

ON RECENT ADDITIONS TO THE FLORA OF
TASMANIA.

By AUGUSTUS SIMSON.

[Read 13th May, 1879.]

At the instigation of Baron F. von Müeller I beg to lay before the Society specimens of a species of *Hakea*, not hitherto recorded in the Tasmanian Flora.

From the Baron's letter, which I send herewith, it seems that this plant is found in Gippsland, Victoria. I found it at George's Bay on my first visit in May, 1875, where it is of very frequent occurrence in marshy places, growing to a height of twelve (12) to fifteen (15) feet, or even higher. These shrubs occur also on Flinders Island, Bass' Straits, forming occasionally scrubs in wet places, and growing very closely together to a height of at least twenty (20) feet.

As Baron Müeller seems to think that the announcement of the discovery of new plants (or at least plants as yet unknown as Tasmanian, though possibly occurring in other countries) may encourage others to search diligently for more, I send also specimens of two other plants recently added to the Tasmanian Flora, one of which is quite a new species. These are:—

1st. *Eucalyptus virgata*, Sieber, or, as the Baron has re-named it, *vide* his letter, *Eucalyptus Sieberi*, Müeller, one of the species known in the colonies as "Ironbark." This fine tree grows to a height of one hundred (100) feet, with a diameter of four (4) or five (5) feet, on all the dry granite country in the north-east portion of the colony. It occurs also in that neighbourhood on the Slate Hills about the heads of the George's River, Scamander, South Esk, Break-of-Day River, and other streams. In the granite country it grows in the valleys also, but in the slate districts is replaced by Stringy Bark (*Enc. obliqua*), Swamp Gum (*Enc. viminalis*), and Peppermint (*Enc. amygdalina*). On the dry hills and ridges along the coast, and about George's Bay, it is the prevailing species, *Enc. amygdalina* being the only other of frequent occurrence, except close along the shores of the Bay, where *Enc. globulus* is to be found. Like all of its section of the Eucalypts, it has thick rough persistent bark, deeply furrowed in the older trees; in the saplings the bark is outwardly scaly, and can easily be scraped off. The timber is useful for posts and rails, being very hard and durable. It is also good for sawing purposes, having been the timber cut up at the saw mills on the George's River

before they stopped work. For bushmen, or those camped out in the bush, it has the great advantage of burning freely when green. The bark of all the species of this section burns fiercely; so much so, indeed, that in Northern Queensland the bark of the local species is used by blacksmiths for heating tires of wheels and other pieces of work too large to be placed in the forge, and I daresay this is the case in the other Australian colonies. To Mr. Thomas Stephens belongs the credit of having added this forest tree to the Tasmanian Flora, he having told me of it before I left town on my first visit to George's Bay, and stated his conviction that it was a species not hitherto known as Tasmanian, or possibly a new species altogether.

2nd. *Helichrysum Spiceri*, Müller, a new species of the "everlasting" or *immortelles* flowers, which I discovered first in December, 1876, on the roadside, going from Longley towards the Sandfly coal seam. There was only one plant, which was bushy and covered with flowers.

The following December I passed the spot a second time, and found the same plant again in blossom. Unfortunately on neither occasion had I time to search for more specimens.

I have not yet seen Baron Müller's description of this plant, nor do I know if he has yet published it. No doubt he will communicate the particulars to the Society in due time.

It is quite unlike any other *Helichrysum* occurring in this colony, and is a very pretty shrubby plant. It is much to be desired that any one residing in the vicinity, or passing by the locality, should search for more specimens.

The Society will, no doubt, be glad to hear that Baron Müller has named this new species after the Rev. Mr. Spicer, as he says, "in acknowledgment of the exertions made by our reverend friend for the furtherance of Tasmanian Botany."

In conclusion, I hope the recent discovery of these three conspicuous plants, after the census of the Tasmanian Flora was supposed to be complete, may, by showing that there are still discoveries of new plants to be made, stimulate others to search carefully for other new species.

In the event of any plant not agreeing with the descriptions given in Mr. Spicer's "Handbook of the Plants of Tasmania," or in the more elaborate works of Hooker and Benthams, it is advisable in all cases to send the specimen to Baron Müller, who will, no doubt, with his usual courtesy, give the name, or state whether the plant is of a species new to Tasmania.

GOULD'S COUNTRY, 29th April, 1879.