

## JOANNES JACOBUS SMITH.

J. J. SMITH was born June 29th, 1867, at Antwerp, where his father was the director of the Netherlands' Railway Post Office. In 1872 the family moved to Utrecht and in 1875 to Amsterdam. SMITH spent his school days in the capital. His leisure hours were occupied by growing and sketching plants and tending such animals as mice and keeping an aquarium and a terrarium. His 10th birthday was celebrated by the establishment of a private herbarium, the first plant inserted being *Bellis perennis*.

His years at secondary school were greatly influenced by the then teacher of Natural History, Dr J. C. COSTERUS, who advised SMITH to look for a position in horticulture. Horticultural schools being not yet "en vogue", SMITH got his education in this field at the Horticulturist's Messrs GROENEWEGEN & Co., Amsterdam. In these years the Orchids began to impress him and SMITH spent his few free hours in making pictures of flowering species. The connection with Dr COSTERUS was continued. Together they looked after their herbaria and later on started to study teratologica, found in the GROENEWEGEN gardens and greenhouses, a field in which both would publish several valuable papers later on. After having been working for his firm for 3½ years, SMITH went to Kew where he stayed one year and afterwards to Brussels for completing his horticultural knowledge and skill. At Brussels he was working one year in the famous Orchid nursery of Messrs LINDEN, and then another year at the "Jardin Botanique".

In the mean time SMITH had, in 1887, made the acquaintance of MELCHIOR TREUB, the then director of the Botanic Gardens at Buitenzorg, who was on leave in Holland. There was, however, no position available for SMITH at the time. After SMITH's stay at Brussels, Dr COSTERUS advised his pupil to try and get a position on a plantation in the Netherlands Indies. So he did and he left on May 7th, 1891 by mail steamer "Prins Alexander", bound for Java, where he arrived on June 5th. One month later he occupied a position as inspector at the Wangoenredja Estate of the Pamanoekan and Tjiasem Concern. How-

ever, the jungle and the virgin forest between the cultivation plots had more attraction for SMITH than the coffee plantations, and his manager, Mr RANT, was liberal enough to permit his young employee to make a herbarium for own use; his first trials in this field, however, proved to be failures on account of the great difficulties in drying the specimens.

Only a few weeks later, however, circumstances made it possible for SMITH to obtain the position at the Government Botanic Gardens at Buitenzorg he had desired already for years. On August 29th, 1891 he was appointed a temporary official. SMITH served the Government for almost 33 years, until May 1924. His consecutive positions, his many activities and his admirable results will be mentioned in a biography, to be issued, together with a bibliography, in the "Bulletin du Jardin Botanique de Buitenzorg", Sér. III, Vol. XIV, 2. We may therefore refer to this publication for more detailed information and restricting ourselves to giving a short account of SMITH's career we deem it our task to devote a few words to his life and work after his retiring from active service.

The following outstanding points in SMITH's career may be recorded here on behalf of the readers of "Blumea".

- 1891: Temporary official at the Botanic Gardens, Buitenzorg.
- 1893 (May): Assistant Curator at the Botanic Gardens, Buitenzorg. During this period SMITH's interest in Orchids strongly increased. Many species from the Gardens were pictured and later on also accurately described in his leisure hours.
- 1900: trip to the Moluccas, with Dr J. G. BOERLAGE, keeper of the Herbarium, during which the latter died at Ternate.
- 1902: on leave to Europe for one year. Afterwards he was on detachment at the Rijksherbarium (National Herbarium) at Leyden in order to prepare, at TREUB's order, the elaboration of the Orchids for the "Flora van Buitenzorg".
- 1905 (Febr.): return to Buitenzorg. Appointment as a temporary assistant at the Herbarium of the Botanic Gardens, Buitenzorg.
- 1909: Deputy keeper of the Herbarium, Buitenzorg.
- 1910: Honorary Ph.D. degree at Utrecht University.
- 1914: Keeper of the Herbarium, Buitenzorg; second leave to Europe.
- 1921: Decorated (Off. O.-N.).
- 1922: Acting Director of the Government Botanic Gardens, Buitenzorg.
- 1924: retirement and return to Holland.

After his retirement Dr and Mrs SMITH first lived at Hilversum for one year. This allowed frequent trips to Utrecht. However, the family soon moved to Utrecht in order to be in closer contact with the Utrecht University Herbarium and its director Prof. A. A. PULLE. SMITH worked here for three years and then moved to Oegstgeest near Leyden where he could work in the Rijksherbarium under the directorate of Dr J. W. C. GOETHART. Since 1933, when the undersigned was appointed director of the Rijksherbarium, SMITH remained a zealous and accurate unofficial collaborator, occupying himself chiefly with the *Orchidaceae* and the *Ericaceae* of recent collections. He continued the preparation and publication of his "Icones Orchidacearum Malayensium". Owing to his state of health, however, he increasingly worked at home, visiting the Rijksherbarium only during the summer.

It is an honour and a great satisfaction to me to offer, on behalf of SMITH's Jubilee, hospitality in the Journal of the Institution with which he is now connected as an unofficial collaborator. The contents may speak for themselves by the diversity of their subjects and authors. They all hope that SMITH will be able to continue his work for many years to come, for the benefit of all those who are interested in taxonomic Botany, in the floristics of Malaysia in general and in Orchidology in particular.

Leyden, June 1937.

H. J. LAM,  
Director, Rijksherbarium.



(Phot. J. P. M. BIEGELAAR)

Dr J. J. SMITH in zijn kamer in het Rijksherbarium te Leiden.  
Dr J. J. SMITH in his room in the Rijksherbarium, Leyden (1934).