

LINNAEA OR OBOLARIA?

BY OTTO KUNTZE.

IN that Journal of Botany 1894 p. 25-29 Mr. Daydon Jackson gives a review of my *Revisio generum plantarum* III^r. I made in my Rev. g. pl. III so heavy reproaches in regard to his treatment of his nomenclature that this report by no means can claim impartiality. Indeed his opinion is often one-sided, as every body may convince himself who reads my book partly written in English. In particular I wish to raise protest against Mr. Jackson's insinuations, that I desired to minimise my indebtedness to Kew and to its Msc. Index, and that all my bibliographical help obtained were derived from the British Museum at Bloomsbury. I have shown in the preface of my Rev. g. pl. I. p. vi-vii according to truth, how much I am indebted to Kew and the Msc. Index, but I have also shown that I used that Index only for the determination of my plants and only as long (spring of 1889) as Mr. Jackson commenced to add the dates of the genera-names in that Index; for my Rev. gen. pl. proper, except the determination of plants, I have neither used nor required help from the Kew staff and the Kew Index Msc. On the contrary I gave some times to Mr. Jackson information as desired by him since I was far ahead of his revision of genera-names. See also my Rev. gen. pl. p. 97, in which it appears that a copy of *Tropaeolum* out of the Msc. Index applied by Mr. Jackson and obtained for Professor Buchenau in October 1889 contains a great lack in genera-synonyms.—I used only as auxiliary the British Museum libraries; Mr. Jackson's inferring as to this point is merely arbitrary.

2^d. I have to protest against what he writes as follows: Dr. Kuntze's "statement that Linnaeus was 'contemptuous' enough to change Siegesbeck's *Obolaria* into his *Linnaea* is utterly wrong; the genus *Linnaea* was founded by Gronovius in the first edition of the *Genera*, which came out early in 1737, whilst in October of the same year Linnaeus was writing to Haller about the rumour that Siegesbeck's *Hortus Petropolitanus* was published, but was sorry to say that he had not yet seen it; *Amman sent the book itself to Linnaeus in January 1738*. The latest charge against Linnaeus is therefore clumsy, as well as false." This refers to my note No. 25^b at the foot of p. clxxxix in Rev. gen. pl. III; I wrote:

"Why shall be *Obolaria* Sieg. an apparently contemptuous name against *Linnaea*? Mr. D. Jackson had apparently forgotten that Siegesbeck's *Obolaria* was published in 1736 before the *Linnaea* of Linnaeus in 1737 was established. On the contrary Linnaeus was 'contemptuous' by changing Siegesbeck's *Obolaria* into *Linnaea* and naming another genus *Obolaria*. In 1736 Siegesbeck was not yet an opponent to Linnaeus, as Mr. Jackson wrote wrongly on the other page."

I wish now clearly to state:

I. That Gronovius is not responsible for the establishment of the genus *Linnaea*; for only Linnaeus established in his works the

genus *Linnaea* by diagnosis, synonyms and illustration. Gronovius is merely the pretended inventor of the name.

II. Linnaeus wrote in his folio work *Hortus Cliffortianus*, of which in August 1737 already 400 pages were printed (see Corresp. of Linn. ii 270; O. Ktze. Rev. gen. pl. p. cxxxiv) and which work is quoted as far back as early in 1737 as manuscript by Linnaeus himself in his *Genera Plantarum*:

II^a, in the introduction, Classis v, No. 60: "Siegesbeck. Fo. Georg, Majanthemum, Lilium convallium affinis. Petropoli 1736, 4to, p. 15." Linnaeus acknowledges thereby to have been in receipt of one of the 2 different papers of Siegesbeck published in 1736. And he should not have received the other one?

II^b, pag. 320. "*Linnaea* gen. pl. 523 . . ." (among the synonyms:) "... *Obularia* . . . Sieg. hort. . . ." (and at the end of the description:) "... *Obularia* nobis longe diversissima est planta."

II^c, pag. 323. "*Obularia* . . ."

