

A NEW ALOE FROM SWAZILAND.

BY I. B. POLE EVANS.

(Read July 21, 1915.)

(Plate XLIV.)

ALOE SUPRAFOLIATA, spec. nov. Swaziland.

Aloe suprafoliata, Pole Evans ; species nova et distinctissima, nulli alii arctius affinis, sectionem propriam constituere debet.

Superpositæ POLE EVANS.

Acaules ; folia disticha, superposita, carnosae, immacolatae, lanceolatae, sensim acuminatae, dentibus marginalibus armatae. Pedunculus simplex, vacuus bracteatus, racemus sublaxus ; bracteae late lanceolatae apice acutae, flores trigono-cylindracei.

Herba succulenta, acaulis vel brevissime candescens. Folia ca. 12, stricte, disticha, glauco-viridia, patentia vel venuste arcuata, superposita, rigida, carnosae, lanceolatae, acuminatae, 17-30 cm. longa, basi 4 cm. latae, supra subcanaliculatae, subtus convexae, ad margines dentibus 3 mm. longis rubro-brunneis pungentibus 5-9 mm. inter se distantibus armatae, et linea cartilaginea rubella cincta.

Inflorescentiæ 35 cm. altae scapus simplex, basi nudus, superne bracteis 9-10 vacuis late lanceolata-acutis munitus ; racemus ca. 15 cm. longus et ca. 30-florus, sublaxus ; bracteae lanceolato-acutae, plurinerviae, 15 mm. longae et 10 mm. latae ; pedicelli 10-12 mm. longi, erecto-patuli.

Perianthium rosaceum, 38-40 mm. longum et 6 mm. latum, base levisime stipitatum, anguste cylindraceum, distincte trigonum ; segmentis exterioribus medium connatis, acutis, apice viridulis ; antherae vix exsertae.

This rather remarkable *Aloe* was first brought to me from Swaziland by Mr. R. A. Davis in June, 1914. At first I was inclined to regard it as an immature specimen. When received, it was in the condition shown in Fig. 1. Further specimens which were obtained from the same locality showed very little variation from the original specimen either in size or general character. The leaves were always exactly distichous and were superimposed one above the other in a most regular fashion. After being planted out for nearly a

year, all began to show evidence of a flower bud from the centre of each plant towards the early part of May, and by the first week of June last were in full bloom. It then became apparent that the plants were fully grown specimens, and that they belonged to a hitherto undescribed species. I have accordingly described the plant as *Aloe suprafoliata*, spec. nov. Its general habit is unlike any other *Aloe* known to me. It must be regarded as a unique species, for which I propose a new Section *Superpositae* under Berger's *Humiles*.

Aloe suprafoliata may be recognised at once by its distichous leaves, which are rigid, somewhat fleshy, and patent or gracefully recurved.

The flower spike is slender, unbranched, and bears rather loosely attached rose doree flowers.

The plants are usually found on the tops of quartzite kopjes, and have been sent to me from Stegi, Lebombo Range, and Forbes Reef by the following gentlemen: Mr. R. A. Davis, Mr. B. H. Warner, Mr. Thos. Honey and Mr. A. Roberts.

Description.—Herb succulent, stemless, or with a very short stem. Leaves usually 12, exactly distichous, bluish or glaucous-green, patent or gracefully arcuate, lying above the other, rigid, somewhat fleshy, lanceolate, acuminate, 17–30 cm. long, 4 cm. broad at the base, somewhat channelled above, convex below, armed along the edges with sharp reddish-brown teeth 3 mm. long and 5–9 mm. apart, on a red cartilaginous border.

Inflorescence, about 35 cm. high, unbranched, naked at the base, clothed above with 9–10 broadly lanceolate-acute bracts; raceme about 15 cm. and composed of about 30 flowers, somewhat loose; bracts lanceolate-acute, many-nerved, 15 mm. long and 10 mm. broad; pedicels 10–12 mm. long, erect-patent.

Perianth rose doree (R.C.S.),* 38–40 mm. long, 6 mm. broad, very slightly stipitate at the base, narrowly cylindrical, distinctly trigonous; outer segments connate to the middle, acute, greenish at the apex, anthers just exerted.

EXPLANATION OF PLATE XLIV.

FIG.

1. General habit of plant.

2. Plant in flower.

3. Flowers.

Figs. 1 and 2 much reduced, Fig. 3 natural size.

* (R.C.S.) refers to colours taken from Ridgway's "Color Standards and Color Nomenclature," Washington, 1913.



Pole Evans, I. B. 1915. "A NEW ALOE FROM SWAZILAND." *Transactions of the Royal Society of South Africa* 5, 603–604.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/00359191509519732>.

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