

Of those sent out last year, which have had a fair trial in this country, the following can be recommended:—

Abbe Bramere (H.P.)—A fine dark rose, large, full, and of good form; colour velvety purple.

Auguste Rigotard (H.P.)—A showy rose, with large, well-formed flowers of a bright red

Cecile Berthod (Tea-scented).—A very beautiful rose, with large yellow flowers, which appear to great advantage in relief with the dark bronzy foliage.

Coquette des Blanches (H.P.)—A useful, white-flowered hybrid perpetual.

Lyonnaise (H.P.)—A most attractive variety, with large rose-pink flowers.

Madame George Schwartz (H.P.)—A useful rose, with large rose-coloured flowers; vigorous in growth and free flowering.

Marie Van Houtte (Tea-scented).—A pretty variety, with large white flowers tinted with yellow and rose.

Perfection de Monplaisir (Tea-scented).—A desirable addition to its class, with clear yellow flowers.

President Thiers (H.P.)—A fine dark-coloured rose; likely to become popular.

Princess Louise Victoria (H.P.)—A splendid climbing rose, figured in the FLORAL WORLD some time since.

Richard Wallace (H.P.)—A useful variety, with large, well-shaped flowers of a bright rose shading to white.

Victor Verdier (H.P., climbing)—A scandent form of one of the most beautiful roses in cultivation.

It remains to be said that the present time is most favourable for the purchase of roses in pots. Well-established plants, if shifted at once into six-inch pots and properly attended to during the summer, may be expected to bloom superbly during the following spring.

HYDRANGEAS FOR THE CONSERVATORY.

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VISITORS to the Crystal Palace who take an interest in the floral decorations very frequently express their surprise at the splendid appearance presented by the Hydrangeas employed in the embellishment of the marble basins round the glass fountain in the nave. Inquiries are also made as to the means adopted for securing such successful results, and it appears that a very general impression prevails that we must possess some secret. There is not, perhaps, what may be correctly designated a "secret," but unquestionably our system of growing Hydrangeas differs materially from that usually

adopted in private gardens, and I will describe it as briefly as possible, for the guidance of those amateurs who may be desirous of growing this useful plant to the highest state of perfection. At the Crystal Palace, where we have visitors from all parts of the world and of all ranks of society, we of necessity are compelled to grow the plants used for decorative purposes to a very high state of perfection; and for that reason are bound to adopt, in many cases, a system differing materially from that adopted elsewhere. For example, the half-starved Hydrangeas, with puny little heads of flowers, which one frequently meets with in the private conservatory, would, in a noble building like the Crystal Palace, be of small value for purposes of embellishment, and would not create so favourable an impression in the minds of the visitors as we could wish. After stating this much, I am anxious to remove any impression which might prevail, after reading the foregoing remarks, that our system entails a larger amount of labour than that of any other cultivator. It does nothing of the kind, for, after all, it is exceedingly simple, and may be said to consist in doing the work in the proper manner and in the right way. It is, moreover, equally as well adapted for the cultivation of a dozen plants, as it is for those who like to grow them by hundreds.

Let us for a moment imagine the case of an amateur who possesses a plant which, although of considerable size, is of no value for decorative purposes. Now, the best course to pursue will be to strike a batch of cuttings, so as to lay, as it were, the foundation of a stock of plants, and the old plant will yield an abundance. To do this is simple enough, for the short-jointed shoots, without flowers, strike freely when managed in the ordinary way. With the aid of a cucumber or melon pit, the cutting can be struck at any time, but if they have to be placed in the greenhouse or cold frame, it will be better to wait until the summer season, when the wood has become moderately firm, and avoid the risk of their damping off. Prepare the cutting pots by first placing a layer of crocks in the bottom, and then filling them with a light and sandy mixture. A layer of sand will complete the work, and the cuttings can be inserted round the outside. The latter should be cut just under the third joint, and the lower pair of leaves removed. Well water them in and for the first fortnight or so, keep them rather close and moist to keep the leaves fresh for as great a length of time as possible; but at all times sufficient air must be admitted to prevent the decay of the leaves resulting from an excess of moisture. This can be easily done, whether the cuttings are placed under a hand-glass in the greenhouse or in a frame.

