

it was not ripe, and I did not afterwards examine it — but I fancy the genus ought with Endlicher to be merged in *Phillyrea* not *Olea*, as by most botanists. A. De Caudolle retains *Osmanthus* as a distinct genus. You are aware that neither Loureiro nor Kämpfer had ever seen this fruit, and that the latter even states it to be unknown in Japan. — From a few casual observations on some of the trees here, notably such as *Bombax malabaricum*, which is very remarkably in this respect — I am inclined to place considerable reliance on Dr. McCosh's theory of the similarity in arrangement between branches and leaves — you know to what I refer. It was noticed in extenso in the *Phytologist*, and discussed before the British Association. Bentham's remarks about *Zornia diphylla* in Hooker's *Journal* (I mean the absence of pellucid dots) are inaccurate — as I have satisfied myself by living specimens. I also notice with surprise that *Palurus Aubletia* is described as unarmed, its numerous spines sometimes exceeding an inch in length. *Desmodium gangeticum* and *D. triflorum* are to be added to our flora, as well as an *Alysicarpus* and I dare say a good many other plants.

Yours etc. etc.

H. J. Hance.

Dr. Hooker über die Publikations-Frage.  
To the Editor of the *Bonplandia*.

Kew near London, April 17. 1854.

The question whether priority of publication is secured to a communication by reading it at a public meeting of a scientific Society has often been agitated in England and has been so generally answered in the negative that I think it is now agreed by common consent. As a rule it should hold that no scientific communication is considered as published until printed in a scientific *Journal* of acknowledged reputation and considerable circulation in France, Germany and England, or in a separate scientific work which is also published and properly advertised; the mere reading before a Society does not constitute publication, which implies the matter being at the disposal of the public, which it is not. One of the great objects of a scientific Society is to provide such a *Journal* and at a moderate cost to insure circulation at as rapid a rate as is consistent with accuracy and the convenience of scientific men who expect to receive the parts done up in a definite shape and not in too small quantities at once. The state of a Society's publications affords in general the best criticism of its condition, if flourishing it publishes rapidly and regularly, if declining or stationary, the contrary; but as many communications, and indeed mostly those of the greatest value, cannot be passed through the press, still less accompanied with illustrations, without considerable delay, the more flourishing Societies of London now have a double publication, namely *Proceedings* and *Transactions*; of these the *proceedings* contain an abstract of all papers read at the meetings and of all other business there conducted, and in it are printed at length short papers not intended for the *transactions*, and sometimes miscellaneous matter is added when considered by the Council or Secretary as useful for the members to have. These *proceedings*, if published at stated intervals, obviate the necessity of a periodical

issue of the *Transactions*, which may have been got up to greater advantage in many ways. The Royal Society of London affords the best example of a flourishing Society as now conducted; it publishes monthly an 8vo. part of *proceedings* which is stamped by Government and transmitted to all members free of cost and to any subscriber at the rate of a few shillings per annum to cover the extra cost. It also publishes large quarto *transactions* copiously illustrated with lithographies. The Geological Society of London publishes its *proceedings* quarterly in the form of thick 8vo. parts, illustrated copiously with maps, lithographed plates and woodcuts; it is issued to all fellows and paid for by them. This Society also publishes quarto *transactions*, but the nature of its communications so seldom requires these, that no parts of the *transactions* have been issued for some years. The quarterly *Journal* is highly approved of by all the fellows and the Geological world at large; and it would be difficult to make any improvement upon this in the present satisfactory state of the Society; it presents one great advantage in obliging the contributors of matter to keep to their subject and not digress or dilate unnecessarily, the Subscribers naturally objecting to pay for verbiage, the Council of publication have to insist upon the papers communicated being as brief as is consistent with fullness and clearness. The Linnean Society also publishes both *proceedings* and *transactions*, but neither appear periodically and the *proceedings*, not being put up in a cover or other definite form, are often lost or mislaid, besides, being issued at irregularly intervals, they are too often wholly neglected by the fellows. So many of the communications made to the Linnean Society are botanical and require quarto plates that it is advisable for this Society to continue its *transactions*, but it would be greatly to its advantage and that of the scientific public in general if the *proceedings* appeared periodically and contained all communications except those which require quarto illustrations. With regard to the comparative advantage of scientific *Journals* independent of Societies and those conducted by Societies there can be no doubt but that public opinion is greatly in favour of the latter when properly conducted. The advantages are the following: 1) their object is definitely the cultivation of one branch of knowledge, 2) the resources are greater both for diffusing the information (before the meetings, in the *proceedings* and in the *transactions*) and for publishing it at a cheap rate and with no loss of time, 3) the Society (through its council of papers) is responsible for the value of its publications, for the originality of the communications to a great extent, for their containing no more than is necessary, for the absence of any personal reflections and the introduction of any matter that may lead to unseemly discussion, 4) there can be no doubt but that the wish of every man who has the interest of science at heart is so to bring his communications before the world as that they should be open to discussion during the time that must elapse between their being read and published and it is also most advantageous to him that his communication should be exposed to that severe scrutiny which it undergoes in the hands of the Council of papers (of a well organized Society) and which in so many cases

