

THE FRINGED BIRTHWORT.

The fringed birthwort, of which we take our illustration from *The Garden*, is one of the large genus *Aristolochia*, of which there are 200 species. The greater number come from tropical America; in North America, Europe, and India a few are found. Many of these plants attain too great a size to be easily cultivated, and the generally dingy color, together with their disagreeable odor, render them undesirable. The leaves of the fringed birthwort are characterized by the nerves being surrounded on the upper surface by whitish zones, this coloring being due to the presence of a film of air under the epidermis. The outside of the perianth is greenish and the interior brown-purple crossed with greenish veins. The half-climbing stems grow from 1 foot to 2 feet long, and the flowers are produced in July and August. Being a native of Brazil, it grows best in a warm house.

A CURIOUS HYBRID.

Our engraving represents a curious family, consisting of an African zebra, an Abyssinian ass, and their hybrid foal. The young animal resembles both parents, its color being grayish inclined to fawn, and its legs showing very clearly the zebra stripes. The crossing of the zebra and the ass is in accordance with the law that the most frequent and most useful forms of hybridity occur between different species belonging to the same genus. The horse, for example, will breed with the ass, the zebra and the quagga; the dog has been certainly known to breed with the wolf, and probably with the fox; the goat with the sheep, the ram with the roe; and it has been comparatively easy to obtain hybrids from the union of the rabbit and the hare.

As a rule however hybrids are not fertile. Thus the mule does not reproduce itself, but is only obtained by a repetition of the union of the ass and the mare. Between horse and ass, however, there is a wider gulf than between the zebra and ass, and therefore the chances of the hybrid of the latter having the faculty of reproduction are more favorable.

It was noted that the period of gestation in this case extended to $11\frac{1}{2}$ months, or about fifteen days longer than that of the mule. The animals are at the Berlin Zoölogical Garden.

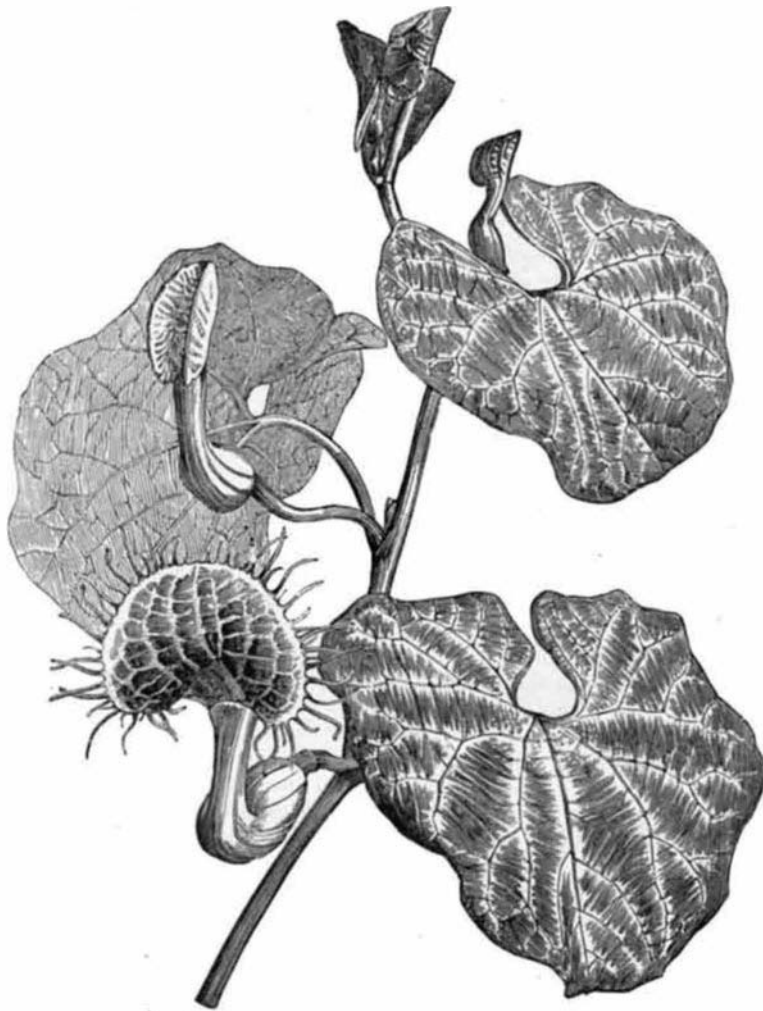
We are indebted to the *London Sporting and Dramatic News* for our illustration.

A Decorative Process.

The latest and one of the most successful efforts in art decoration we have seen has been introduced by Mr. Aldam Heaton, of Bloomsbury square, who has applied hand paint-

