I. On the Hungarian Oak (*Quercus conferta* of Kitaibel) as Cultivated in the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh

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multiplication of the parts of the floral envelopes and andrœcium, and a pistil composed often of several whorls of carpels.

13th January 1876.—ALEXANDER BUCHAN, A.M., Vice-President, in the Chair.

The following communications were read:—

- I. *On the Hungarian Oak* (*Quercus conferta* of Kitaibel) as Cultivated in the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh.
By Dr MAXWELL T. MASTERS. Communicated by Professor BALFOUR. (Plate VII.)

On the occasion of a visit paid to the Royal Botanic Garden during the summer of the past year, my attention was drawn by Mr M'Nab to a handsome deciduous Oak, known under the provisional or commercial name of *Q. pannonica*. As an ornamental tree it is deservedly a great favourite with that gentleman, who knows how to employ it picturesquely to the best advantage. It was my privilege to "assist at" the removal and replanting of one of these trees in July last, in that speedy and satisfactory manner familiar to those who have had experience with Mr M'Nab's method of transplantation, and with the machine devised by his father for that purpose. In consideration of these circumstances, I may be excused for feeling a kind of personal interest in this Oak, so much so that I felt it a duty incumbent upon me to endeavour to unravel the history of the tree, and ascertain its precise botanical status. The results of my researches I now beg leave to submit to the Society; I must, however, speak of it as *Q. conferta* rather than as *Q. pannonica*, as it has been duly registered under the former name, while the latter appellation is a mere commercial or garden name.

Q. conferta forms a handsome round-headed tree of moderate size, with spreading branches and grey, cracked bark. The young shoots are more or less hairy, but become glabrous. The leaves are deciduous, very shortly stalked or

almost sessile, 5 to 7 inches or more long, 3 to 4 inches broad, membranous, deep-green and glabrous above, pubescent beneath, with stellate hairs. In outline (Plate VII.) they are oblong-obovate, tapering gradually to the cordate base and more abruptly to the somewhat rounded apex, pinnately lobed, sometimes so regularly so as to be almost pectinate; at other times irregularly so as to outline and direction; the upper lobes extend about half-way down from the margin to the midrib, the lower ones rather farther. The lobes themselves are oblong, acute, not spine-pointed, entire, or with a slight tendency to lobulation. The sinuses between the lobes are narrow, linear, acute at the proximal end, somewhat dilated at the distal extremity. The petioles are very short, pilose, channelled on the upper surface, and dilated at the base. The stipules are deciduous, longer than the petioles, pilose, linear-subulate. The buds are elongate-ovoid, pilose, clustered about the ends of the shoots, and sometimes encircled by the withered stipules. Bud-scales oblong ovate, membranous, with a dark edge.

I forbear from giving the characters assigned to the acorns and their cups, as I have not seen fresh specimens of them. They are described in the works cited at the end of this note; and it is for its foliage that the tree will be valued in British gardens.

On applying to Mr M'Nab for information as to the history of the tree, he was kind enough to furnish me with the following particulars:—

“The largest tree in the Edinburgh Botanic Garden of the Oak known as *Quercus pannonica* was procured about twenty years ago from Mr P. S. Robertson, when in charge of Messrs Lawson's nursery at Golden Acre. It was planted in a part of the garden where, judging from its free-growing nature, it could not possibly extend itself into a full-grown tree, and was in consequence removed to its present site in 1865, and planted by Sir William Gibson Craig, Bart., of Riccarton, who at that time took an active share in the arrangements with the Government when the old Experimental Garden was added to the Botanic Garden, and it was the first tree removed into it. This tree is now 20 feet high, and 36 feet in circumference of branches; stem 28 inches in circumference. A very fine

plant of this Oak is to be seen at Riccarton, where it is a great favourite with Sir W. G. Craig. As Mr Robertson was the first who took charge of this Oak in Scotland, I enclose a note received from him on the subject."

