THE
GARDEN

AN
ILLUSTRATED WEEKLY JOURNAL
OF
HORTICULTURE IN ALL ITS BRANCHES.

FOUNDED BY


"You see, sweet maid, we marry
A gentler scion to the wildest stock;
And make conceive a bark of baser kind
By bud of nobler race: This is an art
Which does mend Nature,—change it rather: but
The art itself is nature."

Shakespeare.

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The Garden.

February 4, 1893.

Dendrobium Ainsworthi and its Allies.

Hybrid Dendrobiums do not as yet form a very important group from a horticultural standpoint, but the first place amongst them must without question be given to D. Alwaynii and the two or three other hybrids which have subsequently been raised from the same species. It was first raised in Dr. Ainsworth's garden near Manchester, the seed having been sown in 1867, the first flowers appearing in 1871. Its parents are the two well-known species D. noble and D. auratum (or hetero-stigma), which are somewhat alike in habit, but intermediate is it between the two, that it would be difficult to say which of them it most resembles. The flower is occasionally nearly 4 inches across, has white or yellow sepals and petals, in some varieties tinged at the points with rosy purple; the lip is also white or yellowish white at the margin, the centre marked with a blotch of redish purple, from which spread numerous lines of the same colour.

In the year 1870 another hybrid, from D. Alwaynii, flowered in Mures, Veitch's nursery at Cheltenham named it Dendrobium splendidissimum. Its flowers, as a rule, are closer than in Alwaynii, flowered naturally, and the petals being of a somewhat enamelled-like white, but shaded with rosy purple at the tips. The lip is broader and larger altogether than that of D. Alwaynii, but the colour of the same, the purple on the disc, however, being much deeper and the marginal area of a yellowish shade. The variety named grandiflorum has the largest flowers of any in this group of hybrids. Mr. Seiden's hybrid was followed by a third, which flowered at Fallowfield in 1882, having been raised from the same seed by Mr. W. Swan. Although bearing a strong family resemblance to D. splendidissimum, it was considered distinct enough to deserve a name of its own, viz., D. Leechianum. The colour of the same, the petals being the same as in D. splendidissimum, but they are not so broad and are more pointed; the lip is broader and there is a variety in the sepals of these three hybrids are easily distinguished, each one of them has varieties merging towards the others. During the early part of last year, for instance, some plants were exhibited at the Drill Hall, Westminster, which might as properly have belonged to D. Leechianum as D. splendidissimum but it is to be thought in the group in which they belong, they are invariably beautiful and there is no doubt that they represent some of the finest work of our Orchid hybridizers. The mere fact of the widespread cultivation of D. Alwaynii is a conclusive proof of its garden value. In its amenability to cultivation it evidently inherits a good deal of its parentage. After a few years' cultivation, requires much more careful treatment to keep it up to the mark.

D. Alwaynii is another for hybridizing both as a pollen- and seed-bearing plant. In 1887 Sir Trevor Lawrence flowered two of its progeny, which had been raised by him from crosses with D. Alwaynii. Dr. Ainsworth was the seed bearer Riechenbach named D. chrysoides, and described it as "a lovely thing." It is remarkable that in the reverse cross, for which Dr. Ainsworth supplied the pollen, the flowers did not differ materially from its own. In most hybrids where the characters of one parent predominate, it is as a rule those of the female. Other instances besides the present bare, however, occurred to the contrary. The third variety of hybrids of hybrids extends from the beginning of January to the end of February, during which time it would appear more than a third of the hybrid seed is well-grown and well flowered specimens of any of the group.

Short Notes—Orchids.

Odontoglossum Edvardi Klabahoruni (G. Uelser).—This is a very good and highly coloured form of this variety; the flowers, although somewhat smaller than the type, are yet fairly large, and whilst the colour is all that could be desired, being deep violet-purple with a blotch of yellow on the lip.—W.

Cyripedium Marginatum.—This fine hybrid is now flowering for the first time with Mr. Osborne. It is from some seed sown many years ago when he was at My Week. A very fine variety of Marginalia. The flower was not open enough at the time of my visit, but it looks fair to be a very fine representative form.—W. H. G.

Cyripedium Lathamianum.—From Mr. W. M. Standish's collection of this important hybrid, a cross between C. Spierianum and C. siliquosum, the dorsal sepal being white, tinged with light lilac, the lateral sepals are a dull yellow, or even almost white, with a line of brown along the edge of the centre. The upper part of the petals is pale yellow at the base, becoming quite brown at the tips, the whole flower is a beautiful white. New varieties.

Ludia anceps Williams.—J. Brown, of Andaroch, sends me a superb form of this. The plant has thick green leaves, such flowers, which are of the purest white, saving the lip, which has a yellow throat the side lobes barred with crimson. I am pleased to announce that this form is beginning to flower pretty freely.—W. H. G.

