

# ENUMERATION OF THE PLANTS.

## PHANEROGAMÆ.—DICOTYLEDONES.

### CARYOPHYLLACEÆ.

*Polycarpon tetraphyllum*, Linn., f.

*Polycarpon tetraphyllum*, Linn., f.; DC., Prodr., iii. p. 376; Oliver, Fl. Trop. Afr., i. p. 144.

ASCENSION.—Indigenous? *Hooker*.

This almost ubiquitous plant in maritime districts was not one of those collected by Osbeck, but it has perhaps as good a claim to be considered indigenous as *Aristida ascensionis* or *Portulaca oleracea*.

### PORTULACEÆ.

*Portulaca oleracea*, Linn.

*Portulaca oleracea*, Linn., Sp. Pl., ed. i., p. 82, sub *Aristida*, et p. 445, et Amœn. Acad., vii. p. 505; DC., Prodr., iii. p. 353; Oliver, Fl. Trop. Afr., i. p. 148.

ASCENSION.—Indigenous? *Osbeck*; *Sparrrman*; *Hooker*, &c.

This plant is common on nearly all sandy sea-shores in tropical and subtropical countries, and it seems very probable that its seeds or even branches are conveyed by the waves from shore to shore, for it is found in the most remote and unfrequented places. It is apparently one of the first flowering plants to invade the coral islets, and it will grow close to the water's edge. There is a specimen in Kew Herbarium from Mangaia, South Pacific, collected by the Rev. Mr Gill, who notes on his label: "Grows on dead coral close to water's edge." It grows perhaps equally well inland; and, as it is a cultivated plant, its present wide area of distribution is doubtless partly due to that fact. Unless it belonged to the ancient flora of Ascension and St Helena, which is not probable, its presence in these islands is more likely to be due to the agency of man. Nevertheless, it is of interest to reproduce the earlier records of its existence. As already mentioned, it was one of the four flowering plants collected by Osbeck in Ascension about 1750; and Sparrrman observed it in 1776, as we learn from his *Iter in Chinam* (*Amœnitates Academicæ*, vii. p. 505). Thus: "Maii 11. Anchora jacta est ad insulam St Helenæ, ubi Portulacæ oleracæ ingens copia sponte crescebat. Maii 25. Ad insulam Adscensionis pervenimus, ubi in littore numero 79 Testudines *Mydas cepimus* et *Portulacam oleraceam collegimus*."