

BOTANICAL NOTES.

By L. RODWAY.

(Read November 25, 1895.)

In a paper I had the honour of reading early this year, I alluded to a grass from Adamson's Peak that appeared distinct from any described form. I am now convinced it is an alpine variety of the scarce grass described by Brown as *Tetrarrhena juncea*, and as such is of greater interest than if it had been specifically distinct, all the more so to us as it upholds the wisdom of our respected botanical head, Baron von Mueller. Brown, guided by a similar train of thought to that which directs more modern specialists, was a great genus maker as well as species maker. There was rather a tendency to make genera on artificial lines. Thus he removed from the well marked genus *Ehrharta*, of Thunberg, sundry forms that differ inessentially from that genus in bearing 4 instead of 3 or 6 stamens in the flower. Of these those that bore a loose inflorescence he placed in a genus as *Microlæna*, and those whose flowers were arranged in a spike or spike-like raceme were formed into a genus *Tetrarrhena*. A long time after this Gunn found a grass undoubtedly new that was close to *Microlæna*; but having but 2 stamens, Hooker in describing it thought it necessary to erect a new genus, *Diplaz*, for its reception. Mueller, following Sprengel, has long ago returned these genera to *Ehrharta*. The grass I found on Adamson's Peak is in all essential details a stunted *Tetrarrhena juncea* of Brown, but it has a paniced inflorescence, and the androecium is reduced to a single stamen, making it necessary to form a new genus for an apparent variety, or to accept the teaching of von Mueller and return to the single genus *Ehrharta*.

Lepturus cylindricus, Trin. This littoral and marsh grass, which is common to temperate Australia, Cape of Good Hope, and the Mediterranean, is widely distributed in Tasmania, with its ally, *L. incurvatus*, Trin., from which it differs in the spikelets possessing a single outer glume. It is doubtless indigenous.

Cynodon dactylon, Pers., referred to in the appendix of Spicer's Handbook as a recent introduction, has so long been known in out-of-the-way localities that it is better considered indigenous. Bentham so treats it as Australian in his *Flora Australiensis*.

Page 103, line 5.—For bracleypodium, read *brachypodium*.

" 104 " 33.—For natricaria, read *matricaria*.

" " " 39.—For lepdium, read *lepidium*.

" " " 31.—For arvensis L. restbarrow, read *arvensis L. restharrow*.

Amongst introduced grasses that are widely spreading are :—

Kælaria phleoides, Pers., throughout central districts and islands of Bass Straits.

Bracleypodium distachyum, R. et Sch., on the Domain in and about the Botanic Gardens. Referred to in Spicer as a *Triticum*.

Gastridium lendigerum, Beauv., the common nitgrass of the northern hemisphere, is dispersing itself in the Berriedale neighbourhood.

Panicum sanguinale, Linn., a fingered grass of world-wide distribution, is appearing in a few districts.

Polypogon littoralis, Linn., is also becoming common on the river swamps below Bridgewater.

Lepidosperma falcata, n.s. Densely tufted. Leaves flat, not acute, about $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ line diameter, spirally curved, about 6in. long, stems similar. Panicle simple, few flowered, each pedicel curved. Glumes few, obtuse, inner pair much exceeding the rest and widely gaping when the nut is mature. Nut shining, obscurely triquetrous. Hypogynous scales thick and short below the nut as in *L. lineare*. Common in poor soil, in healthy and stony places in Tasmania.

It is with considerable hesitation I describe this as specifically distinct from *L. lineare*, R. Br.; but it could not be included in that species without also including both with *L. laterale*, R. Br., a clubbing hardly justified though natural.

Carex barbata, Boott. Tufted. Leaves about 1ft. long, rather narrow, without a conspicuous mid-rib, margin scabred. Stems slender, 12-18in. high. Spikelets few, stalked, the upper one male, but often bearing also a few female flowers; the female spikelets often with few male flowers at the apex, about lin. long. Glumes and utricles similar to those of *C. gunniana*, Boott, but the latter only half the size.

Common in swamps at Claremont and Longley.

This species, which I apprehend to be the *Carex barbata* of Boott referred to in Bentham's *Flora Australiensis*, lives with *C. gunniana*, and though similar in general habit, is most undoubtedly distinct from that species.

Corysanthes unguiculata, R. Br. This rare and interesting little orchid occurs near Kingston, in damp heaths, and will probably be found in suitable localities.

In the transactions for 1893 I drew attention to the artificial basis upon which the species *Thelymitra longifolia*, Forst., and *T. aristata*, Lind., besides numerous other now suppressed species, were maintained to be distinct from *T. ixioides*, Sw., I endeavoured to point out by means of dissections taken from numerous plants the totally unreliable details upon which those species were founded. I have since obtained specimens from Clarke Island, Bass Straits, and near Strahan, in which the upper hooded portion of the column wing is exceptionally well developed, and the lateral lobes are entirely suppressed. This necessitates the raising of this variety into specific rank, or reducing the forms *T. aristata* and *T. longifolia* to inconstant varieties of *T. ixioides*, Sw.

Amongst introduced plants the following deserve attention:—

Trichonema roseum, Ker. A pretty little lily-like iris, with pinkish mauve flowers, steadily disseminating itself in pastures. It is often passed by as a pink form of the harmless little white lily of spring, but I am assured by von Müller that it is poisonous, and should be eradicated.

Euphorbia lathyris, L., the caper-spurge, probably responsible for some of the cattle poisoning that has taken place lately. It is naturalised in many parts. Its powerful cathartic qualities are dangerous.

Nepeta cataria, L., catmint, is found in some parts.

Gilia pungens, Hook., of South America, a prickly little herb of certainly no useful qualities, has made its appearance in the central districts.

Helminthia echinoides, Gaert., a useless thistle and *Ononis arvensis*. *L. restbarrow*, whose habit is well expressed by its name, are also with us.

Hatricia discoidea, D.C., a composite with conical inconspicuous flower-heads, is becoming very common about the suburbs of Hobart. It has medicinal properties like its allies.

Erigeron linifolius, D.C., is also a common composite but harmless weed very common about Hobart.

Lepidium draba, L., is common at Cornelian Bay and Sandy Bay.

Linum catharticum, L., is establishing itself in one or two places.



Rodway, Leonard. 1894. "On Some New Botanical Specimens." *Papers and proceedings of the Royal Society of Tasmania* 1895, 102–104.

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