II^d, pag. 412. "*Sigesbeckia* g. pl. 882 . . ." (synonyma, descriptio) "Dixi plantam in honorem Fo. Georgii Siegesbeck, in Horto Medico Petropolitano Botanices Professoris, qui quanto ardore Floram Ruthenicam prosequitur ostendit abunde *Catalogus Horti Petropolitani*." The full title of that work of Siegesbeck quoted here by Linnaeus is: "*Primitiae Florae Petropolitanae, sive Catalogus plantarum tam indigenarum quam exoticarum, quibus instructus fuit hortus medicus Petriburgensis praesenti anno 1736. Rigae 1736.*"

III. Amman did not send that book in question (Siegesbeck, *Cat. hort. petr.*) to Linnaeus in January 1738, as Mr. Jackson wrote wrongly. The book sent by Amman in January 1738 at the request of Linnaeus was "the critical dissertation of the works of Linnaeus he had hitherto published" of which Amman gave notice him in his letter of 15th of November 1737 (see Corresp. of Linn. ii 195, 196). The correct title is: *Epicrisis systematis Linnaei* which is attached to Siegesbeck's *Botanosophiae* . . . 1737.

IV. Linnaeus denied still in a letter to Haller of Sept. 1739 to have ever seen the *Primitiae Florae Petr.* of Siegesbeck (*l. c.* ii 338). Notwithstanding Mr. Jackson thinks that Linnaeus had got it in January 1738. On the other hand Amman's letter to Linnaeus shows that Linnaeus did not inquire after that book published in 1736, although it would have been a most easy matter for him to obtain with the other shipment in 1738 the book which he pretended not to have seen at all.

V. Linnaeus' denying to have seen the *Primitiae* . . . = *Catalogus* . . . of Siegesbeck (*l. c.* 300 and 338) is also in contradiction with his own previous quotation of the said work in his *Hortus Cliffortianus* written late in 1736 or early in 1737 (see above II^a).

VI. Even if Linnaeus should not have seen that work in question he knew the name *Obolaria* Sieg. (perhaps from labels of plants forwarded by Siegesbeck to Cliffort's garden, as is it mentioned on the second page of the preface of his *Hortus Cliffortianus*) for Linnaeus expressly quotes *Obolaria* Sieg. to his *Linnaea* in the same time (see II).

We may consider the matter from whatever point of view it must be inferred that *Linnaeus* had changed *Obolaria* Sieg. into his *Linnaea*. Thus, I think, Mr. Jackson's statements have been proven to be fallacies.—If we take the year 1735 as starting-point *Obolaria* Sieg. must be preferred; but in case of 1737 as starting-point *Linnaea* L. ought to be valid.

In conclusion I wish to protest that it be a "Kuntzean fable"—as Mr. Jackson wrote *l. c.* p. 27:—Mr. Jackson having effected an entire change of front since my *Revisio* gen. pl. in 1891 came on the scene. What Mr. Jackson quotes for "demolishing this fable" proves only and shows very correctly that Mr. Jackson was willing to commence his nomenclature with 1735 and that from and after 1753 he would let in application only a different orthography, if any. But after the publication of my *Revisio* gen. pl. in 1891 he has disowned his former starting-point of 1735 and called the same now "Dr. Kuntze's arbitrary starting-point" (see *J. of Bot.* 1892 p. 57 and my notices No. 5 and 21 of my *Rev.* III) willing just as Mr. Hemsley (see *Nature* 24th Dec. 1891 p. 172 . . .) to commence with 1753 and hoping that 4/5 of all my proposed names would fall by his changing of the starting-point of nomenclature into 1753. Later on after I had proved this to be a mistake, he finished the *Kew Index* in accordance with his former plan, without applying, however, the *lex prioritatis* even in cases free from doubt, as, to be sure, he promised it formerly. For he wrote in *Journ. Bot.* 1887 p. 68: "But whilst strenuously advocating *strict priority as the only sure foundation for nomenclature*, it can only be applied when free from doubt." Why gave Mr. Jackson figures at all of year-numbers of first publication to the names when he did not make the slightest use of such dates now?