No time must be lost, and therefore make a point of potting them off separately immediately they are rooted, and put them in three-inch pots, and afford them every encouragement to become established quickly by keeping them close for a few days, and the foliage sprinkled once a day. A stocky growth from the first is essential, and to secure this expose the plants freely, and if they are well established by the end of July, place them in the open air. The winter management consists in thoroughly resting the plants

by keeping them in a cool, airy position, and the soil rather dry. In February or March, according to the time they are required in bloom, turn them out of the pots, carefully loosen the roots round the outside of the ball of soil, and shift them into pots two sizes larger—that is to say, pots six inches in diameter. Use a compost consisting of turfy loam three parts, and decayed manure or leaf-mould one part. Or the fourth part may consist of equal parts of leaf-mould and manure. They can then be placed in the greenhouse or frame, but, if required in bloom early, they must have the assistance of a little artificial heat. But, as a rule, the amateur will not require to use artificial heat, for *Hydrangeas* are needed in private gardens after the *pelargoniums* are past their best, and to have them in bloom at that period, the protection of a greenhouse or cold pit will alone be needed. If the plants do not attain a height of more than a few inches during the season in which they are propagated, it will not be necessary to prune them at all. But if, on the other hand, they attain a considerable height, prune them, at the time of potting, to the first or second joint. If the plants are liberally supplied with water and kept near the glass, the majority will produce magnificent heads of bloom, such as are to be seen on the plants with which we decorate the marble basins at the Crystal Palace.

Let us take another view of the case, and suppose the amateur to be desirous of producing a few large specimens after he has thoroughly mastered the cultivation of specimens of the size alluded to in the foregoing remarks. But before passing on to the consideration of this part of the subject, I would say that by pruning the plants back rather severely, and allowing only one or two shoots, they may be kept to a small size, and be made to produce gigantic flower-heads for several years. In doing this the main point will be to reduce the ball of soil at the spring shift sufficiently to admit of their being put in the same sized pots again, with at least an inch of rich fresh compost all round. The first step in the production of large specimens is to secure a number of branches, and it will be found that if at the first pruning the plants are pruned back to the second joint three or four strong side-shoots will be the result. The second year these can be pruned back to about the same distance from the secondary shoots. To state the whole case in the fewest words, the shoots produced the previous season should at each winter pruning be cut back to the distance from the old wood mentioned above. By this means the specimens, although they will attain large dimensions, can be kept neat and compact. To maintain them in a healthy and vigorous condition without the use of gigantic pots reduce the ball of soil from one to two inches all round, according to the size of the plant. This will admit of the use of a much larger proportion of fresh compost at each annual shift than would otherwise be possible without the use of pots of an extravagant size.

There is really no limit to the size to which the plants may be grown under the system here described. It is simply a work of time, and each cultivator will be the best judge as to what sized specimen are best adapted to his requirements. Specimens five or six feet in diameter, with fifty or sixty well developed flower-heads,

and furnished with glossy green foliage, are certainly most noble in appearance, whether employed in the decoration of the conservatory or the terrace garden. Speaking generally, it may also be said that specimens of the dimensions here mentioned will be quite large enough for all purposes. Hydrangeas, it should be observed, are perfectly hardy, as the large plants round the beds of American plants on the terraces here amply testify. They may, therefore, be wintered in the open air, but to prevent the frost from splitting the pots or injuring the roots, they should be covered with long litter, or at the least the pots be plunged in a bed of coal-ashes.

GARDEN PLANTS OF KINGSTOWN, IRELAND.



IN the May number of the FLORAL WORLD, I have read with pleasure an interesting paper on plants and shrubs growing out of doors winter and summer in the north of Ireland. Perhaps a description of those I saw myself last autumn in full bloom at Kingstown, a watering place near Dublin, may also prove interesting to some of the readers of the FLORAL WORLD.

In the front gardens of the terraces, some of which were close to the sea, others more inland, were fine large plants which had evidently been growing out of doors many years, of the following amongst others:—*Scarlet Salvias*, *Shrubby Veronicas*, *Sweet-scented Verbenas*, *Myrtles*, and *Fuchsias*; not the old *Fuchsia Riccartoni*, which is common enough out of doors, but large show and double flowering varieties, in the style of *Mrs. Marshall*, *Sir Colin Campbell*, etc., etc. The most of these small gardens were divided by iron rails about two feet high, which formed a support for myrtles, veronicas, and fuchsias, which were trained against them, and allowed to form a thick hedge the height of the rails. The effect of these when in full bloom, as I saw them the first week in October, was truly charming, and would surprise many as it did me at the time. Indeed, I was wondering had my favourites at home been yet lifted and put into their glass quarters for the winter, but here were these fine specimens (some of the myrtles stood over eight feet high) in full flower, looking strong and healthy, having stood many a sharp frost and blustering wind, for Kingstown in winter is bitterly cold, yet they were much finer, and with a far greater amount of flowers on them than mine which were well taken care of under glass during the winter months. The plants appeared to have been cut back rather hard, which no doubt accounted for the amount of flowers on them. I also observed some fine yuccas, which seemed to grow there in great luxuriance, also fine plants of *Escallonia rubra*, which is used there mostly for covering walls. I was mentioning my astonishment at seeing the above-named plants doing so well out of doors the season round to the foreman of a well-known nursery firm a few days since, and