

VII. *Nova Literaria Physico-Medica curiosa; containing a Description of the Cereus which flowered at Norimberg in the Year 1730. Communicated by Jo. Georg. Steigertahl Arch. Reg. Hanov. Prof. Helm. Soc. Honorar. Coll. Med. Lond. & R. S. S. to Sir Hans Sloane Bart. Pr. R. S. & Coll. Med. Lond. Translated from the Latin by T. Stack, M. D.*

THE *Cereus Peruvianus* happened lately to flower at *Norimberg*, in the Garden of Mr. *John Magnus Volkammer*, who is well known to the World by his *Hesperides Norimbergenses*. Upon this Occasion Dr. *Christopher James Trew* made use of all possible Care and Industry to acquire a thorough Knowledge of this Plant. Wherefore we will compendiously communicate his Observations at present, waiting his own giving an ample Account thereof, with Copper Plates, such as he has some Years since given of the *American Aloe* with the utmost Accuracy and Diligence.

This *Cereus*, separated from another, of which it was a Branch seven Years ago, and exposed in open Air all Summer, grew without pushing forth Branches. It is six Foot three Inches high, and thirteen Inches thick. It has seven Angles at its Basis, eight about the Middle, and nine near the Top. Its upper Part is of a Sea-Green, on Account of the Powder with which it is covered; its lower of a Grass-green. The Down of its Prickles is between Pale and White about the Top, every where else it is Brown. On the fifth of
September,

September, at the Height of six Foot two Inches from the Ground, it shot a certain round Knot from its Trunk, which without any help of Art, so encreased and extended almost horizontally, that on the fourteenth of the same Month, it was eight Inches long, and plainly shewed a Flower, though as yet closed, embellished with a beautiful Mixture of Green, Purple, and White. This same Evening the Flower began to open, and continued till Midnight; when being entirely spread, it was six Inches in Diameter. It was of a pretty strong, but not very pleasant Smell. After Midnight it gradually contracted about half an Inch, and remained thus till next Day at Noon. Then it began to contract faster, to half the Diameter the expanded Flower was of; and the next Morning it was quite closed and withered, but hung on the Trunk till the thirtieth of *September*. The Beginning of the Flower is a sort of Tube three Inches long, not quite an Inch thick, between a yellow and a pale Green. Its Surface was smooth, but channelled by certain small narrow Furrows, between which, blunt Protuberances were seen to run, in a parallel Order, along the Ridges. Where the Tube expanded itself, it divided into more than forty petaloid Segments, ranked in six separate Series, the three inferior and exterior whereof here and there confounded their Order; while the three superior and interior remained regular and unmixed. These Series were distinguished by their Size and Colour. The first, or exterior was of the same Colour with the Tube, *viz.* of a pale Green; but its upper Part gradually inclined to a Purple. The second and third had half the inner Part greenish, the Edges of a more intense Purple. The fourth was between yellow

low and white, terminating in purple Tops. The Tops of the fifth were likewise purplish. The petaloid Segments of the sixth were very tender and white. The Segments are of an oblong Figure, and in the first Series were terminated with blunt, in the others, with more and more pointed Tops. The inner or sixth Series, which contained thirteen of these Segments, exhibited all the Edges finely and lightly, but irregularly cut and divided. The *Pistillum* of equal Height with the Surface of the Flower, and hollow like a small Tube, ran, at its upper End, into as many fine pale Filaments, spread in the Form of a Crown, as there were Segments in the inmost Row, *viz.* thirteen. The Day before the Flower dropped from the *Ovarium*, the Place where it was to separate was marked by a blackish Circle, at which the Tube separated spontaneously from the *Ovarium* or *Matrix*, that is, the Rudiments of the Fruit; the *Pistillum* still firmly adhering to the *Ovarium*. The Flower, now fallen, being dissected longitudinally, the Origin of the *Stamina* lay open to the Eye; and it very manifestly appeared that the petaloid Segments of the Flower, far from affording the least Mark of a natural Partition, stuck so very close to the Tube, that not one of them would quit it without tearing it off by Violence.

The Fruit, though it came not to its full Growth, plainly evinced, by Inspection alone, that it is not prickly. Upon Dissection it afforded a viscous Juice, and within was a certain Cavity, the Sides whereof were every where, except at the Bottom, thick set with an innumerable Quantity of small *Villi*,

to

to each one of which hung an oblong, white, pellucid Vesicle, which is the Rudiment of the future Seed.

We hope this Description will not be unacceptable to Lovers of Botany, not only because the *Cereus* does not often flower, nor are there always at hand Persons either able, or willing to give the Attendance requisite for rightly observing and describing so transient a Flower: But also because it plainly discovers the Errors committed, even by very great Men, in the Description of this Plant and its Flower. The Grof-
fest of these Errors, doubtless, is their ranking it unanimously among the polypetalous Flowers, whereas it is monopetalous. But as for other Remarks, which our most diligent Author has furnished us with, for correcting the History of this Plant, we will, for want of Room, refer to the next Opportunity.

Dec. 20.
1730.

F I N I S.