

ICONUM BOTANICARUM INDEX LONDINENSIS

BY

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Every botanist recognises the need and appreciates the use of good illustrations as a companion of any accurate descriptive work in the sciences of Botany and Horticulture and numerous figures have appeared by now either as separate plates or as text figures. These are scattered throughout the world's scientific literature, so that the need of their being systematically indexed has always been felt. In 1855 Pritzels undertook such a work and his *Iconum Botanicarum Index Locupletissimus* along with its supplement, containing references to the end of the year 1865, has always been a very useful work of reference. Owing to the accumulation of new material, however, it had been felt for sometime that to keep up the usefulness of this work it should be brought up to date, but by this time the number of published illustrations had become so large that it had become impossible for any person to take up such a task alone. Consequently, it was taken up by the Council of the Royal Horticultural Society of London in 1909. In July 1918 Stapf was appointed as the Honorary Editor and the work begun at the Herbarium of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. Now this work has been completed and published in six attractive volumes.

The work gives references to all the illustrations whether text-figures or plates, published up to the year 1920 and its immense importance scarcely needs any emphasis. It has already proved a valuable supplement to the *Index Kewensis* by the registration of the plant names not included in the latter and by giving extensive cross-references which connect older abandoned names with their modern equivalents. It has further demonstrated its usefulness by giving innumerable clues to literature buried in books and periodicals, which would *prima facie* not suggest itself to the 'pure' botanist or horticulturist.

A great need to keep up the usefulness of such works, however, is the publication of supplements, from time to time, cataloguing the new material. We understand that the Editor of this work is already engaged in writing out a supplement which will take the work to the year 1935. The undertaking deserves all help from botanists and institutions all over the world.

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