

A NEW PHILIPPINE SPECIES OF CYCAS

By E. D. MERRILL

Of the Gray Herbarium, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts

FOUR PLATES

February 11, 1902, I made a single day's trip inland from Halsey Harbor, Culion, the objective being a large open grassy area locally known as the *cogonal grande* or the *patag grande* originally selected as a possible site for the Culion leper colony. Towards the northern part of this area my attention was called to a number of characteristic *Cycas* plants, these mostly 1 to 2 m high, growing on open gentle slopes in the cogon (*Imperata*) area. A number of these were examined, but none of the plants bore traces of either male cones or female sporophylls. I accordingly had to content myself with collecting a few leaves. Until 1923 this single collection represented all that was known regarding this cycad.

In the early part of 1908 I compared the Kew specimen of my No. 657 with the *Cycas* material in that herbarium, concluding that the only close match was the Australian *Cycas cairnsiana* F. Muell. In my Enumeration¹ I placed this number under F. Mueller's species with the comment: "A curious species, of which only the leaves are known, perhaps representing the above Australian species."

Although several attempts were made by correspondents and friends to locate this *Cycas* in Culion it was not until April, 1923, that additional material came in when Dr. G. A. Perkins and Dr. H. W. Wade found the species near where I had originally collected it, and sent portions of a single leaf and a few male sporophylls to Manila. Previous trips made by Doctors Perkins and Wade had failed in their objectives, probably for the reason that my trip was made eastward from Halsey Harbor on the west coast of the island, and their trips were made westward from the Culion Leper Colony on the east coast. On the trip in April, 1923, which resulted in the relocation of the species, the plants were found late in the afternoon after Doctors Wade and Perkins had been on the trail for about seven hours. Later

¹ Enum. Philip. Fl. Pl. 1 (1922) 1.