

THE

GARDENERS' CHRONICLE.

A Weekly Illustrated Journal

OF

HORTICULTURE AND ALLIED SUBJECTS.

VOL. XVIII.—NEW SERIES.

JULY TO DECEMBER, 1882.

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THE GARDENERS' CHRONICLE.

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Vines.—Vines.—Vines.
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Spleenwort leaves." "It makes a fine tea, and gives a good flavour to beer used as hops." About *Cornus canadensis*, however, I have not succeeded in obtaining more definite data than those given above. *Geo. Nicholson, Royal Gardens, Kew.*

Orchid Notes and Cleanings.

CATLEYAS AT PICKERING LODGE, TIMPERLEY.—Not very many years back Cattleyas were the least successfully managed of Orchids. It was not unusual to meet with collections in which the generality of the plants grew satisfactorily, save and except the Cattleyas, and allied *Lælias*, which often gave unmistakable evidence of a deficiency of living roots, accompanied by the never-failing presence of weak, more or less shrivelled bulbs, and yellow undersized leaves. Less of the treat-all-alike management, especially in the matter of water, combined with the use of less moisture-holding matter in the potting materials, have no doubt done much to bring about the improved state of matters, in these, the most gorgeous of all Orchids. The collection of Cattleyas here stands in the first rank, as regards numbers, rarity, and size of the plants, and unquestionably so in their condition; the strength, particularly in thickness, which the past summer's bulbs have attained, is quite unusual. All the leading divisions are represented by scores of plants, including the rarest forms, many of which are only kooky amongst a select circle of cultivators, and which, *en passant*, it may be said command prices such as would stagger the uninitiated. Amongst a few of the most noticeable may be mentioned *C. Trianae amabilis*, 2½ feet across, supposed to be the only plant in cultivation; *C. Warneri*, 3 feet across; *Lælia purpurata*, 3 feet; *Cattleya Skinneri*, the best form of the *Burton-Constable* collection, 3 feet; it is not an unusual occurrence to see exceptionally well-grown Orchids, like the *Burton-Constable* plants, fall off when they have changed hands, but such is the reverse here, as the last bulbs are not only bigger than any of the preceding, but stronger than we have ever before seen. There are many specimens of the leading kinds only a little smaller than the above. The new *C. aurea* was blooming, and is a very fine thing. The large quantity of plants that go to form Mr. Hardy's collection of Orchids, comprising as it does almost every species and form procurable, are collectively in the best possible condition. The following were in flower:—*Cypripedium niveum*, *C. Spicerianum*, *C. Sedeni*, *C. Dominicanum*, *C. Harrisianum*, *C. Lowii*, *C. Maulei*, *C. insigne*, *C. Roezlii*, *C. venustum*, *Cattleya maxima*, *C. marginata*, *C. Loddigesii*, *Dendrobium bigibbum*, several varieties; *Lælia autumnalis*, *L. prestans*, *Masdevallia chimera*, *M. tovarensis*, three to four flowers on a spike; *Mesospindium vulcanicum*, *Odontoglossum grande*, *O. crispum*, *O. Pescatorei*, *O. biconense*, *O. Uro-Skinneri*, *Oncidium Forbesii*, *O. cheiroporum*; *Phalænopsis amabilis*, *P. Schillerianum*; *Vanda cœrulea*, *V. lamellata* *Boxalli*, and *Zygopetalum maxillare*.

CALANTHES AT OAKLEY, FALLOWFIELD.—Orchid growers, like people engaged in other pursuits, are not unusually inclined to set store on their plants more on account of the money they cost than for the beauty of their flowers or the freedom with which they are produced. If this were not so, those finest and most useful of autumn blooming Orchids, *Calanthe Veitchii* and *vestita*, would be better grown than they are usually. Mr. Swan has a display of their lovely flowers such as it would be difficult to surpass in the whole family of Orchids; these consist of *C. Veitchii*, with the red and yellow lipped varieties of *C. vestita*. The plants are grown in pots about 8 inches in diameter, containing several bulbs each; they form a continuous row on each side of a path running through two houses and across the end of one, standing closely, so as to give a dense bank of bloom, the *vestitas* on one side, and the *Veitchii* on the other. The effect produced by the hundreds of strong arched spikes is extremely beautiful, to say nothing of their use for cutting, for which purpose they are invaluable. So easily are they managed that any one who has a warm stove may grow them well. There are two distinct forms of *C. Veitchii*, one much darker and more telling in colour than the other. This latter is being discarded from the Oakley collection,

