

THE

GARDENERS' CHRONICLE.

A Weekly Illustrated Journal

OF

HORTICULTURE AND ALLIED SUBJECTS.

VOL. IX.—NEW SERIES.

JANUARY TO JUNE, 1878.

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THE GARDENERS' CHRONICLE.

Established 1841.

A WEEKLY ILLUSTRATED JOURNAL OF HORTICULTURE AND ALLIED SUBJECTS.

No. 222.—VOL. IX. { NEW SERIES }

SATURDAY, MARCH 30, 1878.

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NOTICE.—All Numbers of the "Gardeners' Chronicle" prior to 1874 are 1s. each.

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THE GARDENERS' CHRONICLE
VOLUME FOR JULY TO DECEMBER, 1877.
W. RICHARDS, 41, Wellington Street, Strand, W.C.

ROYAL HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY,
South Kensington, S.W., March 21, 1878.
NOTICE TO EXHIBITORS.—In the Notice for General Information at page 9 of the Society's Schedule the figure 5 for the hour of closing the Exhibition on Floral Meetings IS INCORRECT—it should have been 6 o'clock.

ROYAL HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY,
South Kensington, S.W.
NOTICE.—SCIENTIFIC, FRUIT, and FLORAL COMMITTEES' MEETINGS, on TUESDAY NEXT, April 2, in the Conservatory, at 11 o'clock. GENERAL MEETING for ELECTION OF FELLOWS at 3 o'clock. The Band of the Royal Horse Guards will attend. Admission 1s.
N.B.—The Show will close at 6 o'clock.

THE INTERNATIONAL POTATO EXHIBITION of 1878 will be held at the Crystal Palace, Sydenham, on TUESDAY and WEDNESDAY, September 24 and 25, when PRIZES amounting to ONE HUNDRED and TWENTY POUNDS will be awarded.
Schedules are now ready, and can be had from Mr. P. McKINLAY, 23, Upper Thames Street, E.C.; or the Secretary, Mr. J. A. MCKENZIE, 1 and 2, Great Winchester Street Buildings, London, E.C.

BLACKPOOL.—THE FLORAL and HORTICULTURAL SHOW will be held at the Winter Gardens, on WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY, and FRIDAY, July 17, 18, and 19.
THOMAS BLANE, Secretary.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.—SPRING EXHIBITION, April 3 and 4; SUMMER EXHIBITION, July 18 and 19; AUTUMN EXHIBITION, September 11 and 12. Prizes, EIGHT HUNDRED POUNDS. Schedules ready.
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To the Trade, &c.

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almost all plants that required peat wherein to grow, used to be consigned. Its effects were most apparent upon the quickest free-growing species. Experience has proved that to treat all fine-rooted plants that need peat for growing them to anything approaching a uniform character in the peat, is a mistake, as the quicker the growth it is natural for a plant to make, the lighter or more fibrous the soil should be. In support of this I have always found that any plant, naturally a quick grower, if its roots were placed in soil of a heavy nature deficient in fibre invariably was inclined to become stunted—a condition that always increased with age, frequently giving the appearance of a plant that had attained its full natural development before half its wonted size was reached. The species of plants that I have observed the most affected in this way were *Tetrathecas*, *Roellia ciliata*, *Gompholobium*, *Chorozemas*, *Leschenaultia biloba*, and *Boronias*, except *B. serrulata*. Of late years I have grown these in soil composed of from a third to one-half of such as comes under the denomination of fair Orchid peat, mixed with from one-half to two-thirds of some of a heavier nature, that is, containing more earthy matter, but not of the close, heavy description obtained from the high drier situations, where the strongest-wooded British Heaths flourish naturally; this latter for many years I have all but totally rejected, except a small quantity mixed with some a little lighter for a few of the very hardest slow-growing Heaths. In such a mixture as the above the plants I have named, with suitable treatment in other ways, will make as much growth in one season as I was ever able to get in two when harder peat was used; but it is here necessary to state that it will almost invariably be found that the lighter and more fibrous the description of peat the less sand it contains naturally, and at the same time the more absolutely necessary it is to add this ingredient, not so much to ensure free percolation of the water through the soil when first used, as from its open condition this would occur until its fibrous contents were further decomposed; but from its becoming a positive necessity when this takes place, for it must be borne in mind that we are now treating of plants that, when once their roots have got hold of the soil, must by necessity remain in it as long as they live.

