

On the Identity of *Premna corymbosa* Rottl. et Willd. and *Premna integrifolia* Linn.

BY

HAROLD ROY FLETCHER.

Since 1771 the name *Premna integrifolia* Linn. has been used for a shrub distributed over tropical Asia and Western Australia, being particularly common on sea-coasts.

Linnaeus (Mantissa ii, 1771) gave this name to the plant which had been known as "*Cornutia corymbosa* Burm. ind. 133, t. 41, f. 1 (1768)." Therefore, according to priority, *P. corymbosa* (Burm. f.) Rottl. et Willd. in Gesell. Nat. Freunde Neue Schr. iv (1803), 187-8, is the correct name for this plant, which most subsequent authors have called *P. integrifolia* Linn.

The type of *P. integrifolia* Linn. came from Ceylon. The plant was first described by Burman in Thesaurus Zeylanicus (1737), 209, under the name "*Sambucus zeylanica odorata aromatica*." Later, Linnaeus in Fl. Zeyl. (1747), 195, gave the plant the single name "*Cornutioides*." Following these early records, the first binomial was used by Burman in Flora Indica, 133, t. 41, f. 1 (1768), who named the Ceylon material *Cornutia corymbosa*.

In his Mantissa, Linnaeus split this Ceylon material into two species which he distinguished on leaf margin characters: *P. integrifolia* ["*P. foliis integerrimis*" (p. 252)] and *P. serratifolia* ["*P. foliis serratis*" (p. 253)]. These two species were united by Schauer in DC. Prodrômus, xi (1847), p. 632, under the name *P. serratifolia*, which name, as Bentham points out, would seem to be the less appropriate of the two for the consolidated species, and which, in point of priority, is the later and therefore the wrong name. Subsequent authors have consistently followed Schauer in uniting the two plants, but have used the earlier name *P. integrifolia* instead of the name *P. serratifolia*. Ridley is the only modern author who separates the two plants. In Fl. Mal. Pen. iii (1923), p. 619, he remarks that *P. serratifolia* is quite a distinct species. Schauer was correct in uniting the two species and Ridley wrong in separating them, for both names were based on the same Ceylon material—*Cornutia corymbosa* Burm.

It is therefore clear that there is only one species in the Linnaean material and that the correct name for the species is *P. corymbosa* (Burm. f.) Rottl. et Willd.

However, we must note that C. B. Clarke in Hook. f. Fl. Brit. Ind. [Notes, R.B.G., Edin., No. XCIII, July 1936.]

iv (1885), 573, uses the name *P. corymbosa* as well as the name *P. integrifolia*. But C. B. Clarke was wrong in believing that he was dealing with two distinct species, for all three names, *P. corymbosa* of Rottl. et Willd. and C. B. Clarke, *P. integrifolia* of Linnaeus and subsequent authors, *P. serratifolia* of Linnaeus, Schauer and Ridley, have been based on the same type material, and *P. corymbosa* (Burm. f.) Rottl. et Willd. is the correct name.

The true *P. corymbosa* is thus characterised: In maturity the stems are sometimes thorny; the leaves, ovate to ovate-oblong, up to 12 cm. long and 6 cm. broad, entire or slightly toothed, and round, truncate or slightly cordate at the base, often are very pubescent when young, but later pubescent only along the midrib; the small flowers, greenish-yellow in colour, are in lax cymes or corymbs.

There are, however, three varieties, and with the change of name new combinations are involved.

P. integrifolia L. var. *angustior* C. B. Clarke in Hook. f. Fl. Brit. Ind. iv (1885), 574, like the species a low shrub of the seashore, but with narrower leaves tapering at both ends and with smaller corymbs, now becomes *P. corymbosa* (Burm. f.) Rottl. et Willd. var. *angustior* (C. B. Clarke) Fletcher comb. nov.

P. integrifolia L. var. *minor* Ridl. Fl. Malay Pen. ii (1923), 619, 'a prostrate creeper of the sandhills of Mergui, Ceylon, and Lower Siam, is now *P. corymbosa* (Burm. f.) Rottl. et Willd. var. *minor* (Ridl.) Fletcher comb. nov.

P. integrifolia L. var. *obtusifolia* (R. Br.) P'ei, Verbenaceae of China (1932), 75, a variety differing from the type in its oblong, obtuse, entire leaves, which are very glandular beneath, now becomes *P. corymbosa* (Burm. f.) Rottl. et Willd. var. *obtusifolia* (P'ei) Fletcher comb. nov.