

" SOME MORE PLANTS DEVELOPING ADVENTITIOUS ROOTS FROM LEAVES "

BY

G. B. PATWARDHAN,

Economic Botanist to the Government of Bombay, Poona.

In the March, 1930, issue of the Journal of the Indian Botanical Society—Vol. IX, No. 1, page 65, Mr. Krishnamurthi has brought to the notice of your readers an example of adventitious roots developing from the cut end of the petiole of *Fittonia verschaffeltii-rubrovenosa* and states that nothing has been mentioned about it regarding the genus *Fittonia* or even the family Acanthaceae. He mentions the common examples of the *Begonia* and *Bryophyllum* plants behaving similarly.

Immediately on reading the above statement, I doubted the correctness of it because I had before my mind as one of the most commonly known and familiar facts, the usual practice of our local gardeners propagating not only *F. verschaffeltii-rubrovenosa* but also some others by leaf cuttings.

These plants are :—

1. *Peperomia cluisifolia*.
2. *Peperomia magnolifolia*.
3. *Peperomia argyreneura*.
4. *Saxifraga sarmentosa*.
5. *Fittonia Pearcei*.
6. *Fittonia argyreneura*.
7. *Fittonia verschaffeltii-rubrovenosa*.
8. *Gloxinias*.
9. *Achemines*.
10. *Gesneras*.
11. *Naegelia Zebrina*.
12. *Saintpaulia ionantha*.
13. *Begonia sp.*
14. *Bryophyllum calycinum*.
15. *Strobilanthes Dyerianus*.
16. *Centrosolenia bullata*.
17. *Pellionia Daviana*.

On referring to the following books :—

1. "Gardening in the Tropics" by Woodrow.
2. "Firminger's Gardening in India" by W. Burns.
3. "Dictionary of Gardening" by Nicholson.
4. "Encyclopedia of Horticulture" by Bailey,—

I found Mr. Krishnamurthi's statement to be too true. I was specially surprised about the absence of mention of the propagation of these plants by leaf cuttings (i.e., 5, 6, 7. in the above list) in Woodrow's book, since Mr. Woodrow worked in Poona where they are propagated with ease in conservatories.

Mention may, however, be made here that several plants are propagated by leaf cuttings. Woodrow gives Nos. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14 mentioned in the above list. "Manual of Gardening" by Bailey, second edition, 1910, gives *Begonia* and *Gloxinea*, while Fuller in "Propagation of Plants" (1918, Orange Judd & Company, New York) mentions Lilac in addition to *Bryophyllum*, *Begonias* and *Gesneras*. Rangachariar in his "Manual of Elementary Botany for India", page 312, says that *Scilla indica* grows by leaf cuttings. Many more plants are said to be propagated by leaf cuttings. *Echevera* is propagated by planting a whole leaf. Even roses have been successfully propagated in experimental work by cuttings, vide page 18 of "The Practical Book of Outdoor Rose Growing" by G. C. Thomas, Jr. 1914, Philadelphia & London—J. B. Lippincott Company.

Of course for teaching or illustrative purposes, one uses *Begonias* and the very easily grown hardy *Bryophyllum Calycinum*. The latter grows in any place almost without any treatment and is obviously a favourite example to demonstrate adventitious roots from leaf cuttings. But the others mentioned, also multiply themselves very easily under conservatory conditions and may, therefore, be used for the purpose. The last three plants of the list given above produced in my garden adventitious roots from leaves in September, 1930, in 12 days.