Another important matter is, that in the operation of potting, when the soil such as here indicated is used, it is requisite to make it as firm as possible, ramming it in with the potting-stick to an extent that never used to be attempted when the soil employed was of a heavier description. *Acrophyllum venosum*, *Apelexis*, *Daphne indica*, *Hedera*, *Dracophyllum gracile*, *Dillwynias*, *Polygalas*, *Mirbelias*, and the more delicate varieties of *Pimelea* that do best in peat, will succeed with a less proportion of the lighter description mixed with that of a heavier character. The question might be asked, Why this mixture of light and heavy peat? Could not such as would answer the purpose be got without mixing? I am aware that this is the more general course followed, but after trying peat procured from most of the sources available in the country I have never met with any that would grow the plants so well without mixing, as it was invariably either too light or too heavy for those I have named, and by mixing one corrects the other. For stronger growing plants, such as *Eriostemons*, *Hardenbergias*, *Kennedys*, *Witsenia corymbosa*, *Phanocoma prolifera*, *Epacris* and *Correas*, from one-fourth to one-fifth of the most fibrous description of peat added to the stronger kind will be found about the right mixture.

For Heaths, except the very hardest of the hard-wooded section, a mixture similar in pro-

portions to that advised for the last-named group of greenhouse plants will grow them very much quicker without in any way weakening, so as to render them less enduring; and in all cases where grown in such material they will be found to carry more foliage and to flower more freely, a less proportion of the weaker shoots failing to bloom. A few of the very hardest-wooded Heaths, that never attain a large size, I have not been able to get to succeed well in a mixture where any of the light description of peat was introduced, since in it they have always a disposition to die off suddenly; on the other hand a portion of the close black such as I have already alluded to, from one-fourth to one-third, mixed with some of a medium description, answers their requirements better.

In the matter of the sand added to the peat for the growth of all the plants above-mentioned, it is necessary to put in enough to keep the soil porous for as long as the plants can live; it is not possible to give the proportion, this will always be dependent upon the nature of the peat, as also the nature of the plants to be grown in it—the slower they grow naturally the more sand will usually be needed, as where the progress they make is proportionately slow they are always more susceptible to injury if the material in which the roots are placed is such as to retain water too long. But the necessity of guarding against the danger of stagnant moisture has been so much dwelt upon that it has induced many young growers of this description of plants to use such an excessive quantity of sand as to prevent the plants either growing so quickly as they ought, or ever attaining the proportions they would have done had less been used, and this not alone from the presence of so much sand reducing the nutritive elements so as to make the soil too poor, but the plants appear to suffer through its mechanical effects upon the roots, as when manurial elements are applied growth is still languid.

Another matter that never should be overlooked in the use of either peat or loam for potting is that more should not be provided than can be used within a twelvemonth from the time of its being dug; in fact, if sufficient time has intervened for the roots of the various grasses and Ferns that have grown upon it to die, this is all that is required.

In regard to loam it is quite as necessary that it should contain as much vegetable matter as possible; the more delicate rooted and slow-growing plants are the greater the influence of the fibrous matter in promoting growth. This I have proved by many experiments, one in particular which I may relate. Amongst soft-wooded plants there are few, if any, that make slower progress than the more highly coloured *Tricolor Pelargoniums*; but even with the most delicate of these I have found that if from the first stage after the cuttings were struck the greater portion of the earthy matter was shook out, using the dead grass roots comparatively alone with the usual sand added and a little rotten manure, I could grow these plants to a larger size in a single season than I was able to get them to in double the time in the mixture used for ordinary show or fancy *Pelargoniums*. As a matter of course material like this requires ramming very firmly into the pots, but although these plants are proverbially weak rooters, the amount of fibres they form in such soil as the above would scarcely be credited without being tried, and their top growth will always be found to correspond with their root power. This points to the course that should be followed in the selection of loam for potting purposes— that it is not only necessary to choose such as is free from pernicious mineral elements and is full of the roots of grasses, but also to dig it thinner than in many cases is deemed requisite; yet when loam of this description is used it may be necessary to repeat that it is essential in potting to be particular that the material is rammed quite firm, otherwise two evils will follow—the soil will from the first hold too much water for the well-being of the roots, and as it decomposes will shrink in the pots; in the case of such plants as have to remain in it for years it will do so to an extent that will be both unsightly and inconvenient to deal with.

There are some plants that will succeed in

either peat or loam, yet do better in peat where it can be had of good quality, but where such as is of an indifferent description only is available loam containing an extra amount of fibre will usually be found preferable. Some plants again appear to thrive the best in mixtures of peat and loam, but where it can be avoided I am not partial to a mixture, as in few cases have I found a combination so satisfactory as one or other of the above.