F. Bedford sends me a very nice flower of this variety, and says he has observed that the white flowers, which appear to be suitable for preserving, every bulb giving a spike. Especially this is to be noted in Mr. Sender's collection at St. Alans, and I have no doubt that Mr. Bedford's plants get stronger they will also flower more freely.—W. H. G.

Odontoglossum Rossi majus.—J. L. Stackhouse sends me a flower of this species, asking my opinion of it. It is undoubtedly good, but there is nothing quite so special as to make a notice. This Orchid is worthy of more extended cultivation, the flowers being large and lasting in the open air. In this variety two to three centuries come to hand from Mr. Appleton; the smaller flower is an especially good one, having the petals broadly band for their entire length with rich chocolate. The larger spike is very good but it has nothing special to commend it.—W. H. G.

Cyripedium Bozalii.—Mr. Appleton sends me a seedling of this. The flower is large, the dorsal sepal being masked throughout the whole lower surface with spots and blotches of purple on a light yellow-green ground which runs out at the leaf, leaving a broad maroon-colored border of pure white; the petals are broad, the base and lower half tessellated, the upper portion yellowish-brown tinged with red. The lip is rose with a white streak, pale yellow streaked with brown. This is a handsome bold marked flower, which is well worth taking care of, but it is not the variety called strictum.—W. H. G.

Odontoglossum eripsum Arthurianum.—This comes to me from Mr. Dorman's garden at Sydenham, but it has suffered to some extent from fog and dull days. Some growers seem to say a few years ago that this species, although a mountain plant, grew just as well in the London atmosphere as it did at home, but it really will grow with much better effect under a south roof, and in a well-aerated greenhouse, where the flowers are well-flowered and famous for size. The female. Other instances besides the present bare, however, occurred to the contrary. The third variety of hybrids of hybrids extends from the beginning of January to the end of February, during which time it would appear more than a third of the hybrid seed is well-grown and well flowered specimens of any of the group.
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METHODS OF PRODUCING EARLY CUCUMBERS.

The past severe weather has necessitated continuous firing to maintain a temperature that will keep the young fruits of Cucumbers well on the move, conditions that will rear out the plants of Cucumbers. The young fruits of Cucumbers plants should get into a debilitated state, it is seldom that they grow out of it. In fact, in many instances they are quite an eyesore. Unless there is a second crop coming on, preparations should certainly be made to put on as much as possible a fresh relay of plants.

This is much better than depending upon the old plants. Pot culture is a good method to grow an early crop of cucumbers, they can be found in a stove for a few plants, so that by the time these come into bearing the old ones (if planted out) may be cleared away to make room for the main set. In plant boxes where a comparatively high temperature is maintained, Cucumbers may be grown without the aid of bottom heat. The raising of the young plants may now be proceeded with. The seedlings are planted singly in 3-inch pots in preference to sowing several in a pot and then potting off, as by this latter method a check is received and valuable time lost, whilst by sowing the seeds singly the plants start and root far more quickly. The pots should be well drained and filled with equal parts of leaf-soil and loam, and the seeds dibbled in about three parts of an inch. The soil being fairly moist, no water will be needed until the seedlings are through the soil. If planted in a bottom-heat of 80° or therabouts, the germination will be greatly hastened. After this takes place do not keep the plants unduly confined, but place them well up to the light, that is if the position is warm, as the young plants must not be subjected to a chill, this very quickly causing them to collapse. To be successful with early Cucumbers they must be kept growing steadily in an even temperature.

In Cucumber houses a narrow bed of fermenting litter about 18 inches in depth and to the width of 3 feet should be placed throughout it is actually worked up and Cucumber litter. If in pots, these could be surrounded with the litter, but care must be taken that it is well worked beforehand, or there would be danger of it becoming too hot. This can be avoided by keeping the pots out of the stove until the heat has declined to a safe degree, when it can be replaced. Bottom-heat for pots could also be obtained entirely from fermenting materials, or even leaves alone, and if these are good they form the best medium for plumping, the warmth being steady and last. To sow the Cucumbers must be lighter than that needed later on, the proportion being three parts turfy loam and a third each of leaf soil and pulverised horse manure, with some lime. A little of this should be added for the adhesive character, a little old mortar rubbish pounded up would be a good addition. The young plants when ready should be planted out by putting them in a medium as the roots reach the sides of the pots, for if allowed to remain until they become pot-bond the growth is spindly, and, moreover, time is lost. In planting, keep the young plants well up, whether on mounds or in pots. Some of the earlier sorts, plants are too low down, the idea being to leave room for top-dressing. A space of 2 inches or 3 inches will be ample. After planting, give a gentle watering with tepid soft water, so as to settle the soil. Cucumbers are different to many other plants in this respect, as if a watering is not given, they are apt to droop if the weather should be bright, the bright sunshine taking effect up, in it is advisable to afford a little shade for a few days, or until it is seen that the plants have taken to the soil. In staking the plants do not affix the stake to the trellis until it is seen that the plants have taken to the soil. The plants will be stranded at the collar. What ventilation is needed will depend upon the weather. The time to give a little ventilation is on mild days when the temperature feels "stuffy" to a person entering. By closing early and dapping down the house, also dewatering the plants over, a healthy and fruitful growth will be obtained.

