

Henslow, who regarded two of the plants as new species. We have not seen the specimens, but from the description and figure of *Stenotaphrum lepturoide* we believe it is nothing more than *Stenotaphrum americanum*, Schrank, which is a common littoral grass in the tropical regions of both hemispheres, and not very different from the *Stenotaphrum subulatum* of our list. And *Urera gaudichaudiana*, Hensl., is treated by Weddell¹ as a variety of the widely spread *Fleurya æstuans*, Gaud. The *Cæsalpinia* may be correctly named, or it may be the much commoner *Cæsalpinia bonducella*, for the two species have been much confused; though both doubtless owe their wide dispersion in part, at least, to oceanic currents. *Triumfetta procumbens* is a common seaside plant in the Archipelago and Polynesia, and is also found on the coast of North-eastern Australia. *Cordia orientalis* is a synonym of the *Cordia subcordata* of our list. *Ochrosia parviflora*, Hensl. (*Cerbera parviflora*, Forst.), is a common seaside tree in the Pacific Islands, and also occurs in North-eastern Australia. *Achyranthes argentea* is a variety of *Achyranthes aspera*, rather than a distinct species, and *Lepturus repens* is a common Polynesian and Australian littoral grass.

Darwin's sketch of the vegetation of the Keeling Islands² merits reproducing here, as it conveys a good idea of the aspect of the coral islands:—

“The cocoanut-tree at the first glance seems to compose the whole wood; there are, however, five or six other trees. One of these grows to a very large size, but from the extreme softness of its wood is useless; another sort affords excellent timber for ship-building. Besides the trees, the number of plants is exceedingly limited, and consists of insignificant weeds. In my collection, which includes, I believe, nearly the perfect flora, there are twenty species, without reckoning a moss,³ lichen,⁴ and fungus.⁵ To this number two trees must be added, one of which was not in flower, and the other I only heard of. The latter is a solitary tree of its kind, and grows near the beach, where, without doubt, the one seed was thrown up by the waves. A *Guilandina* also grows on only one of the islets. I do not include in the above list the sugar-cane, banana, some other vegetables, fruit-trees, and imported grasses. As the islands consist entirely of coral, and at one time must have existed as mere water-washed reefs, all their terrestrial productions must have been transported here by the waves of the sea. In accordance with this, the florula has quite the character of a refuge for the destitute. Professor Henslow informs me that of the twenty species, nineteen belong to different genera, and these again to no less than sixteen families.

“In Holman's Travels,⁶ an account is given, on the authority of Mr A. S. Keating, who resided twelve months on these islands, of the various seeds and other bodies which have been known to have been washed on shore: ‘Seeds and plants from Sumatra and Java have been driven up by the surf on the windward side of the islands. Among them have been found the Kimiri, native of Sumatra and the peninsula of Malacca; the cocoanut of Balci, known by its shape and size; the

¹ DC., Prodr., xvi. 1, p. 72.

² Journal of Researches during the voyage of H.M.S. “Beagle,” p. 454, Lond. Ed., 1879.

³ *Hypnum fuscescens*, Hook. et Arn., not *Hypnum rufescens*, Hook., as by mistake appears in Henslow's paper. The former is a Polynesian species, while the latter inhabits Alpine situations in Europe.

⁴ Not included in Henslow's paper. ⁵ *Polyporus lucidus*, Fries. ⁶ Holman's Travels, iv. p. 378.