



Wm. Hooker del.

J. Smith sculp.

ORCHIDIUM CAYENDISHIANUM.

Bot. Beechey's Exped. 1846. p. 107. t. 10. f. 1.

Tab. III.

ONCIDIUM* CAVENDISHIANUM:

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE'S ONCIDIUM.

TRIBUS: VANDEÆ.—LINDLEY.

ONCIDIUM foliis erectis carnosis lato-lanceolatis acutis scapo elato paniculato triplo brevioribus, sepalis obovatis obtusis, supremo fornicato, petalis subæqualibus oblongis obtusis valde undulatis: labello magno trilobo, laciniis lateralibus rotundis petalis sub-conformibus, intermediâ majore reniforme profunde emarginatâ, cristæ tuberculis 2 ad basin 2 à fronte lamellæ elevatæ rotundatæ sitis: columnâ brevi crassâ auriculo decurvo clavato versus apicem utrinque auctâ.

Habitat in Guatemala.—SKINNER.

Description.

PSEUDO-BULBS, none. *LEAVES* erect, fleshy, broadly-lanceolate, sharp-pointed, very deeply keeled, a foot or a foot and a half long. *ROOTS* few, very thick. *SCAPE* 4 feet high, half an inch thick at the base, but tapering gradually, and bearing at its extremity a rather dense *PANICLE*, almost a foot in length. *SEPALS* and *PETALS* nearly equal, obtuse, of a greenish yellow colour, spotted with bright chesnut. *LIP* of a pure dazzling yellow, 3-lobed, the lateral lobes are nearly circular, and approach, in form, the petals, which, from their position, they almost conceal; the central lobe is very large, kidney-shaped, and deeply emarginate. *COLUMN* short and thick, provided, in lieu of wings, with two singular processes, which curve downwards and incline towards each other, surmounted by a cowl-shaped *ANTHER*.

Fig. 1 is a magnified representation of the Column and Crest.

THIS is a very handsome and distinct species of *Oncidium*; and we have, therefore, no hesitation in naming it after a nobleman, whose devotion to botany and horticulture is now far too well known to render it necessary for us to enlarge upon it here. In a few years we hope to see the beautiful family, to which this plant belongs, seated in all their natural majesty on those trees of which they are the proper "incumbents," and under the shelter of the great Plant-Stove at Chatsworth. When this grand structure is completed, all the most striking vegetable forms of India, Africa, and America, will be seen in, perhaps, more than their native luxuriance within its ample boundaries; and thus, amidst the wildest scenery of Derbyshire, there will be found an example of tropical vegetation, richer and more varied than could be met with in any of those baleful latitudes themselves.

Oncidium Cavendishianum is another of the important discoveries of MR. SKINNER; and it formed part of the first collection that we had ever the pleasure of receiving from him. On opening the box in which it was packed, our attention was at once arrested by the prodigious strength of the flower stems, which had the further peculiarity of being destitute of flowers for upwards of three-fourths of their height; and thus they contrasted, in the most striking manner, with those of *O. leucochilum* (Tab. I.), of which a plant arrived in the same case. *O. Cavendishianum* approaches, perhaps, nearer to *O. luridum* than to any other known species; but not only are the flowers of a very different form, and of nearly double the size, but the erect habit of its rigid leaves would at once distinguish the species, even when not in bloom.

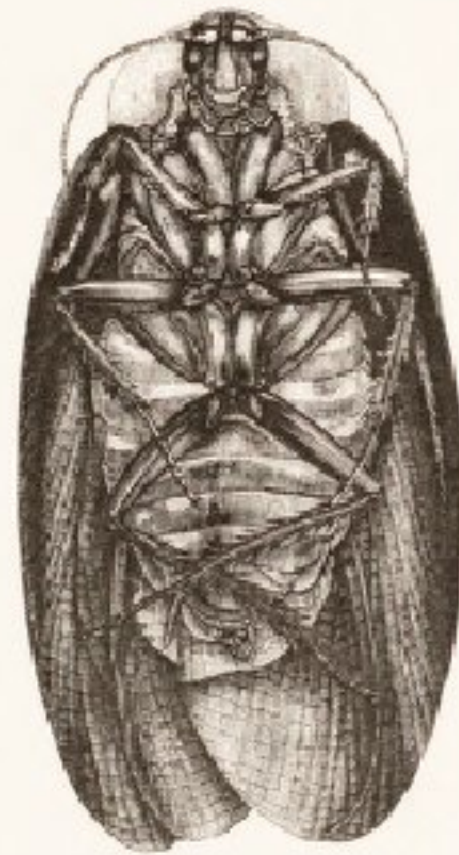
* *Oncidium* supra, Tab. I.

It will prove a very easy species to cultivate, and a very free flowerer, in which it seems to follow the example of *O. luridum*; but it will, we fear, long continue a scarce plant, as it grows very slowly, and seems indisposed to make more than one shoot in a year, or than one shoot at a time. The species was found by MR. SKINNER in the neighbourhood of the city of Guatemala, where it flowers in January; and in the same month of the present year, the specimen was produced which is represented in our plate, and which, we may here observe, is very much inferior in the number of its flowers to the wild specimens which were attached to the plant on its arrival: beautiful, therefore, as the species *now* is, it may be expected to prove far more so, after it has become better established and more reconciled to its artificial state.

The insect, which graces the foot of our page, is of lean and hungry aspect, and, most assuredly, as Wordsworth says,

“Strange contrast doth afford”

to the one which we had the honour of presenting to our readers after the letter-press of Tab. II. *There* we had a portly, well-conditioned insect, happy, to all appearance, in the resources of his well-stored stomach; *here* we have an ascetic half-starved wretch, who might not have eaten an Orchis for a month:—yet they are positively one and the same creature. The fact is, that, like some beings of a higher order, our hero has literally *two* faces. Look at him as he lies before you, and you pity his cadaverous countenance and admire his self-denial; turn him over, and you have the very “*ειδωλον*” of plumpness and sensuality; on one side all is “roses,” while all is “thorns” on the other: reverse him once more, and he who but a moment since “looked every inch an alderman,” is now the picture of an insect anchorite. This seeming contradiction is thus explained; the head is protected by a membranous shield, on which, as on a mask, a set of features are very distinctly traced; and these, on the first view, might almost be mistaken for the real physiognomy; this they, of course, are not; yet, judging from the behaviour of their owner during his voyage, they afford a much surer guide to his real disposition than would be gathered from the examination of his countenance properly so called.



THE TABLES TURNED!

“..... Mutato nomine de te
Fabula narratur.....”
HORACE.