In these *Calanthes* Mr. Swan has had an instance of that reversion that often takes place in the progeny of plants of hybrid origin; some seedlings, the result of crossing *C. Veitchii* with the pollen of *C. vestita*, have turned out true *C. vestitas*, both the red and the white-eyed varieties, without a trace of *C. Veitchii* in either form or colour. It may here be stated that *C. Veitchii* was raised by crossing *Limatodes rosea* with *Calanthe vestita*. The collection of Orchids generally continues to thrive well here, both warm and cool species alike progressing in vigour and size.

CHANGES OF TREATMENT.—As we are fast drawing to the close of another year, it may be interesting to note a few changes that have taken place in the treatment of Orchids at some of the leading establishments where the cultivation of these lovely and, it may be added, useful plants is made a speciality. In Mr. B. S. Williams' collection at Upper Holloway we have never seen the plants look so vigorous, healthy, and floriferous. This condition has been brought about by a modification of treatment which is likely to have an important bearing upon the future cultivation of Orchids, and to render them more popular in gardens of all sizes. The great drawback to Orchid growing is the popular belief that they require special houses and special treatment, which entails considerable extra expense in their cultivation from that of other plants. Hence it is that those who love choice flowers and are constantly complaining of having the same things presented to them over and over again, do not make a start in Orchid growing. This prevalent belief cannot be too early dispelled. Perhaps there is no other class of plants in existence that are so accommodating as regards their general requirements, and the numbers of them that might be grown for cutting purposes all the year round are steadily coming to the front. There are so many useful species that succeed so well suspended from the roof of a house grown either in miniature pans or upon blocks, that those who only possess a single plant stove may well undertake to grow a select collection, if for no other purpose than supplying cut flowers. But to refer for a moment to the change of treatment adopted by Mr. B. S. Williams during the past season, the collection of *Vandas* are the most striking instance of success. More light and air and less shade has been given to the plants, with the result that they are of the most dense green hue, and are showing flower more freely than they have ever done before. Indeed, many of the young plants that are now showing flower are not more than 8 inches in height, and these, be it remembered, are not old stools cut down, but young plants grown from offsets. We counted over a score of *Vandas*, varying from 8 to 12 inches high, all showing from one to two spikes of flower. The varieties are *Vanda suavis*, *V. Boxalli*, *V. tricolor*, and *V. tricolor insignis*. Of course the obvious conclusion to be drawn from this fact is, that the plants are better ripened, and are therefore flowering unusually freely. Heretofore the healthy green hue was only to be obtained by using thick shading, but now we have advanced a step, and can boast of health, vigour, and floriferousness from a comparatively cool system of treatment, which brings the cultivation of Orchids within the reach of all. Cattleyas and other species, both large and small, also bear evidence of the same treatment in their colour, vigour, and the number and strength of their flower-spikes. As, however, the demand for cut flowers is the prevailing requirement of the day, we append a few notes of such species as appear most desirable to possess at the present season.

MASDEVALLIA TOVARENSIS.—This charming variety is now flowering in great profusion in Mr. Williams' collection; the flowers are of the purest white, and from three to four flowers are produced upon a single spike. Ladies who require choice flowers for bouquets, or for touching up small glasses for sitting or bed rooms, should grow this in quantity. The plant is found to succeed so well under the most ordinary treatment that there is a rumour afloat that certain enterprising individuals are procuring all the stock they can to grow for market. It will be a strange reflection upon private gardeners if the market grower succeeds in establishing the reputation of this plant for supplying cut flowers before it is barely known in gardens, where there is a large demand for choice flowers every month in the year.

