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THE
ORCHID MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN. ALBUM,

COMPRISING

COLOURED FIGURES AND DESCRIPTIONS

OF

NEW, RARE, AND BEAUTIFUL

ORCHIDACEOUS PLANTS.

CONDUCTED BY

ROBERT WARNER, F.L.S., F.R.H.S.,

AUTHOR OF SELECT ORCHIDACEOUS PLANTS,

AND

BENJAMIN SAMUEL WILLIAMS, F.L.S., F.R.H.S.,

AUTHOR OF THE ORCHID-GROWERS' MANUAL, ETC.

THE BOTANICAL DESCRIPTIONS BY

THOMAS MOORE, F.L.S., F.R.H.S., CURATOR OF THE CHELSEA BOTANIC GARDEN.

THE COLOURED FIGURES BY JOHN NUGENT FITCH, F.L.S.

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CYPRIPEDIUM INSIGNE PUNCTATUM VIOLACEUM.

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[PLATE 278.]

Native of Northern India.

Terrestrial. Acaulescent. *Leaves* distichous, strap-shaped, keeled beneath, thin and leathery in texture, from nine to twelve inches long, and light green in colour. *Scape* erect, hairy, longer than the leaves, furnished with a large, thin and membranous sheath, one-flowered. *Flowers* some four inches or more in diameter, bright and showy; *dorsal sepal* large, somewhat oblong-ovate, not contracted towards the base as in the variety *Maulei*, flat, slightly incurved at the top, pure crystalline-white, the central portion towards the base being soft pea-green, through which run large spots of purplish violet arranged in lines, the connate lateral sepals obovate, entire (not undulate) at the edges, downy on the under side, pale green, ornamented with spotted lines of reddish brown; *petals* spreading, ligulate, obtuse, undulate on both margins, destitute of the peculiar crimped appearance so conspicuous a feature on the upper margins of *C. insigne Maulei*, purplish or olive-green, netted with dark umber, and faintly tinged with yellow; *lip* smaller, and more compact than in the variety *Maulei*, dark chestnut-red with a slight tinge of purple. *Staminode* somewhat obcordate, furnished with a small blunt tooth-like point in the centre, yellow freckled with orange-red.

CYPRIPEDIUM INSIGNE PUNCTATUM VIOLACEUM, *O'Brien*, in *Gardeners' Chronicle*, N.S., xviii., 716, f. 127; *Burbidge*, *Garden*, xxi., 444, t. 342; *Williams*, *Orchid-Grower's Manual*, 6 ed., p. 248.

CYPRIPEDIUM INSIGNE CHANTINII, *Hort.*; *L'Orchidophile*, v. 3, p. 36; *Revue Horticole*, 1878, 130.

All growers of Orchids now fully recognise the merits of *Cypripedium insigne*, a plant which we figured in the fourth volume of this work, Plate 155. The form of that species, however, which we here portray is far more beautiful than the type, and is now well known in English gardens as *C. insigne punctatum violaceum*, although, as will be seen by the references given above, it passes in continental collections by the name of *C. insigne Chantinii*. This variety was first imported into this country in the year 1855, amongst a miscellaneous lot of Orchids from Nepal, and until it flowered was supposed to be merely a typical *C. insigne*. It was first noticed by us and described as a very fine form of *C. insigne* in the 5th edition of our *Orchid-Grower's Manual*, p., 154, but at that time its full beauties had not been developed. It is a very free-blooming plant, and is a lovely object when grown into a good specimen, deserving to be extensively cultivated for winter decoration, as its robust constitution permits of its removal to the window

of the sitting-room, or any other position in the dwelling-house, without injury to either foliage or flower, whilst in the conservatory or greenhouse few plants can surpass it in beauty at this particular season of the year. The happy possessor of several plants of this variety may, by judiciously retarding some by keeping them cooler and shaded, maintain a succession of its charming flowers for some months, as its blooms last a long time in perfection.

The flowers of *Cypripediums* are invaluable for cutting, as they last for several weeks when placed in water or moist sand; indeed, some flowers of these plants which we cut upon the first day of the present year, and placed in water with other blooms, were quite presentable in the last days of February. For the opportunity of illustrating this beautiful variety we are indebted to the kindness of R. H. Measures, Esq., of the Woodlands, Streatham, whose collection is extremely rich in this now popular family of Lady's Slipper Orchids, this particular specimen being by far the finest of its kind which has hitherto come to our notice.

Cypripedium insigne punctatum violaceum is an evergreen, and in growth and foliage resembles the typical plant. The showy flowers rise some few inches above the leaves and are very persistent. The dorsal or upper sepal is large and broad, the white portion being also broad, which renders it very conspicuous, whilst the purple spotting is bold and effective, adding materially to the beauty of the flower; the petals are purplish green with lighter veins, suffused with yellow. The lip is dark chestnut-brown. This handsome variety produces its flowers during the winter months.

All the members of this genus enjoy a large share of light at all times in the year; so situated, they make good, strong growths and flower freely; shading should only be resorted to during the very hottest part of the day. This form still remains comparatively scarce, and upon this account it has been nursed in the warm house. We are not so sure, however, that this treatment has been beneficial to it, as *C. insigne* and its other varieties enjoy the atmosphere of a cool house, full particulars of which will be found in the fourth volume of this work, under Plate 155.

This variety may be increased easily by dividing the plants after they have finished flowering, provided that they are in vigorous health; the growths which are separated should have roots attached to them, and be placed at first in small well-drained pots, using good, rough turfy loam—the same as recommended for larger plants. When first potted, these small plants require to be kept in a shady place, up till the time root action commences; until this occurs just sufficient water should be given them to keep their foliage from shrivelling, but as new roots are developed they should be gradually inured to stronger light and a larger supply of moisture, until they are sufficiently strong to be treated as established plants.