I. EDITORIAL

By January 1977 the following families in Flora Malesiana manuscript were about ready for the press: Anacardiaceae, Bignoniaceae, Cornaceae, Crypteroniaceae, Iridaceae, Labiatae, Lentibulariaceae, Onagraceae, Symplocaceae, and Ulmaceae. In the middle of the year, the Cunoniaceae are expected to be completed. Together these revisions will be published in the course of 1977 in two instalments, completing Volume 8. Of Series ii Pteridophytes, a 4th instalment will also be published during 1977: the Lomariopsis Group. Volume 7 was completed, with Title Page, Dedication to H.J. Lam, Addenda, Index, and binding in the second half of 1976. If you so far have not received all parts, contact Academic Book Services, Box 66, Groningen, The Netherlands.

Counts were made of the total production to the end of 1976. Additions in later volumes have been incorporated. For Series i Spermatophytes, the figures are:

Volume 4:	60 families	170 genera	785 species
Volume 5:	24 families	102 genera	566 species
Volume 6:	14 families	86 genera	1138 species
Volume 7:	17 families	94 genera	784 species
Volume 8:	1 family	1 genus	15 species
Total	116 families*	453 genera	3288 species

* Thymelaeaceae and Gonystylaceae separated; Campanulaceae and Lobeliaceae separated.

Number of pages published:	non-taxonomic	taxonomic
Volume 1: 152 + 639 =	791 pages	
Volume 4:	219 pages	631 pages
Volume 5:	342 pages	595 pages
Volume 6:	20 pages	1023 pages
Volume 7:	18 pages	876 pages
Volume 8:	115 pages	29 pages
Total	1505 pages	3154 pages

For Series ii, Ferns and Fern Allies, the figures are: Pages 23 + 254 = 278, Families 5, Genera 14, Species 350.

Of the species (± 25,000) this is a small part, of the genera (± 2400) it seems a fair amount, of the families (± 220) it is about half. Moraceae and Dipterocarpaceae are complete in manuscript. A considerable number of other species and genera have been revised in taxonomic journals. Altogether, detailed knowledge is currently available on much of the Malesian flora, and can be easily consulted, through the

Annotated Selected Bibliography in Volume 5 of 1955, and subsequent issues of the FMBulletin, well-indexed to authors and names of plants.

It is surprising then, to see how people who talk at symposia seem to be so indifferent to this knowledge. Take the Symposium on SE. Asian Plant Genetic Resources (LBN, Bogor 1975). An awareness of the value of taxonomy as a rock-bottom of biological knowledge is lacking. There are exceptions: W. Meijer gave distribution data on *Mangifera* supplied by Ding Hou from his MS. revision (p. 45), J.A.R. Anderson, in a paper on Illipe nuts (one of the finest of the lot), dealing with these Shorea species as potential agricultural crops (p. 217-230) neatly identifies 11 'primary' species; J. Daniels e.a. in their fine paper on The Origin of sugarcanes and centres of genetic diversity in Saccharum (p. 91-107) also know their taxonomy which involves *Miscanthus*, *Erianthus*, *Sclerostachya*, and several other genera listed by C.O. Grassl. But far more could have been obtained as background data. True, Frankel observes that "The best preparation, I believe, would be thorough experience in taxonomy and ecology. Plant taxonomy teaches one to distinguish minute morphological differences" (p. 30), but leaves unmentioned the fact that the taxonomic literature contains a wealth of data on distinction, distribution, and ecology of the actually and potentially valuable species. And how could "the comprehensive programme to collect, grow and test related species" demanded on p. 79 by Mr. R.A. Hamilton for Durio succeed without just this knowledge in the very paper by Kostermans (Reinwardtia 4, 1958, 357-460) that he did not bother to mention?

Or take the symposium Tropical Trees / Variation, breeding and conservation (Linnean Society 1976). Little is said about taxonomy except in a paper by T.C. Whitmore therein. He cites elaborate author's names which serve no function whatever in a context like this, and leaves out family names which would have offered recognition — but this may have been done only to emphasize his suggestion "that taxonomy should not be conducted as an intellectual exercise in a vacuum and that taxonomists owe a responsibility to science at large" (p. 31).

