EXOTIC FLORA,
CONTAINING
FIGURES AND DESCRIPTIONS
OF
NEW, RARE, OR OTHERWISE INTERESTING
EXOTIC PLANTS,
ESPECIALLY OF SUCH AS ARE DESERVING OF BEING
CULTIVATED IN OUR GARDENS;
TOGETHER WITH
REMARKS UPON THEIR GENERIC AND SPECIFIC CHARACTERS, NATURAL
ORDERS, HISTORY, CULTURE, TIME OF FLOWERING, &c.

WILLIAM JACKSON HOOKER,
I.L.D. F.R.A. & L.S.
MEMBER OF THE IMPERIAL ACADEMY OF NATURAL AND CURIOSORUM; OF THE WERNERIAN
NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY OF EDINBURGH; OF THE GEOLOGICAL AND HORTI-
CULTURAL SOCIETIES OF LONDON; OF THE ROYAL BOTANIC SOCIETY OF RATH-
BERG; OF THE HELVETIC SOCIETY OF NATURAL HISTORY; OF THE PHYSIOGRA-
PHICAL SOCIETY OF LUND; OF THE PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETIES OF CAMBRIDGE,
AND YORK; OF THE ACADEMY OF NATURAL SCIENCES OF PHILADELPHIA, &c. &c.
AND
REGIUS PROFESSOR OF BOTANY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW.

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MDCCXXXIII.
CYPRIPEDIUM INSIGNE.

Large-flowered Lady's-slipper.

GYNANDRIA DIANDRIA.—NAT. ORD. ORCHIDÆÆ.


Cypripedium insigné; acaule, folis cartilagineis ligulatis scapo piloso dimidio brevioribus, perianthii lacinia superiore fornicata emarginata, lateribus ovatis subundulatis obtusis extus pubescentibus, inferiori labello venoso basi inflexo paulo longiore.—Lindl.

C. insigné, WALLICH, MSS.—LINDLEY, COLL. BOT. t. 32.

Stem none. Leaves few, distichous, sheathing and equitant at the base, the rest linear, carinated, quite glabrous, of an uniform yellow-green hue, paler at the base.

Scape cylindrical, pubescent, purplish, curved at the extremity. Bractea or spathæ ovate, keeled and compressed, marked with lines, glabrous, green, purple at the base.

Flower very large, showy, solitary, drooping, nearly 3 inches in length. The 2 outer segments of the perianth or corolla pale green; the upper one broadly ovate, concave, waved at the margin, white at the extremity, and emarginate, marked with longitudinal lines, and spotted with purple, having at the base a few purplish hairs, horizontal in its direction, afterwards erect, lower one pendent, smaller than the upper one, composed of 2 segments, united at their margins, ovate, incurved at the margin near the extremity, indistinctly lined and marked with a few small purplish spots near the base. The two inner and lateral segments are linear, oblong, broadest at the extremity, 3 inches long, pale green, tinged with and marked with lines of brown, scantily dotted near the base, where there are a few purple hairs, externally pubescent. Lip large, roundish, ovate, pendent, glabrous, much resembling that of C. venusym in figure; above having the sides singularly inflated, yellow, shining, smooth, the mouth open, the upper margin raised into 2 obtuse projections, the rim thickened. The colour of the lip is greenish, the front tinged with brownish-purple, the whole very obscurely lined and veined.

Column of fructification short, terminated by a large, obversely cordate, yellow, slightly convex lobe, glandular below, beset with minute red hairs above, and having one elevated bright orange tubercle in the centre.

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Beneath this, at its base, are 2 short, lateral processes or filaments, to the side of each of which is attached a single, sessile, 2-lobed, orange-yellow anther; its lobes rather unequal. Pollen yellow-brown, waxy. Stigma much smaller than the lobe above described, peltate, rounded, glabrous, pale yellow.

This, the finest, without exception, of the known species belonging to that most singular and beautiful genus, Cypripedium, is a native of the same country as the C. venustum, namely Nepaul, and has many points in common with that species, among which the distichous mode of growth, and succulent nature of its leaves, are not the least remarkable.

The truly excellent representation of this plant in the splendid Collectanea Botanica of Mr Lindley, represents the leaves of C. insignis as much shorter than were those of my specimen, and differing also by being decidedly marked with nerves.

The individual from which Mr Lindley's figure and description were taken, was, as well as my own, communicated by Mr Shepherd, from the Liverpool Botanic Garden, whither it was introduced from that of Calcutta, in the year 1821.

It flowers in the month of November, and the blossoms continue for a great length of time in perfection.

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Fig. 1. Under side of the Column of Fructification. Fig. 2. Upper view of the same. Fig. 3. Stamen, with its 2-celled Anther.—All more or less magnified.