

VI. *On a New Species of Cycas from Southern India.* By W. T. THISELTON DYER,
M.A., C.M.G., F.R.S.

(Plate XVII.)

Read May 3rd, 1883.

THE discovery of a new species belonging to the *Cycadeæ* is always a notable fact, and in this case it is the more interesting as the Indian peninsula has always been regarded as, at the best, poorly furnished with representatives of Gymnosperms.

Southern India appears to possess three species of the genus *Cycas*. *C. circinalis*, L., is well known as a native of Malabar. *C. squamosa*, Lodd., is probably distinct; but it is at present very imperfectly known. I have given its horticultural history, as far as I have been able to make it out, in the 'Gardeners' Chronicle' for August 27, 1881.

Besides these, Colonel Beddome has mentioned in his 'Forester's Manual of Botany for Southern India' (p. ccxxvii), a third. I will quote his words:—

"A . . . species, which I take to be *C. revoluta*, is common on the Cuddapah and other hills on the east side of the Presidency; its leaflets are very narrow, with revolute margins, and the costa not prominent and raised beneath. I have, however, never seen it in flower."

The native country of *Cycas revoluta*, if not some of the Japanese islands, is almost certainly in Eastern Asia; and it seemed exceedingly unlikely that Colonel Beddome's plant could be that species. Not having seen a specimen, I applied to him for one; and this he very kindly furnished me with from his own herbarium. It consisted merely of a frond; but this appeared to me to be in many respects quite distinct from *C. revoluta*.

I was anxious to obtain plants for cultivation, as well as the male and female inflorescences. For copious examples of all of these I have to thank H. H. Yarde, Esq., the Deputy Conservator of Forests, Cuddapah division. From the material so obtained the plate and the following description have been prepared.

The species is so distinct in habit that it is difficult to indicate its relationship; but on the whole it appears to me that it might be regarded as a very reduced form of *C. circinalis*, its Malabar congener, though differing from it in many striking particulars.

CYCAS BEDDOMEI, Dyer, sp. nov.; foliorum segmentis numerosissimis linearibus spinoso-acuminatis margine revolutis, infimis abbreviatis ad spinulas repente reductis, petiolo versus basim inermi, strobilo masculino oblongo-ovoideo subsessili, squamis e basi obovato-deltaoidea longe acuminatis primum fusco-pubescentibus deinde glabrescentibus basi strobili rectis deinde apicem versus valde deflexis, carpophyllis ferrugineo-pubescentibus longe lingulatis supra medium 4 semina gerentibus in laminam ovato-lanceolatam longe acuminatam dentato-lobatam desinentibus, senioribus glabris.

