

## ADA AURANTIACA.

(With Coloured Illustration.)

BY GEORGE GORDON.



THE beautiful *Ada aurantiaca*, of which an illustration is here given, belongs to the section of orchids thriving in a cold temperature, and it is therefore a fitting companion to the *Odontoglossum* and the newly-introduced and extremely beautiful *Masdevallias*, to which Mr. Gedney, who has charge of Mr. Day's magnificent collection of orchids, alluded in the last number of the *FLORAL WORLD*. It is at present the only member of the genus in cultivation; and although known to cultivators for a considerable period, good specimens have been scarce. This, however, has been in a large measure due to its comparative rarity, for it is by no means difficult to cultivate when once its peculiarities are properly understood. Of late it has been imported more extensively, and at the present moment it is so plentiful in trade collections, that well-established plants can be purchased at prices ranging from fifteen to thirty shillings each, so that it is within the reach of all who can afford to grow orchids. It is a very neat-growing orchid, with evergreen leaves, and attains a height ranging from eight to twelve inches. The flowers, as will be seen by the illustration, are of a brilliant orange scarlet, and most attractive in appearance. Under good management the flowers are produced freely in autumn and early spring, and remain in perfection a long time, provided they are kept dry.

As this species thrives under much the same system of management as that sketched out for the *Masdevallias* by Mr. Gedney, it is not necessary to say much in reference to the cultural details. Although found in New Granada at an elevation of 8500 feet, it appears to grow more freely and bloom most profusely in the temperature of an intermediate house; but it will thrive exceedingly well with the cool orchids, provided it is placed at the warm end of the structure during the winter season. Like the majority of other orchids of a similar habit, it thrives most satisfactorily in fibrous peat, broken up roughly, or sphagnum moss, either separately, or the two incorporated together in equal parts. The drainage must be perfect, and as a rule it will be found preferable to fill the pots to about one-third of their depth with clean crocks of a moderate size. Liberal supplies of water will be required during the growing season; but through the winter, when the plants will be at rest, it must be applied more sparingly, and the material about the roots maintained in a moderately moist condition only.

In repotting them, carefully loosen the roots round the outside of the ball, to enable them to strike more readily into the new soil, and at the same time remove as much of the old stuff as possible. The base of the pseudo-bulbs should be rather higher than the rim of the pot.

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