, doubtless is one of the most reliable ones, both taxonomically and nomenclaturally, owing to the utmost cares you gave it almost daily for more than a quarter of a century.

In recent years you have started another important work, a monograph of *Digitaria*. This work was nearing completion at the outbreak of war. I know that many botanists all over the world are looking forward with great expectations to its publication, which we may hope will be effectuated before long. The award, so justly granted you for this purpose by the "Hollandsche Maatschappij der Wetenschappen" out of the revenue of the "Pieter Langerhuizen Lambertuszoon" fund for 1946, is rightly considered a most adequate and satisfactory crowning of your official career.

But, as may be seen from your bibliography (p. 6 ss.), you did not restrict yourself to grasses only. You are, in this country, acknowledged as one of the outstanding authorities on the West-European flora in general and of that of the Netherlands in particular. That rich and accurate knowledge you have lavishly spent on younger botanists, notably on our students, both during their practical work and during the numerous excursions in Holland and abroad, held under your leadership. Personally, I have often admired your astonishing knowledge of the flora of the Eiffel, the Ardennes, the Alps and the Mediterranean region.

Another field in which you have won an international reputation is that of botanical nomenclature, witness not only the numerous cases in which your advice in this matter is requested, but your appointment as the Netherlands representative in the International Committee for Botanical Nomenclature, established by the Fourth International Botanical Congress of 1926.

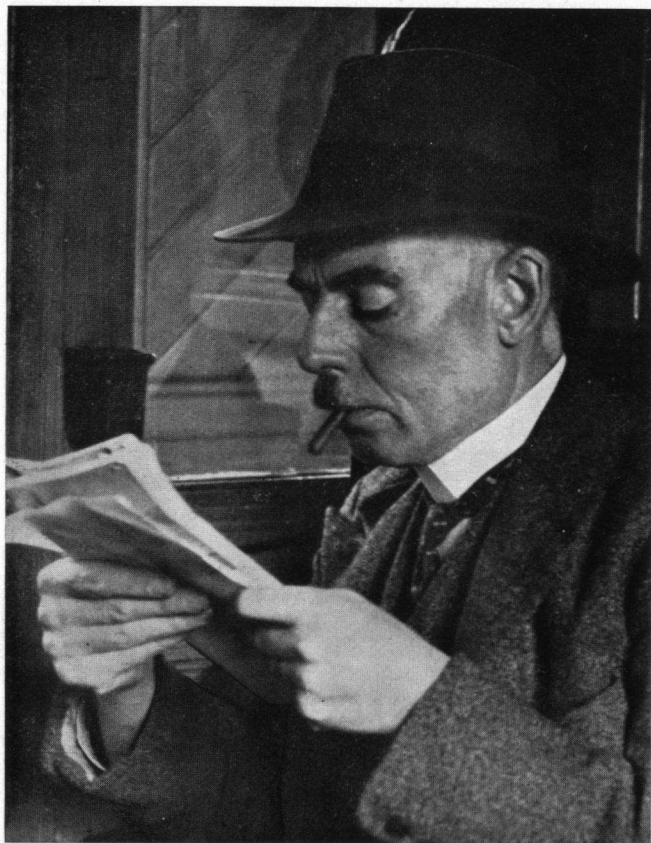
To me, as a director of the "Rijksherbarium", you have always been a loyal friend and collaborator. You never refused whatever I asked of you; on the contrary, whenever summoned, you infallably lent your valuable time and your skilful assistance to students and visitors, to colleagues and to myself. Numerous times you have been in charge of the institute, a task you always scrupulously and ably performed whenever I was prevented from accomplishing it myself.

For all this, we owe you a great debt of gratitude indeed. We are proud of you as a scientific collaborator and as a worthy representative of our institution. And we thank you most heartily for your friendship and your devotion to our common task. Now that our Government regulations force you to retire from your office, we want to express to you our deep appreciation, and we considered that this could not be done more appropriately than by inviting a number of your friends and colleagues, both in Holland and abroad, to contribute a scientific paper for a special number of our journal "Blumea", dedicated to you. Owing to restrictions of budget and paper, we could not go as far as to this

as we would have desired. We therefore confined ourselves to the invitation of some outstanding botanists who have worked in the same fields as you did, particularly in agrostology. The way in which they answered our request and the words with which they accepted our invitation are most flattering for you. We trust you will find something interesting in this little volume, written in honour of your work and in appreciation of your personality.

You may be sixty five years now, yet you are still mentally a young man. There will always remain a place for you, both in this institute and in our hearts and we trust and sincerely hope you continue to favour us with your collaboration and your friendship for many years to come.

H. J. LAM.



Dr J. TH. HENRARD,
in a railway carriage during a botanical excursion in 1936.