THE

# ORCHID ALBUM,

COMPRISING

### COLOURED FIGURES AND DESCRIPTIONS

OF

NEW, RARE, AND BEAUTIFUL

## ORCHIDACEOUS PLANTS,

CONDUCTED BY

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### CYPRIPEDIUM NIOBE.

[PLATE 438].

#### Garden Hybrid.

Terrestrial. A dwarf hybrid plant obtained between Cypripedium Spicerianum and C. Fairrieanum. The leaves are oblong, acute, some five or six inches in length, and a little more than an inch in breadth, dark green above, paler beneath. Peduncle oneflowered. Flowers three inches across; dorsal sepal broadly ovate, white flushed with flesh colour, having a broad central streak of rich bright brown, with a small patch of apple-green at the base—features that stamp it with the undoubted parentage of C. Spicerianum—and having on either side some thinner streaks of light magenta running up through it, but all ending below the margin, thus leaving a border of pure white; on the reverse side the streaks are of a deep magenta-purple; lower sepal smaller, creamy white, faintly streaked with pale green; petals linear-oblong, of a uniform width throughout, deflexed, the points recurved like C. Fairrieanum, ground colour soft apple-green, having a broad central stripe of chocolate and a few dotted lines of dark brown, margins beautifully undulated, broadly bordered with dark brown, and fringed with black hairs; the pouch-like lip medium size, pale green, flushed with bright brown in front, the veins green, passing into pale green beneath. Staminode sub-orbicular, deeply indented, streaked with green in the centre, having a lunate rosy border in front with a white margin.

CYPRIPEDIUM NIOBE, Rolfe, in Gardeners' Chronicle, January, 1890, p. 9. CYPRIPEDIUM GASKELLIANUM, Gower, The Garden, December, 1890, p. 150.

This rare and very beautiful hybrid Cypripedium has been obtained by crossing C. Spicerianum with C. Fairrieanum, and it flowered in the first instance from a seedling obtained in the nurseries of Messrs. Veitch and Sons, of Chelsea, in the early part of the year 1890. In the latter part of the same year we received a specimen from H. Gaskell, Esq., of Woolton Wood, Woolton, Liverpool, with the intimation that the history of the parentage of this seedling was lost; we wished to dedicate it to the raiser, and at that time having neither seen nor heard of C. Niobe of Messrs. Veitch, we were induced to call it C. Gaskellianum, but that name must now stand as a synonym only. From two such elegant species as C. Spicerianum and C. Fairrieanum for parents it was not unreasonable to expect a superb offspring, and here we have a plant which combines the beauties of the two parents in a marked degree. From the last named but few hybrids have been recorded, but the former, although of more recent introduction, has contributed largely to our cross-bred varieties. Our present plate was executed from Mr. Gaskell's specimen, so that we may congratulate him

on having raised so fine a variety of this now very large and highly popular genus. C. Niobe is somewhat stronger in growth than C. Fairrieanum, or at least stronger than that species has appeared to be of late years, but this want of strength may arise from its being unduly nursed for purposes of propagation, for in the earlier times the plant grew very freely with us, sending up stout peduncles some nine inches in height, but we have never seen it produce more than a single flower upon a stem. In those days the Cypripediums were not grown in a high temperature by us; with the exception of one or two, most of the kinds were grown in the temperature of the Cattleya house, in which heat C. Fairrieanum grew apace, therefore we cannot agree with those who ascribe want of strength to this species. The present plant will be found to be as strong in growth as C. Fairrieanum was before it was tampered with by the cultivators.

The present plant has distichous oblong leaves, some six inches in length, dark green on the upper side, but paler beneath; peduncle erect, bearing a single flower which is about three inches across; dorsal sepal large and handsome, broad and ovate, white tinged with flesh colour, having a small blotch of pale green at the base; in the centre is a broad line of chocolate, and having on either side a few streaks of magenta, which all terminate below the margin, leaving a marginal border of pure white; the lower sepal smaller, creamy white, with a few pale green veins; petals deflexed, the points recurved, ground colour pale green, with a broad central stripe of chocolate and two or three dotted lines on either side of dark brown, the margins undulated, bordered with dark brown and fringed with long black hairs; lip medium-sized, pale green, veined with a darker green, the front portion rich brown.

Cypripedium Niobe is a plant which thrives best in well-drained pots of a medium size, and should be potted in a mixture of fibrous light loam and turfy peat, adding a little leaf-mould and sphagnum moss. It enjoys the same temperature as the Cattleyas and Lælias, and should be well exposed to the sun and light, always remembering that the plants are under glass and liable to be burnt, so shade them lightly during the middle of the day.

Cattleya Schofieldiana.—Major Mason, The Firs, Warwick, sends us a fine flower of this rare and beautiful species; it is brighter in colour than any we have hitherto seen. Major Mason informs us that the plant from which this flower was taken had four spikes last year bearing in all sixteen flowers. Our readers will find full particulars of this plant in the second volume of this work, under Plate 93.—H. W.