Mr. Jackson and Mr. Hemsley have misled the majority of botanists to commence the nomenclature with the inept starting-point of 1753, for instance in the case of the circular quotation arranged by the Berlin Committee, in voting at the Genoa Congress and at the Rochester Meeting. This is an historical fact which to prove I preferred full evidence in my *Rev. gen. pl.* III. How inept it is to commence with 1753 and how advantageous it is to begin with 1737 I have demonstrated in figures. The reason of the profitable starting-point of 1737 is that most of authors went back to *Linnaeus' Genera pl.* of 1737 in regard to genera-names, but only exceptionally made use of 1753 heretofore. In commencing with 1753 at least 93 genera and 6886 species would have to receive new names. The list which I have published in that respect (*Rev. gen. pl.* III p. cccxxiii–vi) has in the mean time become considerably larger. If to Mr. Jackson it seems paradoxical that *less* alterations will be occasioned by 1737 than by 1753 what hardly will persuade anyone (*J. Bot.* 1894 p. 28), then I dare say this is light and wrong. On the other hand my opponent Dr. John Briquet wrote on these ciphers, which I published on the consequences of changing the starting-point, in *Bulletin de l'herbier Boissier* 1894 p. 54: "Ces chiffres sont éloquents et nous pouvons assurer que les dérangements signalés par Mr. Kuntze pour l'adoption de la date du

congrès (1753) sont en général corrects et n'ont pas été exagérés pour les besoins de la cause"; and p. 55: "Nous nous mettrons franchement du côté de Mr. Kuntze et de l'ancienne proposition d'Alph. de Candolle pour réclamer l'année 1737 comme point de départ de la nomenclature générique."

Many American and other botanists were willing to use the Kew Index, as they thought it to contain the year 1753 as starting-point, which, however, turns out to be not; for the Kew Index has no fixed starting-point at all, which might have been used for any competition of names.

On p. 28 Mr. Jackson writes as to me: "Although he never saw Darwin, yet he professes to know his wishes better than Sir Joseph Hooker." I know the wishes of Mr. Darwin by Mr. Jackson himself; see Journ. of Bot. 1887 p. 67, where he wrote "that it was the wish of Mr. Darwin to produce a modernised Steudel's Nomenclator." The most condemnable and really unscientific deviation from Steudel's Nomenclator is, that Hooker and Jackson omitted the specific synonyms at their proper place: under the valid name of each species.

For an exhaustive censure of Mr. Jackson's review would here not be the place.

By the courtesy of the Editor I have been enabled to see the foregoing before publication. Although naturally reluctant to engage in anything which savours of personality, the statements of Dr. Kuntze are such that it might be supposed that I approved them if I remained silent.

Dr. Kuntze had the freest access to the MS. Index, as he acknowledged in his former work: he used it constantly, and the date when he had obtained all the information he wanted from it matters nothing; his work would have assumed a very different complexion but for our accumulated material. He has the bad taste to allude to the case of *Tropæolum*; that copy was furnished at his request from our unrevised entries, on the express stipulation that I should be in return furnished with additions and corrections, but Dr. Kuntze has failed to fulfil his part of the contract. I knew perfectly his relative use of the London libraries, but his note on page cxcī needed explanation.

With regard to the *Obolaria* question, Dr. Kuntze allows his animosity to get the better of his reason. Having a strong dislike to Linnæus, as shown in his *Revisio*, he now seeks to convict him of deliberately suppressing Siegesbeck's genera, and founding his own on them. It is a fact that all system-mongers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries thought nothing of renaming genera and species, just as at the present day almost every German professor has his own scheme of plant-arrangement. I have already commented on the stupidity of judging Linnæus by the standard of to-day, but some minds are invincibly prejudiced, and to these it may seem right to foist into one man's system the ideas of his opponent. I venture to think that Linnæus scarcely needs even this defence, as will be seen from the following.

Linnaeus brought with him to the Netherlands a large amount of literary material; the *Flora Lapponica*, his *Systema*, and his *Genera* were practically ready for publication. His *Systema* came out in December, 1735, his *Bibliotheca* is dated 1736, the *Genera* was issued early in 1737, and his *Flora Lapponica* has the preface dated "xii. Kal. Febr. 1737," that is, January 21st, while the *Hortus Cliffortianus* was also passing through the press. It was quite impossible for Linnaeus to have drawn up all these works in the short time since he arrived in the Netherlands. In his *Flora Lapponica*, p. 206, he speaks of "planta nostra" which is described on the next page, and he continues, "Characterem huius generis dedit Clariss. Botanicus D. D. Gronovius in Characteribus nostris Genericis § 523, ab omni parte perfectum (qui eandem ex Alpibus Italicis habuit), cum ista Buxbaumii descriptia minus quadret." In the face of this positive declaration Dr. Kuntze has the hardihood to assert that Gronovius was not the author of the genus; it is by no means the first time that the doctor has claimed to know more than the author.