results in the introduction of great improvements and retrenchments of much that was little to the purpose. An independent Journal on the other hand secures immediate publication, admits of controversial matter, and offers a field for the expression of opinions extremely advantageous; it also contains a vast deal of collateral matter, that is not suited either for the proceedings or transactions of a Society and which indeed could not well be brought under a Society's notice. In my opinion it would greatly promote scientific progress if all papers containing original matter were communicated to Societies and that these published periodical proceedings and issued transactions when necessary. It would further be most desirable that the Society should at stated intervals publish in its proceedings a list of such papers bearing on the subjects of the Society's labours as had appeared in the interval in other periodicals, and of independently published books; besides the number of independent Societies and of ephemeral journals on scientific subjects now published renders it most desirable that some general principles should be kept in view. All papers containing original matter should be communicated to well established Societies as well as to independent periodicals and it is above all things important that these communications be made as short as possible. The practice so prevalent in Germany, especially that of introducing irrelevant matter and dilating upon trifles, has now become a crying evil, which, if not checked by the good sense of the scientific men of that country, will lead to the neglect of their labours by the scientific men of England and France; for it has now become impossible to devote the necessary time to the selection of grains of wheat from bushels of chaff. In England this is greatly obviated by the working of the learned Societies and at this moment its scientific men are making comprehensive arrangements for the better centralisation of their labours, the curtailment of their communications and the speedy publication in the most convenient form.

Joseph D. Hooker.

## Zeitung.

### Frankreich.

§ Paris, 18. April. Die Regierung hat beschlossen, dass die Berichte über gelehrte und literarische Gesellschaften, sowie wissenschaftliche Reiseberichte und ähnliche Artikel fortan in einer Zeitschrift erscheinen sollen, die den Titel: „Bulletin des Sociétés savants“ führen wird.

— Die hier stattgefundene Versammlung der gelehrten Gesellschaften Frankreichs ist nun beendet. Sie hat sich fast lediglich mit der Besprechung von praktischen Gegenständen — dem Acclimatisiren nützlicher Pflanzen und Thiere — beschäftigt und scheint aus diesem Grunde einen

guten Eindruck beim allgemeinen Publikum zurückgelassen zu haben.

### Grossbritannien.

London, 20. April. „Gardeners' Chronicle“ sagt in einem seiner Leitartikel vom 15. April: „Wir hören, dass unter dem Namen „Pescatorea“ ein Werk über Orchideen in Brüssel und zwar in monatlichen Heften, wovon jedes 4 farbige Tafeln und eben so viel Druckseiten enthalten soll, erscheinen wird. Der Herr, dessen Namen es führt und durch dessen grossartige Unterstützung die Kosten des Unternehmens theilweise bestritten werden sollen, besitzt in St. Cloud bei Paris die schönste Orchideensammlung auf dem Festlande, und ist im hohen Grade des Complimentes würdig, das ihm durch den Titel des Werkes gemacht wird. Als Redacteurs werden die Herren Linden, Lüddemann, Planchon und Reichenbach der Jüngere, mit dem in gründlicher Kenntniss der Orchideen kein continentaler Botaniker auch nur annähernd zu vergleichen ist, genannt.... Wir erwarten ein Werk von bleibendem Werthe. Das erste Heft wird am 1. Juni in Brüssel ausgegeben werden.“

— Prof. L. C. Treviranus hat in einem höchst lehrreichen Aufsätze in „Gardeners' Chronicle“ die Frage über die Verwandlung von Aegilops in Triticum erörtert. Er hatte selbst Gelegenheit, die Exemplare, welche die Verwandlungsstufen darthun, in Montpellier zu sehen, und scheint zu Gunsten der Verwandlung gestimmt zu sein, will sich jedoch nicht bestimmt darüber aussprechen, so lange die Fabre'schen Culturversuche vereinzelt dastehen. — Wir können hinzufügen, dass Capitain Munro, einer der besten Graskenner unserer Zeit, sich entschieden auf die Seite Fabre's stellt. So gewichtig aber auch alle solche Meinungen sein mögen, so finden sich doch noch, besonders in Deutschland, viele Zweifler; nur Ein Mann kann die Sache zur allgemeinen Befriedigung in das rechte Licht stellen, und dieser Mann ist Nees von Esenbeck, der auch schon längst sich derselben angenommen haben würde, wenn ihn nicht ein langwieriges Augenübel davon abhielte.

### Briefkasten.

Grijalva id G.—Z. C. d. soll nächstens benutzt werden.  
G. von Jaeger, Stuttgart. Ihre Abhandlung über Bison etc. ist in Kew eingetroffen.  
Kl., Berlin. B. S. hat den Bericht über Begoniaceen — Gattungen am 15. April erhalten.

Verantwortlicher Redacteur: Wilhelm E. G. Seemann.

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