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NOTES ON THE ACCENTUATION OF CERTAIN GENERIC NAMES.

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A REVIEW of the accentuation of botanical names as indicated in current American manuals discloses a number of inaccuracies and inconsistencies. While it is not my purpose here to enter upon an exhaustive discussion of these errors, I should like, however, to call attention to a few desirable changes in common pronunciation. To add to the already overwhelming burden of an increasing and frequently changing synonymy any change in the accentuation of familiar names will probably not arouse great enthusiasm among botanists, but to those who believe that whatever the common practice may be, a manual or other botanical text-book should contain the correct pronunciations, so far as they are known, the changes here suggested will not, I hope, seem altogether unwarranted. In this article I shall limit my remarks to generic names, as being of greater difficulty and variety than those applied to species, and shall discuss only certain of the names in the sixth edition of Gray's Manual.

Before attempting to settle the accent of generic names it will be well to ask just what those names are. I shall divide them into the following principal groups, in which nearly all generic names are included.

1. Latin and Greek common nouns, many of them names of plants, though often not of those genera to which they are now applied. Examples are CORNUS, RUBUS, ROSA ; ITEA, PTELEA, MYRICA.

2. Mythological names : CASSANDRA, ANDROMEDA, CALYPSO, etc.

3. Names borrowed from other languages than Latin or Greek and more or less Latinized: BERBERIS, TECOMA, CABOMBA, YUCCA, MAYACA.

4. Plants named for persons, either by the addition to the person's name (often modified) of *-a*, *-ia*, or by some such suffixed word as *-anthus*.

5. Artificial compounds, invented by the authors, generally from Greek component parts, because of the ease of compounding in Greek, *e. g.*, SERICOCARPUS, CAULOPHYLLUM. These are often carelessly and incorrectly formed. In this sin Linnaeus and Rafinesque are among the chief offenders. Of about nineteen names ascribed by the sixth edition of the Manual to Rafinesque, three are formed from names of persons, one is unexplained, and fifteen are of his own concoction. Of these fifteen, ten are incorrectly formed!

6. Names derived from those of other genera, including anagrams: TRILISA (*Liatris*), VERBESINA (*Verbena*), VALERIANELLA, CROTONOPSIS.

All these names are by common convention put into a form more or less closely approximating to Latin, and are accompanied by adjectives in agreement with them according to Latin rules of gender. From the unity afforded by this thin veneer of Latinity any uniform system of accentuation must take its start. We should therefore enquire upon what principle Latin words are accented. For those whose recollection of Latin accent is less vivid than it once was I will summarize its principal rules.

1. The penultimate syllable of a word if long is accented; if not, the antepenult receives the accent.

2. A syllable is long if it contains a long vowel or a diphthong, or a short vowel followed by *x*, *z*, or two consonants (except a mute or *f* followed by a liquid). Examples:

a) vowel long: CALOPÒGON.

b) diphthong: SUAÈDA.

c) before *x*: HYPÓXIS.

d) before *z*: I have noted no instance of this in the Manual.

e) before two consonants: LITTORÉLLA, SYNÁNDRA, EPIPÁCTIS.

Note that the combinations *ch*, *ph*, *th* (Greek χ , ϕ , θ) each count as a single consonant.

f) before a mute or *f* + a liquid = BRACHYÉLYTRUM.

As in all these cases except a) the length of the syllables is at

once apparent, the difficulties narrow themselves to those words in whose penults vowels whose quantity is not obvious precede single consonants. The quantity of the penultimate vowels of Latin and Greek words is generally known, either from derivation or from use of the words in poetry. Thus Homer, *Iliad* xxi. 350, corrects the Manual pronunciation of PTELEA and ITEA and proves that of MYRICA. Words, however, which do not occur in Greek or Latin poetry but merely in prose are sometimes uncertain (eg. CARDAMINE, ELATINE). Uncertainty as to the etymologies of some words (such as VERONICA, ARNICA, ABUTILON) is a great obstacle to the determination of the proper accent. The quantities also of the penultimate vowels of many native words are uncertain and await the attention of persons conversant with the languages from which these names are drawn. In such cases, until positive evidence is forthcoming, a deviation from current usage is undesirable, and indeed we may count ourselves fortunate when usage does not split upon this very point.

In the case of names formed from proper names by the addition of *-a*, it has been a convenient custom arbitrarily to consider penultimate *a*, *o*, or *u* as long and *e*, *i*, or *y* as short: BERTERÒA; MUNROA not *Múnroa* as in the Manual; LISTERA; LÍPPIA; etc.