It seems clear that Linnaeus had not then seen Siegesbeck's *Primitiae*, his own words as printed in his Correspondence being:— "... I hear that Siegesbeck's *Hortus Petropolitanus* and Gerber's *Flora Moschoviensis* are come out, but I am sorry to say that I have never yet seen them."—Linnaeus to Haller, Oct. 8th, 1737.

By every unbiassed mind these words will be accepted as truthful; but Dr. Kuntze declines to credit them. There are, however, some trifling facts which bear out Linnaeus's assertions. In his *Hortus Cliffortianus*, p. 320, he adds to the synonymy of his *Linnaea*, "Obularia. . . . Sieg. Hort.," this form of abbreviation he seems to have used till about 1745, when in the *Flora Suecica*, p. 189, he says, "Obolaria. Sieg. prim. 79." It will be noticed that Linnaeus made two mistakes in his first citation, misspelling the name, and not knowing the precise title of the work mentioned, this being of course before he saw the book, but so soon as the volume reached his hands, he was enabled to give a true reference. I was probably wrong in supposing that Linnaeus received all of Siegesbeck's works in January, 1738, for as the *Primitiae* is not specifically mentioned, it may be that it did not then reach him, but if not then, it must have been at some later date, which Dr. Kuntze certainly did not intend to prove.

Dr. Kuntze devotes the latter part of his note to a reiteration of some of those statements which I have shown already to be untrue. I do not gather that he includes me in the same class as Linnaeus as being unworthy of belief, he must therefore have failed to understand the question, and I will give the substance of my twice printed paragraph in different language.

The *Index Kewensis* starts from the time of Linnaeus, therefore no direct mention is made of earlier authors: Tournefort, Plumier, Vaillant, and many others, are cited only through the works of Linnaeus or later authors, from 1735 downwards. To me this constitutes a very definite starting-point. As the Linnean work is the very foundation of modern botany, it was imperative to take the

system as a whole, and not force it to include scraps from opposing systems. Naturally then, Linnæus's views have been accorded a respectful treatment, and as I have repeatedly shown, the Index recognises those names as valid which received the final approval of the father of modern nomenclature in his *Species Plantarum* in 1753. This was set out in this Journal in 1887, pp. 67, 68, before Dr. Kuntze saw the Kew MS.

The names which were tentatively used by Linnæus in his earlier works, were only vitalised by his ultimate revision of them in the *Species Plantarum*. This according to Dr. Kuntze is no fixed point; opinions may differ, but our view is perfectly comprehensible to most people, and has the advantage of producing a sounder nomenclature than the collection of sweepings from all sorts of systems which Dr. Kuntze offers in its place. In reply to his reiterated charges of change of plan after his *Revisio* came out, I can only give it a point blank denial. Dr. Kuntze flatters himself too grossly; his *Revisio* only reached me on November 14th, three months after the first part of the *Index Kewensis* had gone to press (September 15th); it was therefore a physical impossibility for me to have made those fundamental changes in the plan which he avers were made after his work had given me the idea. I am in no sense responsible for any mistakes which the doctor's defective hearing may have caused; indeed, he knows better himself, as witness his own words:—"The Kew index of plant names . . . planned at first as a continuation of Steudel's *Nomenclator*, now in preparation since 9 years under the responsibility and direction of Sir Joseph Hooker, will not be now a work like Steudel's *Nomenclator*, but a faithful index of the names of phanerogams."—*Revisio*, p. cxlvi (1891). Within three years of beginning, it was seen that to attempt giving synonyms as Steudel did, would, from its appalling bulk, ensure the collapse of the work. This was good reason enough, but I may add more. The citation of synonyms under the right names presupposes that every plant is already in possession of its right name; this is easy in the Steudelian method, for a name is coined on the instant for any transfer, and the thing is done. No such presumption formed part of our plan; thousands of plants are still awaiting their true nomenclature at the hands of competent monographers working with the plants themselves. Believing, as I do, that the plan adopted will meet with the approval of the majority of botanists, Dr. Kuntze's strictures may be disregarded.

B. DAYDON JACKSON.

[To avoid possible misunderstanding, Dr. Kuntze's remarks are printed in exact accordance with his MS. and proof. We cannot devote further space to the discussion on the points raised.—ED. JOURN. BOT.]



Kuntze, Otto. 1894. "Linnaea or obolaria?" *Journal of botany, British and foreign* 32, 276–281.

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