



Greetings

The year now ending has been an exceedingly full one for this Library, both from the standpoint of outstanding acquisitions and of staff accomplishment.

Late in 1967 we were invited to advise an individual, who must remain anonymous, on the disposition of a collection of "prints" by the 18th century German-English botanical artist George D. Ehret (1710-1770). On examination of the three albums in which they were preserved they were found to be not "prints" but 214 original watercolors by Ehret! No persuasion was needed for the owner to decide that this Library was the proper repository for them. Travelling by airplane that same day, the paintings were in the Library's vault that evening. They came officially to the Library as a gift early this year. In 1970, on the bicentenary of Ehret's death, with our present holdings of books and paintings, we will be in a position to stage a suitable exhibition honoring him and his work.

In October, 1960, we learned at first hand of the existence, in Stockholm, of a superb privately owned collection of Linnaeana—works by or about the great Swedish naturalist-physician, Carl Linnaeus (1707-1778). From then on we coveted it for this Library. The works of Linnaeus, in all their editions and translations, exerted greater influence on the scientific community from the 18th century to the present than have those by any other scientist in the biological field. This collection was the property of Dr. Birger Strandell M.D., a direct descendant of Linnaeus. Through repeated visits to Stockholm, and strengthened by Dr. and Mrs. Strandell's later visit to Pittsburgh, bonds of respect and friendship developed that led to the successful negotiation for this Library's acquisition of this collection. It arrived here in January 1968. The collection includes not only all works by Linnaeus but also a substantial part of the works by his 186 doctoral students, and more than 2,000 biographical items about him and his students. It contains many items not known to be in the greatest of all Linnaeana collections, that in Uppsala, Sweden. It is held to be the most important single acquisition that we could add to this Library and is the finest and most complete in this country. Now designated the Strandell Collection of Linnaeana, it will be housed in a special room to be built here for it. Dr. Strandell, as Honorary Curator, will continue to develop the collection and assist in its cataloguing, and will spend some weeks in residence at the Library each year.

The third notable event of 1968 was the opening of our 2nd International exhibition of 20th Century Botanical Art and Illustration on 20 October. It is the largest and most comprehensive exhibition of its kind, the most extensive ever staged by this Library, and will be

open to the public until 15 April 1969. It presents 362 original paintings, drawings, and hand-produced prints by 126 artists and illustrators of 27 countries. Except for a few items lent by the artists, all are a part of the Library's permanent collection and all have been acquired in the last four years. A copiously illustrated 267-page catalogue has been published. Recently the Library accepted the invitation to exhibit 75 frames from this exhibition at the XI International Botanical Congress in Seattle, next August.

Preset publication dates can be as elusive as moonbeams. The decision to make our most recent work, *Botanico-Periodicum-Huntianum* (better known as *B-P-H*), a more useful volume by expanding the coverage of its contents, delayed the projected publication date by six months. This work accounts for the titles of some 12,000 periodicals important for articles throughout the broad field of the plant sciences, from 1646 to 1966 and in all languages. It is a reference work, useful to writers and editors in all facets of biology, and especially those in the fields of botany and horticulture. It is equally useful to the professional botanists and horticulturists who write scientific articles in those subjects. Reviews of *B-P-H*, now appearing here and abroad, give impetus to the confidence we have had for its place among references to scientific literature. We believe that no other institution has the staff and professional capability to produce such a volume as a part of its research program. Other reference works of comparable usefulness are in preparation and our publication of them will follow. These volumes are byproducts of more basic studies essential to the production of a multi-volume encyclopedic work on botanical literature that we are undertaking, one to be known as *Bibliographia Huntiana*—and whose first volume will require several years of work before a publication date can be set.

Among the world's larger collections of botanical portraits is that at the Bergius Botanic Garden, Stockholm, and whose nucleus was assembled by the late V. L. Wittrock. For its representation of Scandanavian plantmen it is unsurpassed. Last July it was visited by the Library's Curator of Botanical Portraiture, Mr. Theodore W. Bossert who, with our staff photographer Robert Iland, selected and obtained superb copies of some 900 likenesses and for each person obtained supporting biographical material. This brings to 1,585 the number of additional persons whose portraits were added to our collection during the past year, making the collection one of about 8,300 persons and nearly 11,000 likenesses. While there is satisfaction in continuing to make this the most complete collection of its kind, its real function is service to others—one that increases with every succeeding year. For example, for one botanical society we were able to supply a set of uniform photographs of all their past presidents; for a

university department of botany we supplied a suite of nearly life-size photographic portraits of their choice of some twenty or more 19th century botanists of world renown; and less pleasing, but also of service, is the supplying of photographs to accompany the publication of obituaries and necrologies.

The Christmas-Rose (*Helleborus niger*) again is the subject of our year's end greeting to you. Its reproduction with this year's message is, for us, one of special meaning and poignance. Impressed by the technical skill and sensitivity shown in the work of John Farleigh of London, our Curator of Prints, Mr. John V. Brindle, suggested some years ago that Farleigh be commissioned to do a multicolor woodcut for one of our Christmas greetings. Farleigh was visited at his home in North London in 1964; the layout was made and the commission accepted. A few months later sketches were submitted, notated, and returned. Although we knew that a respiratory illness had forced John Farleigh to take extended rests and had reduced his output substantially, we were wholly unprepared for word from Mrs. Farleigh of his passing in 1965. In time we obtained from her his second rendering of the design.

Although done in his last weeks of life before malignancy sapped all vitality, and while not at all the color rendition he planned for us, this last work by John Farleigh embodies such spirit, and so effectively entwines the symbolism of the plant with the legend of the Star of Bethlehem, that we have reproduced it here as he left it. To Harold Hugo and his colleagues at the Meriden Gravure Press we extend our appreciation for the technical excellence with which, in a three-color production, every last shred of subtlety was captured and reproduced from the original two-toned rendering. We wish only that John Farleigh could have known how well it materialized.

To all our many friends of many lands we send greetings and well wishes.

George H. M. Lawrence
Director

6 December 1968