These preliminary remarks are intended to apply to the so-called 'English method' of pronouncing Latin, so firmly established in this country for scientific names that nothing short of a revolution in pronunciation could supplant it. But while this system differs in the sounds given to various vowels and consonants from other more correct systems its theory of accentuation is in agreement with other methods.

I shall now speak of certain generic names incorrectly accented in Gray's Manual, grouping them in two lists: 1) of names in which the mistaken quantity of the vowel has led to placing the accent on the wrong syllable; 2) of cases in which the accent is placed on the correct syllable but in which the length of the vowel of that syllable is wrongly indicated. For the accented syllables I shall employ the notation used in the Manual, the grave accent ` indicating a long vowel and the acute ´ a short vowel.

1. CAÛCALIS not *Caucàlis*

ERIGENIA not *Erigènia*. From ἡριγένεια, a Homeric epithet of Dawn.

HYPERICUM not *Hypericum*. ὑπέρικον (cf. ἐρεικη, *erica*).

MICROSTYLIS not *Microstylis*. }

NEMASTYLIS not *Nemastylis*. } στῦλῖς

NOTHOSCÓRDUM not *Nothoscordum*. The penult is long before two consonants.

POLYGÓNATUM not *Polygonatum*. πολυγόνᾱτον.

STENOSIPHON not *Stenosiphon*.

2. In this list I shall indicate only the *correct* vowel quantities of words which the Manual indicates incorrectly.

ÁBIES

ÁCER

AEGOPÓDUM. So also

CHENOPÓDIUM

LYCOPÓDIUM

THELYPÓDIUM

POLYPÓDIUM

AGRÒSTIS. So also

ERAGRÒSTIS

CALAMAGRÒSTIS

AMBRÓSIA

ARCEUTHÓBIUM

ARISTOLÓCHIA

BÍDENS

BRÓMUS

BUMÉLIA

CASTÁNEA

CHAMAEIRIUM

CLÁDIUM

CLÈMATIS

CRÓTON

CYPRIPÉDIUM

DIÓDIA

EPILÓBIUM

EUPHRÁSIA

GÁLAX

GÁLIIUM

GERÁNIUM

GLYCÉRIA

GNAPHÁLIUM

GRATÍOLA

HELÉNIIUM

HELIOTRÓPIUM

HYOSCÝAMUS

IMPÁTIENS

ÌTEA

LÁRIX

LÍLIUM

LÓLIUM

MÌMULUS

MITRÉOLA

MODIOLA

ONOSMÓDIUM

OPÙNTIA

PHACÉLIA

PHASÉOLUS

PHLÉUM

PHLÓMIS

PHYSOSTÉGIA

PÍCEA

PÓA

PRÌMULA

PTÉLEA

PTÉKIS

PÝRUS (cf. *Pyrola*)

RHÈXIA

RHÛS	STÁCHYS
RÓSA	THÝMUS
RÚMEX	TRÒXIMON
SÁLIX	UNÍOLA
SAPÍNDUS	VACCINIUM
SENECIO	VÍOLA
SÍUM	XÝRIS
SPARGÁNIUM	

I will not here take the space to prove all of these pronunciations but will give samples by notes on a few of the more surprising changes.

CLÈMATIS. Greek κληματίς.

EPILÓBIUM. Greek ἐπί + λόβιον.

LÌLIUM. Cf. Vergil, Aen. vi. 708-709: *candida circum lilia funduntur*.

LÓLIUM. Verg. Georg. i. 154: *infelix lolium et steriles dominantur avenae*.

PRIMULA. Diminutive of *prìma*.

VACCINIUM. Verg. Ecl. ii. 18:

alta ligustra cadunt, vaccinia nigra leguntur.

The other cases may be substantiated in these same ways, partly by derivation, partly by poetical use.

In offering this comparatively short list of names I am aware that many others are in as much need of study. Such a study should be undertaken in connection with a review of the derivations of generic names, a field in which there are many doubtful points, of which some will probably never be known. And if to anyone I may seem to be suggesting too violent changes, I should like to say that by adopting them we should be not merely adopting an accentuation which is theoretically correct, but should also be bringing ourselves into uniformity with European botanists to whom *Hyperìcum*, *Polygonatum*, etc. are the recognized and familiar pronunciations.

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