

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ON A NEW VACCINIUM FROM SAMOA.

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Among a number of Samoan plants placed for elucidation at my disposal by the Rev. S. T. Whitmee, M.A., F.L.S., F.G.S., F.R.G.S., occurs a whortleberry-bush, the first member of the order of Vaccinieæ, as yet known from that Group. The Royal Society of Tasmania has favoured me on former occasions by promulgating notes on plants not always Tasmanian, and, perhaps, this privilege will be continued at this and future opportunities to render known remarkable undescribed plants through the pages of its publications, while this advantage will be all the more appreciated, inasmuch as the praiseworthy regularity and punctuality with which the Tasmanian Society issues its papers, affords the most favourable vehicle in Australia for the early record of new observations. Passingly, it may here be observed, that some of the plants of Mr. Whitmee's collections, which latter were formed at great risk, toil, and expense of the reverend gentleman, amidst the arduous duties of his ecclesiastical position, have been alluded to in an appendix to Mr. F. Campbell's work on the New Hebrides, and in a recent publication on Papuan plants from Sir William MacArthur's sendings.

Melbourne, December, 1875.

VACCINIUM WHITMEEL.

(Sect. *Epigynium*.)

Erect, evergreen; branchlets slightly downy, all other parts glabrous; leaves oval, contracted into a very short petiole, blunt at the summit, entirely without teeth; peduncles axillary, solitary, one flowered, recurved; bracts very early deciduous; tube of the calyx depressed-hemispheric, several times broader than long; teeth of the calyx five, rarely six, deltoid; tube of the corolla ovate-cylindrical, lobes slightly spreading, rhomboid semi-ovate, several times shorter than the tube; anthers somewhat shorter than the filaments, oblong, at the apex very slightly bilobed, neither conspicuously attenuated, nor spurred, nor at the base incurved; style stout, shorter than the corolla; berry much broader than long; embryo more than half as long as the albumen, black.

On the higher mountains of the Samoa Islands: Leaves coriaceous, $\frac{3}{4}$ in. 1 in. long, penniveined and slightly reticulated, almost flat, not dotted; peduncles $\frac{1}{3}$ in. $\frac{1}{2}$ in. long; teeth of the calyx in age

measuring about one line; corolla exceeding hardly $\frac{1}{2}$ in. in length, unbearded; its lobes imbricate in bud; filaments 10, rarely 12, fixed to the very base of the corolla, of equal length, not fringed; anthers 1 in. long, opening with two terminal pores; styles about 2 in. long; berry $\frac{3}{4}$ in. in diameter; seeds pale brown, half a line long, cuneate-ovate, angular, finely streaked.

The anthers distinguish this species from nearly all its numerous congeners, and bring it near the section *Netopera* (J. Hook. Icon. plant. 1159), but they are fixed below not above the middle.

There seem to be but few other species of *Vaccinium* known from any part of Polynesia. Of these *V. Vitiense* (*Paphia Vitiensis*, Seem. Journ. of Bot. 1864, p. 77; Flor. Vit. p. 146, t. xxviii) differs in its large flowers, reminding of certain *Thibandias*, of which genus at least the species with free stamens should be included in *Vaccinium*, as indicated by the writer in the volume of the Acclimatisation Society of Victoria for 1872.

V. cereum (G. Forst. florul. insul. Austr. prodr. p. 28; *Andromeda cerea*, Murr. syst. veg. 406) from Tahiti as well as *V. macgillivrayi* (Seem. Journ. of Bot. 1864, p. 67) from the New Hebrides, differ both by their acute and especially serrated leaves, their cleft calcarate anthers and spherical fruits. In a similar manner, *V. reticulatum* (Sm. in Rees's Cyclop. 1824), of the Sandwich Islands, is removed from our plant; besides it has lanceolate lobes of the calyx, while the tube of the latter is as long as it is broad.

V. penduliflorum (Gandich. in Freycen. Voy. Bot. 454, t. 68) also from Hawaia differs, irrespective of the serratures of the leaves, in longer peduncles, much elongated lobes of the calyx, anthers with dorsal appendages, slender style, almost globular fruit and a shorter embryo.

Dr. Asa Gray has offered on the Polynesian *Vaccinia* notes referring to characteristics and synonymy in the Proceedings of the American Academy for Arts and Science, 1862, p. 323-324.

Among Indian species, *V. Rollinsoni* (Hook. bot. Magaz. 4612) from Java, is nearest, except perhaps the very imperfectly known *V. microphyllum* (Reinw. in Blume's Bijdr. 851) from Celebes. The former has almost precisely the same foliage, and also slightly downy branchlets, while the flowers are not always terminal and racemose, but also axillary and solitary; the berries, however, are globular.*

I am not acquainted as yet with any true *Vaccinium* from Australia and New Caledonia, but the genus will likely be found well represented in the higher regions of New Guinea.

The Samoan collection received from the Rev. S. T. Whitmee, contains the following cotyledonar plants:—

- Stephania hernandifolia, Walp.
- Cardamine sarmentosa, G. Forst.
- Hibiscus abelmoschus, Lin.
- Trichospermum richei, Seem.

* Since writing the above I have had access to the illustrated plate of *Vaccinium Rollinsoni*. It differs from *V. Whitmeei* also in its hairy pedicels and (especially) filaments.

- Triumfetta angulata, Lam.
 Kleinhovia hospita, Lin.
 Waltheria indica, Lin.
 Coriaria ruscifolia, Lin.
 Eurya vitiensis, A. Gray.
 Cardiospermum halicacabum, Lin.
 Allophylus ternatus, Lour.
 Euodia hortensis, R. and G. Forst.
 Desmodium polycarpum, Cand.
 Vigna lutea, A. Gray.
 Erythrina indica, Lam.
 Erythrina ovalifolia, Roxb.
 Albizzia grandiflora, F. v. Muell.
 Myrtus vitiensis, F. v. Muell. (Nelitris vitiensis, A. Gray.)
 Colubrina asiatica, Brogn.
 Phyllanthus ramiflorus, J. Muell.
 Codiaecum variegatum, Blume.
 Spiræanthemum samoense, A. Gray.
 Schefflera vitiensis, Seem. (a variety with 7-merous fruit).
 Loranthus insularum, A. Gray.
 Plectronia barbata, J. Hook.
 Mussaenda frondosa, Lin.
 Blumea Milnei, Seem.
 Bidens pilosa, Lin.
 Scaevola koenigi, Vahl.
 Tournefortia argentea, Lin. fil.
 Premna integrifolia, Lin.
 Clerodendron inerme, R. Br.
 Cassytha filiformis, Lin.
 Piper macgillivrayi, A. de Cand.
 Trema camabina, Lour.
 Pipturus argenteus, Wedd.
 Casuarina equisetifolia, Forst.
 Sarcophilus graeffei, G. Reich.
 Joinvillea elegans, Gaudich.
 Carex graeffeana, Baeck.
 Fimbristylis communis, Kunth.
 Rhychospora aurea, Vahl.
 Panicum compositum, Lin.
 Panicum sanguinale, Lin.
 Panicum crus galli, Lin.
 Imperata arundinacea, Cyril.
 Cenchrus anomoplexis, Lab.
 Eleusine indica, Gaert.
 Centothera lappacea, Desv.
 Paspalum scrobiculatum, Lin.
 Coix Lacryma, Lin.