

Rare Book
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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 LOWII

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[PLATE 428.]

Native of Sarawak, West Borneo.

Epiphytal. Acaulescent, with distichous oblong-ligulate leaves, which are equitant at the base, and somewhat two-lobed at the apex, coriaceous in texture, from a foot to fifteen inches in length, upwards of an inch in breadth, and bright light green in colour. *Scape* two to three feet in length, bearing usually two flowers, although at times more are produced. *Bracts* ovate-acute, much smaller than the ovary, strongly ribbed, and light green. *Flowers* nearly six inches across the petals, showy, and all the segments fringed with black hairs; *dorsal sepal* ovate, acute, somewhat hooded at the apex, keeled at the back, and contracted at the base, where it is stained with brownish purple, the upper part being pale green when it first expands, which, however, passes with age into soft yellow; *inferior sepal* similar in colour, but smaller; *petals* spathulate, slightly deflexed, upwards of three inches long, the basal part greenish yellow marked with large spots of blackish purple, apical part clear bright violet-purple; the pouch-like *lip* oblong-obtuse, purplish green on the upper side, greenish beneath. *Staminode* inversely cordate, having an erect tooth at the base, and another small one on the edge of the inner part, or sinus.

CYPRIPEDIUM LOWII, *Lindley, Gardeners' Chronicle*, 1847, p. 765; *Flore des Serres*, iv., t. 375; *Veitch's Manual of Orchidaceous Plants*, iv., p. 38; *Les Cypripedieés*, i.; *Florist and Pomologist*, 1870, p. 109, with fig.; *Gardeners' Magazine of Botany*, i., t. 297; *Annales des Gand*, 1848, t. 195; *Williams' Orchid Grower's Manual*, 6th ed., p. 250.

CYPRIPEDIUM CRUCIFORME, *Zolling*.

The present species has been known to Orchid collectors in this country for about forty-five years. It is a native of Sarawak, on the West Coast of Borneo, a settlement founded by Sir James Brooke, and the province still remains under British rule, although not under the dominion of the Crown. The plant was discovered by Mr. Hugh Low (now Sir Hugh) growing high up on the branches and in the forks of the tall trees which abound in that island. The plant was sent to the nurseries of Messrs. Low and Co., of Clapton, and it remained a rare plant in our gardens for some years, but is now more plentiful. The only other species which resembles this one is *Cypripedium Haynaldianum*; a plant found in the Philippines some eighteen years ago, which nevertheless is very distinct from it, and at the same time a most beautiful species.

Cypripedium Lowii is dedicated to its discoverer, Sir Hugh Low, but through some mistake the name appeared as *Loweii*. It flowered for the first time in this country in the collection of Mr. A. Kenrick, and the plant here figured flowered

in our collection at Holloway, in the month of January, 1889, although its usual time of flowering in a natural state would appear to be April and May. The plant is a robust and strong grower, and has distichous leaves, which are oblong-ligulate, a foot or more in length, and light green in colour. The scape is erect, from two to three feet in length, and under cultivation it usually produces two flowers only; but on native specimens we are told that sometimes eight or ten are developed. The dorsal sepal is ovate-acute, somewhat hooded at the apex, and narrowed at the base, pale green tinged with brownish purple, downy on the outside; the lower sepal slightly smaller, but about the same colour. Petals deflexed, three inches or more in length, the apical portion soft violet-purple, the basal half greenish, spotted with purple; the edges fringed with black hairs. The lip is oblong and stout, smooth and shining, greenish purple on the upper side, passing into pale green beneath. It blooms during the late winter and early spring months, and continues in full beauty for a very long time, but its flowers must be kept from damp.

Cypripedium Lowii, although growing naturally as an epiphyte upon the branches of trees, we yet find to succeed best under cultivation when grown in a pot; this should be well drained. We have found it thrive best in a mixture composed of one part good light turfy loam, the same of peat and leaf-mould, to which may be added a little chopped sphagnum moss, and a few moderate-sized nodules of charcoal, the whole to be well mixed and incorporated. In potting, the plant should be a little elevated, so that the water may the more readily pass away quickly from the crown and young growths. This plant, like all the rest of the genus, has no pseudobulbs, and therefore requires attention in watering all the year round. In the summer months a liberal supply is requisite, and during the winter sufficient will be necessary to maintain the specimen in perfect health. The warmth of the East India house suits this species best, it will thrive, however, in the Brazilian house during summer, but in winter more heat is necessary than is accorded to Cattleyas, where these plants are properly rested.

GIANT FORM OF LYCASTE SKINNERII ALBA.—We have received through the kindness of T. Statter, Esq., Stand Hall, Whitefield, near Manchester, flowers of a grand variety of this great beauty, the individual flowers measuring eight inches across, and being of good substance; the sepals too were unusually large. This is another instance of Mr. Statter's good luck in flowering gems in his collection.—H. W.