

Helena, having also been found in Ascension deserves examination and discussion in this place.

*Commidendron rugosum*, DC., one of the St Helena small arboreous *Compositæ*, is recorded from Ascension by a no less competent and trustworthy authority than Burchell, who spent five years in St Helena, and was perfectly familiar with every plant. This record was first published, in an abbreviated form, in Hooker's *Icones Plantarum*, xi. p. 45, and subsequently copied by Melliss in his *St Helena*. It was first copied from a note, in Burchell's handwriting, on the back of a drawing of *Commidendron rugosum* in the collection of Burchell's drawings of plants, scenery, &c., of St Helena, in the Herbarium library at Kew. The whole note runs thus: "This plant was found growing wild in the Green Mountain at Ascension, but very scarce, and furnishes the principal food for the wild goats. 26. 1. 17." This is written beneath the original inscription: "Scrubwood or gum-shrub, from between Longwood and Gregory's. 18. 5. 1810." In Burchell's manuscript there is evidence that he was at Fulham in 1817, and within a fortnight of the date given, so that it must have been written from memory or copied from some other document. When he was at Ascension, if ever, we have not been able to ascertain; the only mention of the island in his voluminous manuscript notes at Kew that we have seen is the one in question. But Burchell was so exceedingly exact in all his entries, and so thoroughly reliable in everything that can be verified, that we cannot reject his testimony, simply because it has not been corroborated.

The second plant is *Wahlenbergia linifolia*, ADC., which De Candolle himself<sup>1</sup> records from Ascension thus: "In Sancta Helena (L. Banks! Lindl. ! Kunth!) et in ins. Ascensionis (Herb. Mérat!)."

The third is *Nephrodium cognatum*, Hook., recorded by Kuhn (*Filices Africanæ*, p. 128) from Ascension, in Hb. Miquel. Of course it should be kept in view that all three of these records may be wrong; still, the probabilities of a common origin of the vegetation of the two islands are sufficiently strong to justify the publication of the slenderest evidence bearing thereon. The recent discovery in South Trinidad, by Dr Ralph Copeland, of *Asplenium compressum*, a distinct species of fern previously only known from St Helena, may be adduced as another possible link in the chain of evidence of these islands having derived their vegetation from the same source. It has already been mentioned that the Ascension and St Helena species of *Hedyotis* are as dissimilar as any two species of this large genus, and it may be added of the Ascension endemic *Euphorbia organoides* that its nearest ally is *Euphorbia trinervia* from the Guinea coast, while the genus *Euphorbia* is not represented in the flora of St Helena by any certainly indigenous species. On the other hand, of the fourteen vascular cryptogams found in Ascension, seven also occur in St Helena, and one is more nearly related to endemic St Helena species than to any others.

<sup>1</sup> *Prodromus Syst. Nat. Reg. Veg.*, vii. p. 438.