The heating of the pipes so as to regulate the temperature is a very important part of the internal management of the plants. A night temperature of 65° to 70°, the latter on mild nights, may be easily managed. As regards feeding never apply water unless in a tepid state, and by the time the plants are well rooted, if in pots, a little charred liquid made from cow manure and soo will assist them. The roots, especially those on the surface, must be kept moving, as when these show freely the growth is kept up to the top all right. An occasional top-dressing of light turfy loam with a little pulverised horse manure will keep them right in this respect, adding occasionally a little approved manure to the same. This needs to be done quite as hard as later on. I like the leading shoot to reach well up the trellis before being stopped, the side laterals being allowed to grow a few joints before pinching them, so as to get a foundation laid. Where fruit is showing, stop a joint beyond; longer than this is not necessary unless the shoot should be needed for extension. With early Cucumbers large leaves often form on the leading shoots. Instead of allowing these to remain remove one occasionally, which will allow room for the smaller lateral leaves, and, moreover, their removal encourages the growth of the young fruiting force. There is one other point which must be borne in mind, and that is to avoid overcrowpping. Just leave sufficient fruits to keep up the supply that is needed. Allowing all fruit that shows to form, is sure to result in the early collapse of the plants.

Size of vegetables.—I have read with very great pleasure the article in a recent issue on this subject. While agreeing in the main with the writer I would like to point out a few points as well as that of many others who are deeply interested in exhibition specimens. Quality by all means should come first, but wherever it is possible to combine size with quality let us have it for exhibition. I often wonder that judges act so differently in judging Turnips, Leeks, and Parsnips; almost invariably in the two latter cases the prize goes to size. In the case of Turnips no judge need pay any attention; it is a well known fact that large prizes to the largest specimens. As a result, one also sees large Turnips staked. I hold the same result would follow with a great many other vegetables, not so much for their quality as for the staking the plants, coupled with instructions to the judges that in judging, quality alone is to be the deciding element. It requires no skill to grow a huge coarse vegetable, but there is always a risk. Time and capital are required, but it does require much experience and most careful attention to produce even moderately large specimens of high quality.—William Cuthber- tons, Rothbury.

CULTURAL NOTES ON POTATOES.

Potatoes with strong land to deal with should not employ much fresh manure at planting time. More peat than land should be placed in thoroughly digging the trench, or the soil during the winter months. In the autumn after say a crop of Parsnips has been taken off the land. The manure employed for the latter crop will be a magnificent crop of Potatoes. Land for this crop cannot be too often stirred during dry weather. On heavy land, shallow ploughing, probably not more than 10 inches deep, both in spring and autumn, has been the means of securing inferior crops more often than anything else. Some cultivators prefer the "cropping" of the land with the plough, and for this defect they have to contend with inferior results. In garden culture I find decayed vegetable refuse, leaf soil and wood ashes a marvellous mulch to so extensively the surface of the trench on which to lay the sets. I always have the Potatoes planted as digging proceeds, using long-tined steel forks. Another fault is that of allowing too many growths to each tuber. The "sprouts" are not nearly enough disbudded, a strong shoot, or two at the most, being ample. Some go over the rows and thin the plants when say 6 inches high. I prefer to do it before planting the tubers. The manner in which the "sets" are planted is important. I think it is best to plant them as deep as possible, the tubers often the Potatoes are thrown into large heaps in the bins, shed or cellar and allowed to remain there until the sprouts are 3 inches or more long. The sprout cannot grow in this state sufficiently to be considered. My plan is, after lifting the crop, to thoroughly dry the tubers in the Bubble house, and then plant them in the garden so as to give them the desired time. Here the plants remain until all that are likely to rot from disease have had time to do so. They are then planted in the reserve ground, taking care to place a thick bed of coal ashes under them to keep the base of the heap as dry as possible, yet cool. Each variety is separated by a layer of straw. They are again covered with straw. On this are laid soil, lime rubble, or anything handy to keep out frost. The whole heap is then thatched with dry heavy straw. Early in January a suitable crop is lifted, and these lifted tubers are kept over to pick out any stray bad one, and prevent them growing by admitting air to the pit, removing a stray shoot should one be formed, again cover- ing the heap as before. Early in February the early sorts are taken into a cool, yet light room and set on end to induce stout and healthy sprouts, which I like to see half an inch long before the time planting has to be done. I plant the first earliest out of doors, as a rule, about the middle of March, and am enabled to dig new Potatoes by the end of May. The main crop is planted until the 1st of April, and perhaps a few days later if the weather is not suitable. Here in heavy, un- manured land, and without manure, and "catch a season," as it is called, than to knead the soil into an inert mass by treading on it. I am not in favour of very early planting of the second early or main crop; the growth is so liable to be