The difficulty is that Whitmore does not actually question the taxonomists' decisions, and so fails to make it clear what he exactly wants; nor does he cite examples of good work. But "'Lumping' has often gone too far at the hands of herbarium taxonomists, perhaps resulting from a lack of experience of a group as living plants" (p. 29).* And he is not slow to

* "An example is Hanguana, a morphologically variable giant herb with an ecological range from open swamps to shady hillsides, which has been reduced to a single species H. malayana (Jack) Merr. in the most recent monograph (Backer, 1951)," →

cite *Allophylus cobbe* as an extreme case in point. Whitmore did not go, however, to the Rijksherbarium, get all the materials of Allophylus out on a table, examine them with the publication in hand, question the monographer, and try if he himself could do better. But until a key has been produced by which entities can be named in greater detail, more effectively, more reliably, it is but natural that the monographer's judgement stands.

It is awkward enough that differences which hold in one island, e.g. between *Pometia* entities in New Guinea, break down in another. But if we had to follow Whitmore's dictum that "the usefulness of a classification for all its users, especially field workers, is enhanced when more adequate weight has been given to ecology and geography in drawing up the (morphologically based) classification" (p. 29) we would be back in a confusion where international classification and naming would vary with continent and habitat, separated from typification by means of deposited specimens open to everyone's verification.

His three 'kinds of species', one of them newly named ochlospecies (p. 31), are quantitatively a disappointment compared to the 13 or so that Camp & Gilly distinguished in 1943 (Brittonia 4: 323-385). 'Intractable' as some species may be, Whitmore would only have been fair if he had dealt with Leenhouts's treatment of *Rourea minor* (Fl. Males. i 5, 1958, 514) and of *Connarus semidecandrus* (ibid. 534), where an elegant and workable solution has been offered by outlining 'entities' with reference to synonyms, but without formally naming them. When it comes to dealing with complex species, one would also expect reference to Leenhouts's revision of *Lepisanthes* (Blumea 17, 1969, 33-91), where subtle differences have been extensively discussed and taxonomically digested, and, moreover, caught in the multiple key, introduced also by Leenhouts. This enables users to start identification from any part of the plant and seems a formidable improvement.

Taxonomists at Leiden and other Herbaria — whose results Dr. Whitmore used amply and freely in his own publications — have constantly wrestled with the task to be useful, and wished that it would not be so terribly difficult, in some groups! But keys must work. And he who thinks that the problem of usefulness is of recent date, will be a wiser man if he has read C.F. Symington's incisive paper The future of colonial forest botany, Emp. For. J. 22 (1943) 12-22, largely

Whitmore continues. I must refer, however, to the observations by Corner, Sar. Mus. J. 10 (1963) 12, and by Backer & Bakhuizen, Fl. Java 3 (1968) 23, for the latest critical notes to document the reduction.

reprinted in Chron. Bot. 12 (1949) 277-285. I would say that the above indications point to a real progress. This does not mean that we can be satisfied. Publication, for instance, needs improving. Contrary to experimental disciplines, in alpha-taxonomy no purpose except an author's vanity (or, in a publish-or perish atmosphere, his tenure) is served by publication of a large work in fragments. More whole revisions and fewer 'Contributions', 'Precursors' should be published, and, with courage and coordination, could be published, making consultation easier.

Taxonomists certainly have to unlearn a lot of indifference towards the consumers of their work. Terminology should be in more plain English, and consistency be strived for. Indexing of names and specimens should be far better. Nomenclatural tidbits like quae est, pro maj. parte, quoad specim., should be in English and not in Latin, however desirable it is that every botanist should be well-versed in that language. But even more desirable it is, in everyone's own interest, that people read their literature and use their bibliographies, before they address the crowd. There is not much point in us taxonomists doing the latter. Every matter has its own style, and the style of tropical taxonomy is much the style of the personal effort to become familiar with lots of relevant facts, of patiently using keys and descriptions in order to recognize plant taxa, of noticing gaps and filling them up as well as one can.

Progress in tropical botany is still to a very great extent the number of genera expertly and usefully written up, the number of type specimens critically examined, the number of collections well-named, and of course the persistence of the conditions to make this possible. Therefore the most successful symposia in tropical taxonomy are usually those where 2 people participate, sometimes 3, or at most 4. If at Leiden we have a visitor who is eager to learn, we are always happy to organize such a symposium instantly, and very often learn much in turn.

The present issue carries several features of botanical illustration. Under Personal News an item is devoted to the 25th anniversary of Ruth van Crevel as a botanical artist; an Article dwells on the Collaboration of Taxonomists and Draughtsmen, and under the Reviews, W.T. Stearn's magnificent edition of Bauer drawings is amply discussed. Thus present, future, and past of this rare subject are explored, in that order.

Thanks are due to Professor C.G.G.J. van Steenis, who as usual prepared the Bibliography, and to others who sent information, reviews, or articles.