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*Bignonia*

*Bignoniaceae*

*Bignonia* commemorates Abbé Jean-Paul Bignon (1662-1743) after whom his patron, Joseph Pitton de Tournefort (1656-1708), named this genus. In 1693, two years after being ordained, he was made Abbot of Saint Quentin en L'Isle (a Benedictine order) and he also became the King's Confessor. The Sun King, Louis XIV was ruling France and he appointed Bignon as Court Librarian in 1718 at the Bibliotheque du Roi (today the Bibliothèque Nationale de France) which at the time was the leading library in Europe and continues to be highly respected today. On taking up the appointment Bignon, like many of his predecessors not only developed the classification system further but also made efforts to acquire important European works and by the end of his tenure these additions increased the number of volumes to about 70,000. He also oversaw the Library's move to its present home in the Rue Richelieu. As far as is known he was the first to open the library to the public (for three hours each week). Bignon was a member of the French Academy (authorities say highly influential) and an honorary member of the Academy of Science. He wrote a work of fiction entitled *The Adventures of Abdallah, the Son of Hanif*.