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SATURDAY, APRIL 14, 1888.

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THE GARDENERS’ CHRONICLE. 

NEW OR NOTEWORTHY PLANTS.

CYPRIDIUM ROTHSCHILDIANUM A. E. G.

This very surprising plant appears to be the nearest ally to Cypridiunm prostratum. Its leaves are unusually long, more than 2 feet in length, 2 3 inches in width, green, glossy, very strong. The peduncle is said to be three-angled, but may become more or less circular, with very few very short hairs. The bract is spathaceous, not equal to half the staked glabrous oryza, and has a few dark longitudinal stripes at the base. The fresh flowered one, with its bract, which are quite equal to those of the best of its Pyayan consort, Cypridiunm prostratum. Odd sepal cuneate obsolete, yellow, with numerous longitudinal dark, almost blackish, stripes, also white, quite thick and hard at the base. There is also nearly equal smaller shorter body. Petals undulate at the base, linear narrow at the top, yellow-green, with dark longitudinal lines, and dark blottches at the base. Lip like that of C. Sinus, is thick, very strong, almost leathery, cinnabar-colored, with ochre border to the mouth, and with an ochre-coloured mid-line underneath. The most peculiar point is the staminate. It is quite novel. It has a staminal base, stamens, filaments, anthers, like narrow, process covered partly with hairs. These hairs consist of rows of cells, and the cells have several girdles of numerous tubercles in their circumference, indicating it is very thickened and white at the top. This staminate looks much like the throat and head of some bird, such as a crane.

It is one of the most astonishing introductions we have ever seen, and is due to the indefatigable zeal of Mr. H. G. Robb, of Chelsea, who has given it the name of Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild, of Aylesbury. This I accede to with great satisfaction. H. G. Robb, f.

PHALANXIS LENA, H. K. B.

This attractive novelty has just reached me from Messrs. James Smirke, W. J. Albers, in whose nursery it was raised. The plant is a straggling seedling, detected about seven years ago growing in a pot in which no other Phalanxis seed had been sown, so that nothing of C. Sinus is known. It has at present three elliptic-oblong green leaves, the last developed being 6 inches long. The flower is over 2 ½ inches across, much resembling P. ambullis (P. grandiflora, Lindl.) in shape, and having some resemblance to P. lanceolata. Lip and lip on the front margin of the side lobes, which points out that species as most certainly one of the parents. The tentils are broadly anchor-shaped, 2, is often the same size, point it, the tentils detached, while on the inner half of the lateral segments near the base are some purple spots, both of which point to this or some hybrid of P. Schilleriana and P. Aphrodite as the other parent. Nothing else would account for the anchor-shaped tentils, unless of course, P. Schilleriana itself, and the green leaves are more against this than against any hybrid which had already half blood of a green-leaved species of Phalanxis, and P. roosa seems out of the question, for with P. grandiflora it would give a hybrid much like P. intermedius, and this, with P. grandiflora, gave Cav. F. L. Ames, in the tentils quite narrow at the base, which would indeed be expected. The side-lobes of the lip like the usual shape, but not pointing a little backward, as in P. Sturtiana, &c., and with a very few distinct spots below the middle, and a few hairs of the same colour on the stalk of the lip. P. roosa is of course undoubted, and as the carina, in P. Sturtiana, &c., Front base of lip densely covered with minute dots of rusty tint, its apex and the tentils pure white. It is as handsome as others of its family.

THE BULB GARDEN.

PORTUGUESE NARCISSI.

Kerner permit me to point out an error in a note under the title of "Portuguese Narcissi," recently published, that is, "N. cyclinumius was described by Parkinson in 1610, and figured in Rudbeck, Theat. Flor., 240, 1. N. cyclinumius is named by P. Vallet in the Jardins du Roy, Paris, 1623, and in the anonymous Theatrum Florae of 1650. The last-named folio was first published in 1622, but I have not seen that edition. It seems probable that this book contains the earliest figure published of this remarkable plant.

The Rudbeck, father and son, published figures of many Narcissi in their great and now rare Campi Flapi, 1739, from which they claim it has nothing to do with the rare folio, Theatrum Florae of 1622-83—a work quite unique in its way, and remarkable for the fine bold and free drawings it contains.

Dean Herbert and Itworth are primarily answerable for confounding or connecting the Theatrum Florae with Rudbeck’s name, and at a later date the book became confounded in a similar manner with Parkinson’s work. Of the first edition, I have never visited the Sherardian Library at Oxford, whereas Professor Bayler-Balfour most courteously showed me beautiful copies of the Jardins du Roy, Theatrum Florae, and the unique copy of the Campi Flapi, and other rare books, which I should recommend visitors to the Oxford garden to see for themselves if at all interested in botanized literature.

