

BOTANICAL HISTORY OF JUAN FERNANDEZ AND MASAFUERA.

The botanical history of these islands dates back only a little more than half a century ; for the accounts of the vegetation given in the writings of earlier travellers contain little definite information, and the first descriptions of the peculiar plants have all been published since 1830. Disregarding a few odd specimens collected by various persons who have merely touched at the island, the Juan Fernandez plants in the Kew Herbarium have been collected by about ten persons. Taking these collections in their chronological order, they are—Mrs M. Graham, 1823 ; David Douglas, with whom was Dr Scouler, 1824 ; Bertero, with whom was Cuming for a short time, 1830 ; Gay, 1832 ; Germain, 1854 ; Reed, about 1870 ; and Moseley, 1875. There is also a small collection in the Kew Herbarium, communicated in 1861 by Dr Philippi, without any collector's name ; whether he himself visited the island is not evident from his writings.

Lasègue¹ has little to add to the foregoing list of collectors in Juan Fernandez. He casually mentions Caldcleugh, who was attached to the British Embassy in Brazil, as having botanised in the island with Bertero. Whether he made an independent collection we have not ascertained.

A few words respecting each of the above named collectors and collections, with references to, and extracts from what has been published thereon may follow here.

Mrs M. Graham, wife of Admiral Graham, who was some time on the Pacific station, paid more attention to ferns than flowering plants, though among the latter was a specimen of a *Wahlenbergia* (*Wahlenbergia grahamæ*, Hemsl.), which was rediscovered by Mr Moseley, and is published in this Report for the first time. This lady, who was no mean artist herself, as a picture painted by her of the Bay of Rio Janeiro, now in the possession of Sir Joseph Hooker, testifies, afterwards married Sir Augustus Callcott, the well-known painter, and *Escallonia callcottiae* was named after her. In her Journal of a Residence in Chili, she gives a charming description of the Island of Juan Fernandez :—

“It is,” she says, “the most picturesque place I ever saw, being composed of high perpendicular rocks, wooded nearly to the top, with beautiful valleys ; and the ruins of the little town in the largest of these heighten the effect. . . . The valleys are exceedingly fertile, and watered by copious streams, which occasionally form small marshes, where the Panke [*Gunnera*] grows very luxuriantly, as well as watercresses and other aquatic plants. The little valley where the town is, or rather was, is full of fruit trees, and flowers and sweet herbs now grown wild ; and near the shore it is covered with radishes and seaside oats. After dinner I walked to the valley called Lord Anson's Park, and on the way found numbers of European shrubs and herbs, and in the half-ruined hedges which denote the boundaries of former fields, we found apple, pear, and quince trees, and cherries almost ripe. The ascent is steep and rapid from the beach, even in the valleys, and the long grass was dry and slippery,

¹ Musée Botanique de Monsieur Benjamin Delessert, p. 259, &c. See also Hooker's Botanical Miscellany, iii. p. 303.