Mr Robertson's note is to the following effect:—

"I first saw the *Quercus paannonica* in the garden of the London Horticultural Society twenty-seven years ago, and in a year or two after that I procured for Messrs Lawson several young plants from Booth's nursery, Hamburg. I believe all the plants in Britain till 1870 or so were raised from grafts taken from Booth's plants, and grafted in Lawson's nursery. The London tree seems never to have attracted much notice. I was told by Mr Booth (now deceased) that he had it from Hungary, and under the name of *lyrata*, and also *paonnacia*; but he fixed on the name *paannonica*, and it has stuck to the plant. I have in vain tried for more than twenty years to get seeds. If a supply of seeds could be obtained in early autumn they would probably grow, but would not do so, I fear, if they arrived later than March."

Loudon mentions that "there is an Oak in the London Horticultural Society's garden which was received from M. Schammes, of Pesth, under the name of *Q. conferta*," and which is doubtless our plant.

Wierczbicki, in a report on a botanical excursion in the Banat contained in the "Flora" for 1842, devotes some space to the description of the tree and to its botanical history. He shows that though Kitaibel's plant was but imperfectly known to botanists, yet that the foresters were well acquainted with the tree; in confirmation of which he cites the titles of a large number of papers in various journals devoted to forestry, but which I have been unable to consult.

In 1860 specimens were submitted to the late Professor Lindley by Mr Thomas Rivers ("Gardeners' Chronicle," 1860, p. 73), with a note on the colour of the shoots and the magnitude and long persistence of the leaves. Dr Lindley was unable to refer it to any species described in works accessible to him, but he mentions it as probably identical with a species, specimens of which were gathered near Constantinople by Mr Benthham.

Although, as before said, I have not seen the acorns, yet from a comparison of the leaves with native specimens and with figures, I have no doubt whatever that the *Q. panonica* of gardens is the *Q. conferta* of Kitaibel, a species which Endlicher referred to *Q. pubescens*, and Alphonse de Candolle to *Q. Farnetto* var. β *conferta*. For garden purposes it will be best to call the tree by its original name of *Q. conferta*. The tree is figured under this latter name in Reichenbach's "Ic. Floræ Germaniæ," xii., t. 646; and also in Kotschy's "Die Eichen Europ." (1862), t. 14. The latter figure is very good; in the former the leaves are more nearly sessile than is the case in the Edinburgh or native specimens.

It is a native of South-Eastern Europe, Transylvania, and Turkey in Europe, where it forms vast forests. Its wood is stated by Kotschy to be very durable, so much so that in certain Transylvanian mines, abandoned since the time of the Romans, and in which timber from this tree was used, the wood has still all the appearance of having been but recently felled. Further, we are told that the acorns are sweet to the taste, and are eaten by the Servians. In Hungary, we read, it is sometimes called the Black Oak, or the Gipsy tree, Kittu-jack.

It may be asked why I have adopted the name *conferta* instead of following either Endlicher or De Candolle, the former of whom, as we have seen, referred it to *Q. pubescens*, the latter to *Q. Farnetto* var. To this I reply that, in my opinion, formed after a comparison of numerous specimens in the herbaria, the Oak in question is distinct from either of the species to which it has been referred, though very possibly a derivative from one or other of them. The ordinary *Q. pubescens* of books and of plantations is quite different from our present plant, and nothing but confusion would arise from referring the latter to that species. I cannot think that it is any nearer to *Q. Farnetto*, to *Q. sessiliflora*, to *Q. pyrenaica*, or to any other of the species to which it has been supposed to belong. At the same time, I am too well aware of the impossibility of determining what is a species and what a variety among Oaks—or, indeed, among any other plants—to question the right of any one to come to a different conclusion from that to which I have

arrived. I have preferred, for garden purposes, to treat it, as it really is, as a distinct form, to adopt for it the earliest specific name I could find—one under which the plant has been well figured and described, and one which, for garden use at any rate, is not inaccurate, is convenient, and will not lead to confusion. In ordinary parlance, perhaps, the appellation Hungarian Oak may be as convenient as any, though it must be remembered that the species is not confined to that country.

It may be convenient, lastly, to give the synonym of this species in brief as follows:—

Q. conferta, Kitaibel, in Schultes (Ester. Flor. ii.; Aufl. i. 619 (1814); Rochel, Plant. Banat. (1828), p. 26 (name only); Reichenbach, Ic. Flor. Germ. xii., tab. 646; Kotschy, Eichen Europ., t. 14, Wiczibicki, Flora (1842), pp. 269, 273, (good description); Schur, Enum. Pl. Transsilvan. (1866), 608; Koch, Dendrologie, ii. pt. 2, p. 41 (1873); Wilkomm, Forstl. Flora (1875), 347, where several other references are given.

