BEGONIA PRISMATOCARPA.

Prism-fruitd Begonia.

Nat. Ord. Begoniaceae.—Monocia Polyandria.

Gen. Char. (Vide supra, Tab. 4172.)

Begonia prismatocarpa; herbacea humilis, caulibus teretibus repentiibus pilosis, ramis ascendentibus, stipulis ovatis acutis membranaceis limbiatis, foliis longe petiolatis oblique cordato-ovatis subpalmato-lobatis, lobis acuminatis inaequaliter serratis hinc laitoriibus, petioli teretibus pilosis, pedunculis axillaribus pilosis petiolo longioribus umbellatim bi-trifloris, umbella bracteis duabus stipuliformibus, floribus dipetalis, masculis staminibus monadelphis, antheris lineari-cuneiformibus, filamento perbrevi, capsula (immatura) elongata lineari-oblonga quadrangulare vix alata angulis aequalibus 4-loculari, stylo profunde 4-partito, stigmatibus capitatis pubescentibus.

If this is wanting in floral beauty, it is nevertheless a very interesting plant, a Begonia with an elongated, four-celled, four-sided capsule, a quadripartite style, and capitate stigmas. It is discovered by Mr. Gustav Mann in Fernando Po. It will probably constitute a new genus among Begoniaceae with M. Alphonse de Candolle, who has already alluded to some imperfect specimens of the plant in his valuable 'Mémoire sur la Famille des Begoniées,' in the eleventh volume of the 'Annales des Sciences Naturelles' (quatrième série, Botan.): "L'Herbier de Sir W. J. Hooker m'a fait connaître une espèce de Fernando Po, trop incomplète dans la collection pour qu'on pût la décrire, et qui semble un genre ou une section très-distincte, remarquable par un ovaire étroit et allongé, analogue à celui des Prismatocarpus." It is one of the many interesting new plants we have lately received through our collector from the mountain regions of tropical Western Africa. It flowered in the stove at Kew in December, 1861. Its locality was rocks and trees at an elevation of 3000 feet above the sea-level.

Descri. The plant is small and insignificant-looking; it has creeping, herbaceous, rounded, hairy stems and ascending branches. Leaves on long petioles, also hairy, the largest of April 1st, 1862.
them scarcely two inches in length, obliquely cordato-ovate, subpalmately three to five lobed, but the lobes are much larger on one side than the other, acuminate, coarsely and unequally, but sharply and submucronately serrated. Stipules small, ovate, fimbriated. Peduncle axillary, solitary, longer than the petiole, bearing a small imperfect umbel of two to four dipetalous flowers. Petals ovate, yellow, with a tinge of orange towards the base. Male flower pedicellate, with a cluster of many stamens borne upon a short stalk (hence monadelphous), all inclined to one side. Filament very short. Anther linear-cuneate, most of it made up of the connecticum, yellow. Female flower sessile, apparently one to each umbel. Ovary or immature fruit linear-oblong, tetragonal, a little attenuated upwards; the four angles are prominent, but scarcely form wings, and these angles are equal, four-celled, with numerous ovules attached to the four central receptacles. Style short, soon dividing into four erecto-patent branches, each crowned with a large capitate downy stigma.

Fig. 1. Stamens from the male flower, the petals being removed. 2. Single stamen. 3. Female flower (or immature fruit), the petals only removed. 4. Transverse section of the capsule:—all magnified.