Having been the first person, as I believe, in modern times to allude to the authenticity of the old portraits of Narcissus cyclinumius, I also suggested its being possibly still in existence in the Gardenes Chronicle, 1889, December 19, pp. 789—792, 1890, where I observed, prior to the rediscovery of the plant near Oporto in 1881—’82. This is such a curious thing, I have a small tracing of the flower (fig. 185), in the hope that some steeper worker after old Dallfinh may recognize as an old friend, if he should publish any more figures of plants in his rambles during the next spring. As a matter of fact, A. W. Tate, Esq., and his aide-de-camp, Mr. Johnstone, did find it near Oporto “during the next spring,” and I regard myself as his godfather in a way, and feel quite proud in having been instrumental in getting the hardy little founding rechristened in the Botanical Magazine, t. 6959.

Miss Haworth and Herbert were quite in their literary knowledge of the peculiarities of narcissus, and were mainly dependent on the late Rev. H. G. Ellescombe, of Bilton, for cultivated specimens. F. W. Backhouse, F.R.S.

VIRGIN CROCUSES.

Despite the weather—which has been of a character to seriously impair the beauty of the flowers—the spring Crocuses are very fine this year. The yellows are always the earliest to bloom, and what a wealth of blossoms they give. About seven years ago I observed an old French Hybrid, Crocus Longipetiolatus, in a bed on a north aspect, and the bulbs have so increased that they have grown into large size, and bloom a week or two later than those on the south side. I planted amongst these Hottentot ones, some clumps of the Belgian Squill, and I made a permanent edging of white striped and blue Crocuses. This bed is now a charming floral picture, only that the cold north-easterly wind detracts from rather than adds to the beauty of the flowers, and for making permanent lines the following are the best varieties of Crocus, viz., the Large Yellow, which should be plentifully used both for the sake of its beauty and also for its rich golden colour; David Ridders, his new Ne Plus Ultra blue, edged with white; Pride of Albion, heavy violet-striped; Sir Walter Scott, light violet-striped; and Most Blum white. These are all good old standard sorts of beauty and delicacy, producing freely large blossoms. There are of course many other recent introduction, but those I have named can be depended upon. Early planting is a matter of importance. Crocuses can be had by the first week in September and they should be planted by the end of October, and

THE CROSSING OF FERNS.

(Concluded from p. 149.)

HYBRIDIZATION.

A year or two since I was told by one of the most discriminating botanists, Mr. Chirnhill, that it was known in England that Ascplegium germananum was a hybrid between A. septentrionalis and A. rata-muraria; and as Mr. G. B. Wallaston, of Chiselhurst, fasicl pilosus among British fernists, is entirely of the same opinion, the idea cannot be lightly regarded. I have never seen where A. septentrionalis and A. rata-muraria are not found, and that these two species abound in very rare it is not at all the same with A. rata-muraria—the spreading and extending over a considerable space as ordinary species do, more or less, being with attached clumps or isolated plants as hybrids, having a difficulty in reproducing themselves, might be expected to do. It is reputed to be barren, and yet it is not certain that A. septentrionalis is at any variety from it, recorded as “accentuated” both by Mr. Moore and Mr. Wallaston; it cannot therefore be said that it is impossible that a spore might not be thrown from one such hybrid plants with sufficient constitution and general fitness for survival to establish a new race. There is also the case of lastrem Walkeri, of which four plants were found growing in a clump in Westmoreland, by Mr. F. Smith, about thirty years ago; nor has it been found elsewhere in this country; it has long been accepted by British fernists as a natural hybrid; though apparently profusely scrofulous, it has, after what might have been considered exhaustive experimenting, been dried from spores, and yet it is, I believe, sufficiently established that one of the original plants which Mr. Stansfield has, did once cover the pot in which it was with fertile spores, and though the young plants may not yet be in every respect entirely like the parent, they are, I believe, sufficiently unlike every other British Fern to prove their origin; and would not be unreasonable to conclude that not one of these could have power to reproduce itself with ordinary freedom?

The remarkable “confluent” forms of Asclepium Trichomanes, as fertile in appearance as they have hitherto shown themselves to be barren in reality, are considered by those who have most studied the subject to be hybrids, as are also the “micro- conid” forms of A. A. lannoum and A. laccaninum. There is also the unique crassate form of A. filicinum, which (as not New) appears self-sewn in Mr. Clay- ham’s fernery, and the remarkable hybrid Asclepium found by Mr. Wallaston in Switzerland. There are two or three other forms marked apparently with the trichomanes I past years.

To Mr. E. J. Lowe is due the credit of having been the first to raise an unmistakable hybrid between two acknowledged species, which was neither a monster of ugliness nor incapable of reproducing itself from spores. It was no accident, for with deliberate intentions Mr. Lowe set himself to produce a crassate Polystichum acrostichum by crossing a very narrow crassate