

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 VEXILLARIUM.

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[PLATE 447.]

Garden Hybrid.

Epiphytal, bulbous. *Leaves* distichous, oblong-acute, carinate beneath, some four inches or five inches in length, and about three-quarters of an inch in breadth, soft pale green, tessellated somewhat sparingly on the upper side with darker green. *Scape* terminal, erect, deep vinous purple, hirsute, one-flowered, the bract being about two-thirds the length of the ovary. *Flowers* large and brilliantly coloured, *dorsal sepal* broadly ovate, tinged with emerald green at the base, the surface suffused with bright light purple, the upright veins being of a deep vinous purple, whilst the cross veins are of a lighter shade of the same colour; the upper part of the sepal is pure white, which is continued round in a marginal border; *lower sepal* whitish, faintly tinged and veined with pale green; *petals* deflexed, slightly recurved at the tips, ligulate acute, undulate and ciliate at the margins, the basal half suffused with bright emerald-green, but towards the apex they become whiter and suffused with light purple, the veins being green, dotted with black towards the base; the pouch-like *lip* is soft reddish brown, veined with vinous purple, paler beneath. *Staminode* pale greenish brown, with a lighter margin.

CYPRIPEDIUM VEXILLARIUM, *Reichb. fil., Gardeners' Chronicle*, 1870. *Veitch's Catalogue*, 1879, p. 10. *Florist and Pomologist*, 1880, p. 13. *Veitch's Manual of Orchidaceous Plants*, iv., p. 100, with fig. *Williams' Orchid Grower's Manual*, 6th edition, p. 260.

This most beautiful hybrid is the result of a cross between *Cypripedium barbatum* and *C. Fairieanum*, and in the example from which our plate was taken the variety of *C. barbatum* must, we think, have been of a very fine description. The hybrid was obtained in the first place by the late Mr. Dominy, at the establishment of Messrs. Veitch & Sons, of Chelsea, and although one of the early hybrids, from its charming and brilliant colours and its general contour it must always take a foremost place amongst Slipper Orchids. The plant until quite recently has been rather scarce and difficult to obtain, through being somewhat slow in growth, but we have not found this to be the case, and, in consequence, we now hold a very nice stock of this exceedingly handsome plant. The specimen from which our illustration was taken flowered with us in the Victoria and Paradise Nurseries during the past summer, which was not a season remarkable for either great heat or brightness in the atmosphere, two of the chief elements in the development of good colour.

Cypripedium vexillarium is a small-growing plant, indeed, it is remarkable for

its dwarf habit, the leaves seldom exceeding four or five inches in length, and measuring considerably less than an inch in breadth, the ground colour on the upper side being pale green tessellated with darker markings, while beneath they are soft pale green; the erect scape is hirsute, and of a deep purplish brown. The flower is of good size and charmingly coloured and reticulated, the dorsal sepal being broadly ovate, white, tinged with soft light green at the base, suffused with bright light purple, and veined with rich vinous purple; the upper part and the margins of the sepal are bordered with pure white, the lower sepal white tinged with pale green; petals deflexed and recurved something in the manner of its last-named parent, bright pale green, becoming whiter and suffused with light purple at the tips; the saccate lip is soft reddish brown.

Cypripedium vexillarium is an evergreen plant of exceptional beauty; it enjoys the temperature of the Cattleya house in the summer-time, but the East Indian house in winter suits it best, and a moist atmosphere all the year round. It should be potted in well-drained pots, and in a mixture of fibrous peat, from which the greater portion of the fine soil has been beaten, a little light turfy loam treated in the same manner as the peat, some chopped sphagnum moss, a small portion of sharp sand, and a few nodules of charcoal broken up fine. It requires a liberal supply of water to its roots during the summer months, and during the winter less must be given, but at no time must the roots be allowed to suffer for want of water.