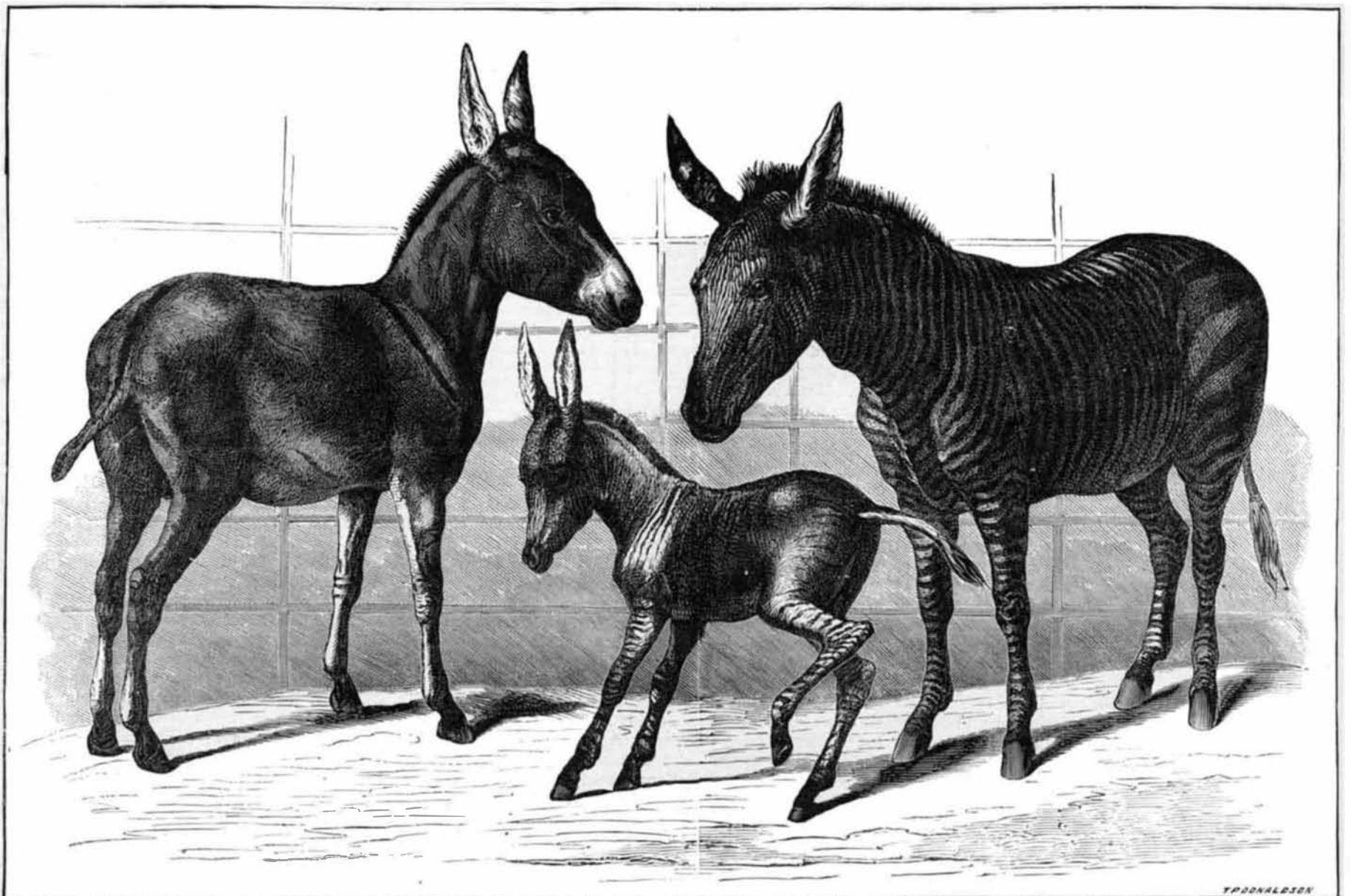
painting on panel, applicable to interiors of houses of a superior class. The work we saw was done on oak and pitch pine; and for the decoration of paneled work it is extremely suitable. One panel on pine was an admirable rendering in a naturalesque spirit of the oak and mistletoe, entwined or blended in a pleasing and thoroughly artistic manner, in which the leaves and berries were raised or painted in rilievo, the raised parts being discriminatingly juxtaposed with the portions flatly represented. The preparation of gilded gesso is, we believe, chiefly composed of lime mixed with oil and other ingredients, and productive of a remarkably fine surface. The colors chosen in the panel we saw were in a low scale—the leaves were of a bronze hue depicted in transparent colors or glazings upon the gilded ground, while the groundwork, or panel itself, was apparently stained with a dark color transparent enough to show the natural grain of the wood.

There is a remarkably pleasing solidity and cabinet picture-like effect in the work, which the smoothness and polish and transparency of the ground enhances. Another panel was treated with a lighter ground, the surface of the wood being apparently grounded with gold. The figure subjects treated by this process have all the beauty and finish of cameos or alto-relievos, owing to the polish of surface and reflection thereby caused. Mr. Heaton has recently executed a fine series of this panel painting for Mr. Ripley, M.P. for Bradford, for the billiard, smoking room, and other apartments of that gentleman's residence, "Acacia." The rooms are divided into panels by pilasters of conventional folial patterns, and contain subjects of rural pastimes and sports—boys climbing, hunting, fishing, shooting, etc., after the model of Luini. Above this a frieze of foliage, children, birds, etc., is formed. The process has certainly more of the finished cabinet picture of oil, than the decorative and flat treatments that have recently been introduced for woodwork. Stamped leather supplies some analogy to it. We are informed that the best and highest class of subject can be done in this manner for about £5 per superficial foot, though of course the cost varies with the subject and the labor bestowed. One immense gain in this kind of art decoration is that it cannot fall into the hands of indifferent or manufacturing decorators, as its value consists in the high class hand work of the artist.—*Building News*.

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ing in a way that will find favor among architects and their patrons desirous of favoring the art decoration of interiors, in contradistinction to the "manufacturing" processes. Having seen some of Mr. Heaton's work, we can explain it simply by saying it is a kind of raised or gesso

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