Q. Farnetto, Tenore (1819), var. β *conferta*, Alph. D.C. Prodr. xvi. pt. 2, p. 11; Parlatoe, Flor. Ital. iv. (1867), p. 184 (by error *congesta*).

Q. apennina, Lois. Desl. in Nouv. Duham. vii. 177, tab. 53 (1819), ex Koch, loc. supra cit. sed. vix.

Q. Esculus, Poll. Fl. Veron. iii. 125 (1824), nec L. ex Koch, l. c.

Q. pyrenaica var. (?), Loudon, Arboretum, iii. (1838), p. 1844.

Q. pubescens, Endlicher, Gen. Plant. suppl. iv., pt. 2 p. 24 (1847), vix Willd. Sp. iv., 450.

Q. pannonica, Hort. Booth, Edinb., &c.

Q. sessiliflora var. *pannonica*, Hort. Kew, Hemsley in "Gardeners' Chronicle," October 9, 1875, p. 455.

Q. hungarica, Hubeny, in Flora (1842), 269, et Hort. Germ., fide Koch, l. c.

Q. Pseudo-Agilops, Arbor. Muscav. 624, ex Koch, l. c.

Q. Agilops-latifolia, hort. quorund, fide Koch, l. c.

NOTE.—Mr M'Nab laid on the table a branch of *Quercus conferta*, taken from a tree in the Royal Botanic Garden, 15 feet high and 23 feet in circumference of branches. This tree has not yet parted with a leaf, and presents at this time (January 13) a singular effect in the landscape.

Judging from the appearance of the stock on which it is grafted, the probability is that it has been worked on a Turkey oak. With the exception of some plants composing a beech hedge, where the branches are annually cut, and some young Turkey oaks, no other

deciduous tree has leaves on just now. The *Quercus conferta* in question has never been subjected to cutting or pruning, notwithstanding the wood seems thoroughly ripened. The leaves in all likelihood will fall off immediately spring action commences. This individual tree has always been late of parting with its leaves, but never showed so many during previous winters as it does at the present time. Small plants frequently retain their leaves for a long time, but none had been known to retain them so long as the one here mentioned.

II. On the Flowering of Spring Plants. By ALEXANDER BUCHAN, A.M., F.R.S.E.

During the past twenty years the Scottish Meteorological Society has been collecting data relative to the budding, leafing, flowering, and defoliation of trees and plants, and to the migration of birds in connection with the periodical return of the seasons, and it was proposed some time ago to discuss the material which has been accumulated. As preliminary, however, to this very difficult line of inquiry, it was resolved to discuss in the first place the observations which have been made by Mr M'Nab on the flowering of spring plants in the open air in the Edinburgh Royal Botanic Garden during the past twenty-six years, and which have been published in our Transactions. These observations have been made by the same observer on the same plants, growing in the same situations, during the whole of the twenty-six years.

The average day of flowering of thirty-two spring flowers has been determined, and are shown in the following table :—

Table of average date of Flowering of Thirty-two Spring Plants in Edinburgh Royal Botanic Garden.

Jan. 25. <i>Galanthus nivalis</i> .	Feb. 11. <i>Sisyrinchium grandiflorum</i> .
„ 30. <i>Eranthis hyemalis</i> .	„ 13. <i>Crocus vernus</i> and vars.
„ 31. <i>Hepatica triloba</i> .	„ 22. <i>Daphne Mezereum</i> .
Feb. 2. <i>Corylus Avellana</i> .	„ 24. <i>Rhododendron Nobleanum</i> .
„ 3. <i>Rhododendron atrovirens</i> .	„ 26. <i>Nordmannia cordifolia</i> .
„ 4. <i>Crocus Susianus</i> .	„ „ <i>Symplocarpus fetidus</i> .
„ 8. <i>Galanthus plicatus</i> .	
„ 10. <i>Leucojum vernum</i> .	