



W. Fitch, del. et lith.

Vincent Brooks, Imp.

BEGONIA PHYLLOMANIACA.

Proliferous-stemmed Begonia.

Nat. Ord. BEGONIACEÆ.—MONOGYIA POLYANDRIA.

Gen. Char. (Vide supra, TAB. 4172.)

BEGONIA *phyllomaniaca*; caule elongato subtortuoso erecto carnoso viridi tereti crasso patentim parce et patentim piloso molliter subulato-setoso copiosissime prolifero, petiolis longitudine foliorum vel longioribus, foliis semipedalibus, cordato-ovatis inæquilateris subpeltatis longe acuminatis basi præcipue varie lobatis, lobis acuminatis margine apiceque molliter spinuloso-serratis ciliatisque viridibus, bracteis ovatis acuminatis membranaceis patentibus fuscis, paniculis corymbosis axillaribus, floribus tetrapetalis, exterioribus suborbicularibus; *masculorum* 2 interioribus nanis, *femineorum* 2 interioribus exter. æquilongis angustioribus, capsulæ immature alis omnibus inæqualibus, 2 brevibus, unica elongata obtusa.

BEGONIA *phyllomaniaca*. *Mart. in Hook. Kew Gard. Miscell. v. 4. p. 206.*

KNESEBECKIA *phyllomaniaca*. *Klotzsch in Walpers Annal. v. 4. p. 890.*

This *Begonia* has been received from the Berlin Botanic Garden under the name of *B. prolifera*,* and, as is too much the case with horticulturists, without any authority for the name attached to it, or any notice of the country whence it has been derived; and in the present state of the very difficult genus *Begonia*, with the several changes that it has undergone, first by the late Dr. Klotzsch, and more recently by M. Alphonse De Candolle, it would seem a hopeless task to endeavour to ascertain if it is anywhere described. Fortunately it possesses a character which led to the determination of the species in this case, namely, in the whole surface of the stem, and to a certain extent the leaf-stalks also, being all quite "hérissé," or squarrose, and proliferous, so to say, with minute leaves, single or in clusters, which are capable of forming new plants, and which appear in some cases to burst through the bark of the stem; at other times soft spine-like, green papillæ develop themselves into

* There is a *Begonia prolifera* of Alphonse De Candolle, in the *Ann. des Sc. Nat.* 4th ser. v. 11. p. 135, but that is a stemless and very different plant.

these leaf-buds. The only mention I can find of it is in Hook. Kew Garden Misc. vol. iv. p. 206, in a communication from Dr. Wallich, to the following effect:—"At one of the last meetings of the Royal Bavarian Academy at Munich, a very remarkable species of *Begonia* was exhibited by Professor Von Martius, having this extraordinary peculiarity, that it produces from the stem, branches and petioles, innumerable leaflets, which on being detached and placed on moist ground, produce roots and plants. In order to mark this singular property, the Professor calls the species *B. phyllomaniaca*—being possessed by *phyllomania*. On the margin and apex of these leaflets (which sometimes cover the plant to the extent of a thousand, and which at first are hair-shaped), cells are produced, single or united into groups (three to six), and filled with a yellow juice. One common cell often envelopes one of these little groups, and afterwards peels off," ready to constitute a new plant.* This is phyllomania in earnest. The account is accompanied by a brief but very accurate description, which leaves no doubt of the identity of our plant with it. The native country of the plant is not given.

Fig. 1. Capsule. 2. Transverse section of capsule,—*slightly magnified*. 3. Portion of the proliferous stem,—*natural size*.

* Since the above was written, I find in the latest Fasciculus (xxvii.) of Von Martius's 'Flora Brasiliensis,' which has just reached my hands, a very full account of this plant, at p. 386, where it is referred to the group of *Gereondia* of *Begonia* (genus *Gereondia* of Klotzsch), and admirable representations at t. 99 and 100 of the plant itself, and the very remarkable physiological structure of the minute leaves and leaf-buds, in a numerous series of figures. The species is said to inhabit Guatemala, and, probably, Brazil.