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An Illustrated Monthly Journal

DEVOTED TO ORCHIDOLOGY



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CYPRIPEDIUM × LITTLEANUM.

The occurrence of another natural hybrid Cypripedium is an event of unusual interest, owing to their undoubted rarity. Hitherto only two examples have appeared, namely, C. × Calceolus × macranthum, from the birch forests of Siberia, and C. × siamense, of which full particulars were given at page 20 of the present volume. The new example has flowered in the collection of H. Little, Esq., of The Barons, Twickenham, having been purchased by him, with others, as an imported plant. On flowering it was immediately seen to be something very distinct, and consequently Mr. Little took a photograph of it, which is here reproduced. It was

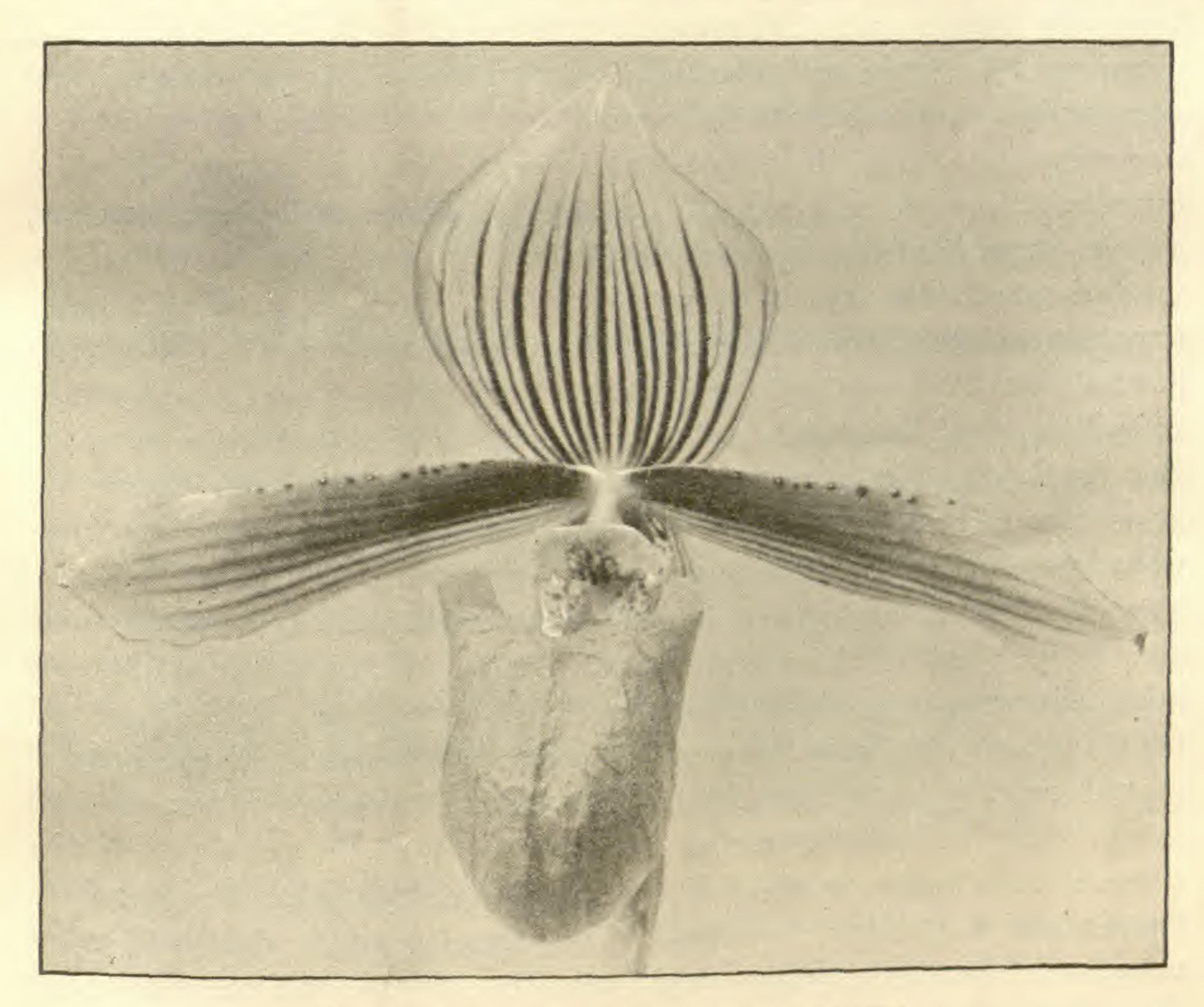


Fig. 8.—CYPRIPEDIUM X LITTLEANUM.

obtained from Mr. H. A. Tracy, of Twickenham, but unfortunately there seems to be a little uncertainty about its exact habitat. Some plants of C. tonsum are said to have come home at the same time; but there are one or two circumstances which lead one to look elsewhere for its parentage, as will presently be explained. The foliage is remarkably like that of C. Lawrenceanum, and out of flower it would almost pass for that species. The chief difference is that the leaves are a little more erect, and the markings rather less in extent. The

flower also shows the influence of the same species, in the broad dorsal sepal and the nearly horizontal petals, as well as in the shape of the lip and staminode. These characters are invariably seen in hybrids derived from C. Lawrenceanum, and thus they afford a clue to the origin of the present hybrid, and at the same time indicate Borneo as the natural habitat; for C. Lawrenceanum is not known from elsewhere. The other parent is not so obvious from an examination of the hybrid, but two or three circumstances lead me to believe it was C. Dayanum. The first character which struck me on seeing the plant, even before I knew anything of its history, was the resemblance it bore to a large form of C. X Swanianum, an artificial hybrid from C. Dayanum 2 and C. barbatum 3, and one derived from the former and C. Lawrenceanum would naturally show such a character. C. Dayanum is the only North Bornean species which would account for the characters of the present hybrid, and as the two facts seem to confirm each other, the obvious inference is that it is a natural hybrid between C. Lawrenceanum and C. Dayanum, which are both North Bornean, and in some locality may grow intermixed. I tried hard to utilise the indication afforded by C. tonsum having come home in the same importation, but without success. If the records are correct, that species is a native of Sumatra, and grows with C. Curtisii. These would give a very different hybrid, and no other species is recorded from Sumatra. Nor is C. tonsum known to occur elsewhere. Again, this species is absolutely destitute of hairs on the petals—in allusion to which its name was given—while C. X Littleanum is as strongly ciliate as C. Law. enceanum. The character is well-shown in the photograph, but has unfortunately almost been lost in the reproduction. Among the multitude of hybrids raised, I find no record of one between C. Lawrenceanum and C. Dayanum, but it is to be hoped that the cross will now be attempted, in the hope of reproducing the present fine thing. The figure is reduced in size, as the living flower measures $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches from tip to tip of the petals $(5\frac{3}{4}$ inches when flattened out), and the dorsal sepal 17 inches broad. The colour is lighter than in C. Lawrenceanum. The dorsal sepal is white with green veins, which become slightly purple near the margin, and the petals dull green below the middle, with a few minute spots near the base, and the apex light purple. The upper margin of the latter has a row of small blackish warts, much smaller than in C. Lawrenceanum. The lip is also lighter in colour than in that species. The modification of the dorsal sepal and the broader petals show the influence of the other parent. The petals are not as strongly ciliate as in C. Dayanum (not yet as in C. X Swanianum), but in this respect, as in some others, it takes most after C. Lawrenceanum. It is a large and very striking hybrid, and particularly interesting on account of its origin. The plant bore two flowers.