

ON AN 18TH CENTURY OIL-PAINTING OF BOTANICAL INTEREST ¹⁾

by

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(Rijksherbarium, Leyden).

A few years ago Prof. Dr W. Martin, at the time director of the Gallery of prints and drawings at Leyden, drew my attention to an oil-painting at Prof. J. N. Bakhuizen van den Brink's, 40 Rapenburg, Leyden. This painting (size 95 × 68 cm), which is owned by the Leyden University Fund, shows a peculiar group of flowering exotic plants, to which a few mushrooms, a snake, a lizard and some butterflies are added, and on the right side in the back-ground a view on a river or a lake. In the lower right hand corner the painting is signed *Lau. Vinne*. Prof. Martin concluded from this that it was one of the Haarlem painters Van der Vinne who made it. The most plausible inference seemed to look upon the senior Laurens van der Vinne (1658—1729), a well-known Dutch painter of flowers, as the maker. However, a closer investigation learnt that this was not correct.

When Prof. Martin showed me the picture, I got the impression that I had seen a few of the drawings of the individual plants before. Looking through the plate collections of the "Rijksherbarium" it appeared that this impression was right. These collections, namely, contain water-colours of the 4 species of *Proteaceae* figured in the painting and moreover a water-colour of the specimen of *Sprekelia formosissima*. All these once belonged to the Leyden professor Adriaan van Royen. The water-colour of *Sprekelia formosissima* is signed "Laurens van der Vinne Pinxcit 1736". It is quite probable that this beautiful drawing, together with those of the *Proteaceae*, were used by Van der Vinne in composing his picture. Besides, it became evident that it was not the senior but the junior Van der Vinne who must be considered the painter, as the former died already in 1729 and the painting must have been made in 1736 or later.

From a history of art point of view it is of importance to state that this is the only picture known of the junior Laurens van der Vinne. The Rijksherbarium possesses, however, besides the above-mentioned drawing

¹⁾ Contributions to the history of botanical science, VI; I in *Blumea* II, 1936, p. 75—85; II in *Blumea*, Suppl. I, 1937, p. 193—209; III in *Rec. trav. bot. néerl.* XXXVI, 1939, p. 526—534 and in *Meded. Bot. Mus. en Herb. Utrecht* no. 66, 1939, p. 526—534; IV in *Ned. Kruidk. Arch.* LI, 1941, p. 252—274; V in *Gedenkboek J. Valckenier Suringar* (ed. *Ned. Dendrol. Vereen.*), 1942, p. 208—217.



of *Sprekelia formosissima* some thirteen beautiful water-colours of plants by his hand. These too belonged to Prof. A. van Royen's collection; all but one are signed "Laurens van der Vinne"; six out of them are dated 1736, two other ones bear the year 1737. Prof. Martin informed me that a drawing dated 1737 and 8 water-colours by the same painter are in the collection of Mr Krelage at Haarlem. One of these water-colours is signed on the back: "Laurens van der Vinne, Vinc. Laur. zoon".

The junior Van der Vinne was born at Haarlem in 1712; in 1735 he settled at Leyden, where in the same year he became a member of the Lucas-guild. He died at Leyden in 1742.

It is quite possible that the water-colours now at the Rijksherbarium, were made by order of Adriaan van Royen who was professor at the Leyden University from 1730 to 1754.

As to the water-colours of the *Proteaceae*, these once belonged, as I elsewhere managed to make probable, to Jan Hartog, one of the chief-gardeners of the Botanical Garden at the Cape. They have been reproduced as copper-plates by Boerhaave in his "Index alter plantarum". A detailed study on these plates of *Proteaceae* will shortly be given by me in a book on these chief-gardeners by Miss M. C. Karsten, Terborg, Netherlands.

A list of the plant species depicted in the painting may follow here:

Upper left hand corner:

Ipomoea Quamoclit L. (Convolvulaceae, circumtropical), on stem of prob. *Pleomele*, *Dracaena*, *Aloë* or *Yucca* (Liliaceae).

Lower, from left to right:

Mesembryanthemum spec. (Aizoaceae). It is rather questionable whether the yellow flower and the stem with glaucous leaves and flower buds belong together or are taken from two different plants.

Zantedeschia aethiopica (L.) Spreng. (Araceae; South Africa).

Sprekelia formosissima (L.) Herb. (Amaryllidaceae; Central America).

Still lower, from left to right:

Protea mellifera Thunb. (Proteaceae; South Africa).

Leucospermum Conocarpodendron (L.) Buek (Proteaceae; South Africa).

Pelargonium prob. *inquinans* (L.) Ait. (Geraniaceae; South Africa).

Adiantum spec. (Polypodiaceae).

At the bottom, from left to right:

Opuntia spec. (Cactaceae).

Haemanthus coccineus L. (Amaryllidaceae; South Africa).

Mimetes lyrigera Knight (Proteaceae; South Africa).

Passiflora spec. (Passifloraceae).

Protea repens Thunb. (Proteaceae; South Africa).

prob. *Cynanchum* spec. (Asclepiadaceae).

Gasteria spec. (Liliaceae; South Africa).

Amaryllis Belladonna L. (Amaryllidaceae; South Africa).