Respecting the addition of leaf-mould to either peat or loam for potting purposes, except for things of very quick growth that like a more open material for their roots to revel in, and that are of a character such as are shook out every year, and the soil removed or simply grown from seed or cuttings for a single season and then discarded, I look upon its use as a mistake altogether. Many plants will grow in it exceedingly fast for a time, but it possesses no lasting properties, is extremely liable to get into a sour unsatisfactory state, the plants usually languishing more or less after their short rapid development. In the case of any plant that will continue to make sufficient healthy growth in loam, although its foliage may have a greener, more taking appearance when potted in peat, yet unless it is naturally very free in blooming I should give the preference to loam, as in it most things that will succeed have a greater disposition to flower profusely; and in the case of plants that will live long, such as *Camellias* and the *Citrus* family, there can be no question that good loam possesses more lasting properties than peat. *T. Baines.*

New Garden Plants.

CYPRIPEDIUM NITENS, n. hybr.*

This is a hybrid between the *Cyripedium insigne*, var. *Maulei*, and *C. villosum*, Lindl. The leaf is shorter and broader than in the first-named plant, and much nearer those of the second, dark green. The hairiness of peduncle and ovary is just intermediate. The bract is wide, in the way of that of *C. villosum*, the upper sepal and inferior one quite as in *C. Maulei*, but far larger, not a vestige of the narrow base of the superior one as in *C. villosum*. Petals long, wavy, light brown and ochre colour, reticulate, very shining, as in *C. villosum*. Lip with long lateral horns of sac and narrower, in the way of that of *C. villosum*. Staminode as in *C. villosum*. It is theoretically a very valuable addition to the rich series of hybrid *Cyripedia*, and practically it may be regarded an improved edition of *C. Maulei* that is much in favour and said to flower easier than the genuine *C. insigne*. Whether this statement is correct I do not know. I believe it is one of Mr. Seden's skilfully produced crosses, since I have obtained it from Messrs. Veitch. *H. G. Rehb. f.*

ANSELLIA GIGANTEA, Rehb. f., 1847.†

This is much in the way of the once well-known *Ansellia africana*, Lindl., but it has smaller flowers of a light yellow tint, with very few narrow, transverse, brown bars, and a deep yellow lip, without warts of any kind on its middle lobe, and with more or less crenulate keels. It has that same curious smell, making one think of musk and iodine at once. It was originally discovered by the Leipzig traveller Guenzius, who discovered the *Stangeria paradoxa*, the plants of which he presented to Mr. Stanger, who sent them to Mr. N. B. Ward, by whom they were given to the Chelsea Garden. I may be permitted to tell here a very funny remembrance. Kunze, the celebrated Lipsian pteridologist, having obtained the first leaf of this beautiful *Cyripedium*,

* *Cyripedium nitens*, n. hybr.—*C. insigne* Maulei × *villosum*. Folis *C. villosi*; pedunculo et ovario *den-uis* hispidis; bractea ampliuscula; sepalis summo sessili ovato obtuso, inferiori oblongo triangulo obtuse acuto; tepalibus ligulatis oblongis obtuse acutis porrectis; labelli sacco longius subconico; cornubus lateralibus bene evolutis; staminodio *C. villosi*.

† *Ansellia gigantea*, Rehb. f. in *Linnaea*, xx. 673.—Labelli lobis lateralibus in labium medium incumbentibus; carinis geminis postice contiguis, antice divergentibus interjecta carina tertia, omnibus crenulatis, verrucis circumstantibus nullis, buccis oblongis parvis minute crenulatis.—*Ansellia africana* var. *B. natalensis*, Hook., *Bot. Mag.* 1857, 4955, fig. 3.—Habitus *Ansellia* africanae; folia ejusdem sed vulgo angustiora magnitudine varia; inflorescentia nunc maximis illis *Ansellia* africanae longe major, nunc parva. Flores pallide citrini maculis brunneis in perigonio; labellum pulchrum citrinum (*Bictirina*); omnino flavifloro, labio pulchre citrino aurantiaco. Sepala ligulata obtuse acuta. Tepala subaequalia. Labelli lobis laterales quadrati supra lobum medium incumbentes; lobus medius cuneato ovatus apiculatus, angustus, valde crispatus, crassior quam in *Ansellia africana*; carinae a basi contiguae, demum paulo divergentes usque ante apicem lobii medii, antice crenulatae; antice interjecta carinula crenulata testa parvi in lobis lateralibus incrassato carinata. Columna clavata dorso carinaeformis straminea buccis aurantiacis. Sepala et tepala straminea striis transversis brunneis. Labelli lobus medius et carinae citrini.—Port Natal. Detexit Guenzius. *H. G. Rehb. f.*