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THE
ORCHID ALBUM,

COMPRISING

COLOURED FIGURES AND DESCRIPTIONS

OF

NEW, RARE, AND BEAUTIFUL

ORCHIDACEOUS PLANTS.

CONDUCTED BY

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CYPRIPEDIUM INSIGNE.

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CYPRIPEDIUM INSIGNE.

[PLATE 155.]

Native of India: Sylhet, &c.

Epiphytal. *Plant* acaulescent, forming a dense tuft of evergreen foliage. *Leaves* distichous, linear-ligulate acute, channelled down the centre and clasping at the base, keeled at the back, smooth, leathery, of a pale unspotted green colour. *Scapes* erect issuing from the heart of the plant, erect, terete, downy, of a dark chocolate-purple, each bearing one flower, which issues from an ovate green spathiform bract, which is about as long as the ovary. *Flowers* large and showy, when well grown occasionally measuring five inches across from the tip of one petal to that of the other; *sepals* (dorsal) two and a half inches deep, fornicate, that is, thrown forward or overarching, oblong-obovate, wavy, emarginate, longitudinally ribbed, greenish yellow thickly dotted with brownish purple, the upper or anterior third white, the combined lateral sepals ovate greenish; *petals* spreading, linear-obovate, slightly undulated, bearded at the base, the outer surface pubescent, the inner greenish yellow, striped and slightly reticulated with tawny brown, the margin being of a clear greenish yellow; *lip* saccate, oblong, the mouth inflected and bearing an obtuse erect lobe on each side, of a deep tawny brown with greenish yellow rim. *Staminode* yellow, obcordate, glandular-pubescent with a small central boss.

CYPRIPEDIUM INSIGNE, *Wallich MS; Lindley, Collectanea Botanica*, t. 32; *Hooker, Exotic Flora*, t. 34; *Id. Botanical Magazine*, t. 3412; *Loddiges, Botanical Cabinet*, t. 1321; *Flore des Serres*, t. 1564; *Maund, Botanist*, ii., t. 56.

This old inhabitant of our stoves and greenhouses has been a friend to all growers of plants, both for its use as a decorative object in conservatories and also for cutting purposes; in fact, anyone or everyone can grow it, who has a frame or pit with glass, or a small greenhouse. If well grown it produces its flowers during the autumn and winter months, and it will stand in a warm room during the blooming season, and continue for several weeks in perfection. We do not, indeed, know of a more accommodating species in the whole Orchid family. Mr. Bruce Findlay, of the Manchester Botanic Gardens, makes a special feature of this plant during the autumn and winter months. The secret of keeping up its blooming powers is to take care of it after the flowering season is over.

The form we are figuring is a good variety of the type. There are other forms, such as *C. Maulei*, *C. Chantinii*, and *C. punctatum-violaceum*, which are more showy on account of their larger spots, but they are rare. It is with this as with all other species of Orchids, there are different varieties amongst the imported stock, but this, perhaps, varies less than do many other species. Our drawing was taken

from a fine specimen plant grown in the collection of Mrs. Heywood, Norris Green, West Derby, Liverpool, and in autumn and winter Mr. Bardney, the energetic gardener, cultivates many specimens for furnishing the conservatory, in which the grandest display is kept up with thousands of spikes of Pelargoniums, Primulas, Camellias, and other kinds of winter-blooming decorative plants, and he finds the *Cypripediums* most useful for this purpose. There are also some other good Orchids well grown in these gardens.

Cypripedium insigne is an evergreen plant with light green foliage, producing its flowers from the centre of its growth, the flower stalks being about ten inches high. The dorsal sepal is greenish yellow spotted with dull purple and orange, and tipped with white; the petals are of a pale purplish green veined with dull purple and tinged with yellow. The plant continues in bloom for six or eight weeks if kept in a warm greenhouse or conservatory.

We grow this *Cypripedium* in a warm pit during winter, after the flowering is over; in spring and summer no heat is required, but it must have plenty of ventilation during the day, the pit being closed at night. When the growths are strong they will soon show signs of flowering. When the blossoms are nearly ready to open we take them into a warmer house in order to expand their flowers to perfection, for if kept in a cool place the blooms will be much smaller. When they have finished flowering we repot them if they require it, but do not over-pot them. They require a liberal supply of water if the pots are full of roots, as they root very freely; and a little manure water applied during the growing season is a help to them, as the roots are of a fleshy texture.

We find good rough fibrous loam over two inches of drainage to suit them, if in a large pot; in smaller pots they require less. During the whole year they like to be grown near the glass, so that they get all the light possible to mature strong healthy foliage. Although, therefore, this may be considered an easy plant to grow, it requires good treatment or it will not flower freely.