DENDROBIUM SUPERBIENS.—Wherever choice flowers are held in high esteem in winter this charming novelty should find a home. It is one of those useful things which, apart from the transcendent beauty of its flowers, may be grown by almost any one who has the least notion of growing plants. With Mr. B. S. Williams it is the freest flowering variety of its species, and the show of flowers upon little plants grown in small pans and suspended from the roof is a sight which no lover of flowers would easily forget. The plants last in bloom for about three months, and the flowers, which are mauve-magenta, are borne in drooping sprays of from six to nine flowers to each spray. Some of the stronger plants are bearing two spikes of flower from the same growth. Here, then, is a plant which produces the most lovely flowers in mid-winter and which succeeds perfectly suspended from a wire in the plant-stove. Those who contemplate establishing collections of Orchids for supplying cut flowers should always remember that it is best to obtain a goodly number of one species or variety at the commencement.

CÆLOGYNE OCELLATA.—This is a variety of a well known species deserving of notice at the present season. The flowers have a strong smell of Cocoa-nut, and a single plant will perfume a whole house. The flowers are produced in drooping spikes, the sepals and petals are pure white, and there are two orange spots upon the lip, which is also margined with light brown spots.

CYPRIPEDIUM MAULEI, &c.—Our illustrations of *C. Maulei* and *C. punctatum violaceum* (see pp. 716, 717), and which were photographed direct on to the wood blocks, have brought us the following communications, to which we willingly give insertion. Mr. Maule is of opinion that the artist "apparently did not get a good flower, for the beauty of *C. Maulei* consists in the curl or turn over of the dorsal sepal, which is of the purest ivory-white, resembling in its curve that of a bud of *Niphetos Rose*, and revealing 7–8 bright magenta spots [in addition to the brown ones]. Perhaps to a florist's eye the flat petal may be more pleasing, but those who admire Nature's line of beauty can appreciate the curve. . . . *C. albo punctatissimum* is a larger, more robust, and coarser flower without the texture or refinement, if I may be allowed to say so, of *C. Maulei*." M. Godefroy-Lebeuf, writing from Argenteuil, doubts the correctness of our statements as to *violaceum punctatum*, and adds:—"M. Chantini, the well-known nurseryman, of Paris, sent out *C. Chantini* some time since. The plant was sold to M. Bertrand, then a great Orchid collector, and a part of the plant was sold to M. le Comte de Nadailac, who has it still living. There is no difference, in my opinion, between *C. Chantini* and the plant you figure as *punctatum violaceum*, of which I have numerous specimens. It is so distinct from *C. Maulei*, that even when out of bloom we have no difficulty in determining them. In France we have a third form, quite distinct from the common one; it is not so good as *Chantini*, but much better than ordinary *insigne*." M. Godefroy sends us four flowers, all different—a little so, botanically—a good deal financially, we suppose, but we should certainly not be surprised to see them all produced from one and the same plant, so slight are the botanical differences, and so insensibly do they shade off one into the other. *C. insigne* (as sent) measures under 4½ inches across from the tip of one lateral petal to that of the other. The dorsal sepal is over 1½ inch across at the widest part, and its upper half has a narrow white border with numerous spots on the disc, only a few of which are magenta coloured. *C. Maulei* measures over 4½ inches across the lateral petals, which moreover are of richer colour than in the preceding. The dorsal sepal measures over 1½ inch across, and has a deep white border, and the numerous spots on the disc are brighter in colour. *C. insigne* var. (Godefroy) measures over 4½ inches from tip to tip of the lateral petals. The dorsal sepal measures 2 inches across, and has a deep white border. Lastly comes *C. Chantini* with a transverse diameter of nearly 5 inches. The dorsal sepal is very nearly 2 inches across at its widest, and the depth of the white border is considerably greater than in the others, and the spots—indeed the whole coloration of the flower—is deeper and brighter. There is thus a series increasing gradually in size, depth of white margin, and coloration, especially in that of the spots, from *C. insigne* to *C. Chantini* or *violaceum purpureum*.

SACCOLABIUM BLUMEI MAJUS.—Messrs. Heath & Son, of Cheltenham, send us several good spikes of this fine Orchid from Upper Burnham, all somewhat differing from each other, and showing what a great difference there is in the varieties, all of which are very beautiful.