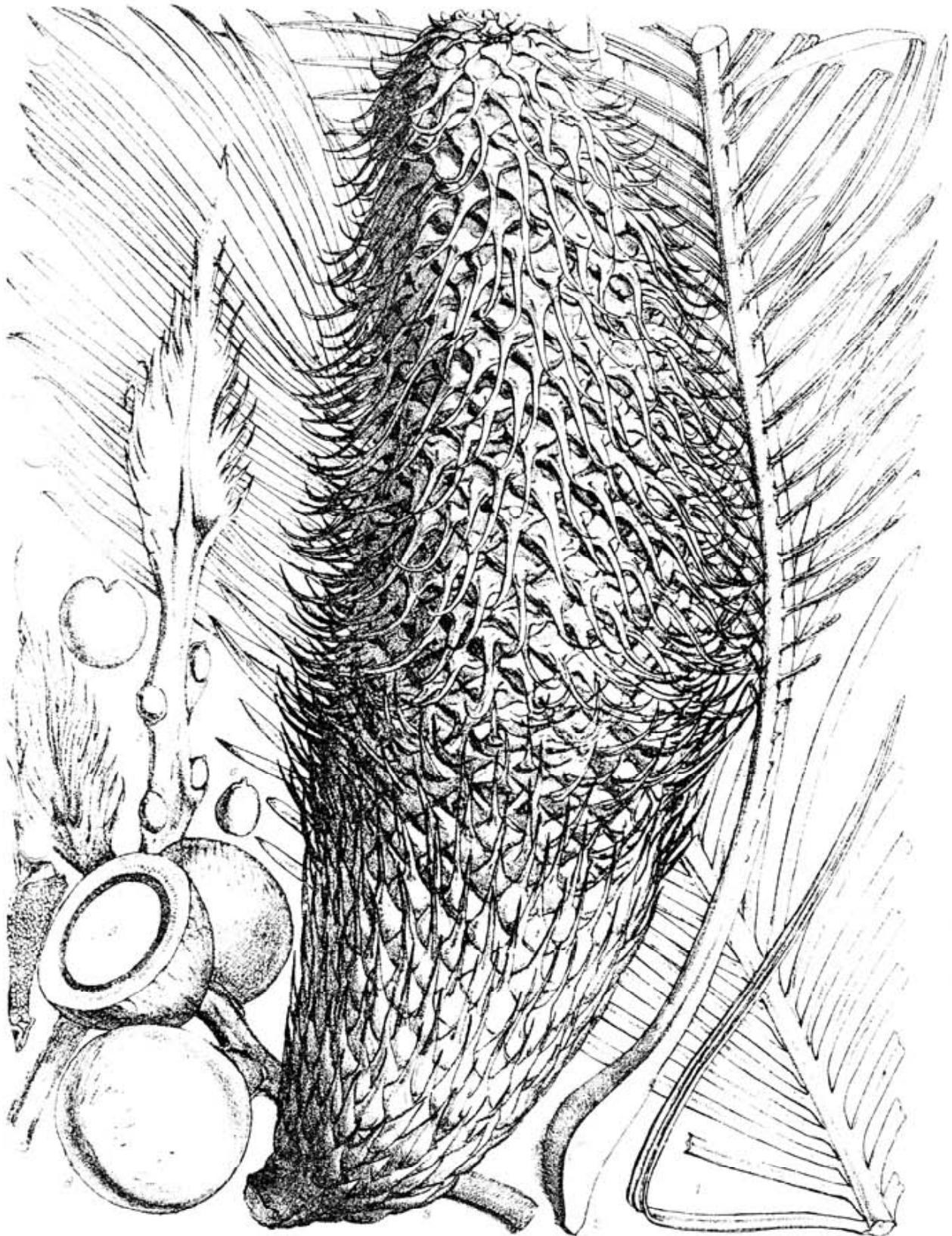
The only stems I have seen are small, not more than a few inches high, and clothed with the glabrescent closely imbricated leaf-bases. Leaves about 3 feet long, 9 in. broad; rhachis subquadrangular; petiole about 6 in. long, strongly 4-angled, the upper third furnished with a few minute teeth, the base clothed with a tufted tomentum; leaf-segments strongly revolute, about $\frac{1}{2}$ in. wide. Male cone about 13 in. long, 3 in. in diam., slightly stipitate; scales tapering acuminate from an oblong-deltoid base, erect at the base of the cone, strongly deflexed in the upper half or two thirds. Carpophylls 6-8 in. long, bearing 4 ovules above the middle; lamina about 3 in. long, 1 in. broad, ovate-lanceolate, with a long acuminate point; margin deeply lacinate, segments tapering into aculeate spines, seeds globose, $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. in diameter, sometimes slightly compressed.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PLATE.

PLATE XVII.

Cycas Beddomei, Dyer, n. sp.

Fig. 1, upper part of frond; 2, lower part of same; 3, male cone; 4, antheriferous scale of male cone; 5, carpophyll with ovules; 6 & 7, ovules in different stages of growth; 8, carpophyll with mature seeds, all of natural size.



CYCAS BEDDOMEI, Dyer n. sp.