

## MASDEVALLIAS.

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*(With a Coloured Illustration of Masdevallia Harryana.)*

AMONGST the orchidaceous plants suitable for cultivation in cool houses, the Masdevallias will eventually occupy a high place. They are all neat in growth, possess a hardy, vigorous constitution, and are, moreover, remarkable for the surpassing beauty of their flowers. They also possess another good quality, which will not fail to be appreciated by the amateur, and that is, the simplicity of the culture necessary for the production of good specimens. In the latter respect they are quite unsurpassed, for they are more easily grown than the commonest geraniums, and they possess a considerable advantage over the latter class of plants, for they cannot be so easily killed by bad management. They are, especially some of the best species, rather expensive, and there is every reason for supposing they will command a high price for some time to come, because of their great and increasing popularity.

Some of the species have been known in collections for a considerable number of years past; but it is now a very rare occurrence to meet with fair specimens, for they have been usually placed with the kinds requiring a high temperature for their successful cultivation, whereas a great heat is not only quite unnecessary, but extremely hurtful to them. The most showy kinds, of which the lovely *Masdevallia Harryana* is one of the best, have been introduced within a comparatively recent period, and it is only within the last year or two that they have been introduced in sufficient quantities to admit of their being placed within the reach of the amateur. Now, however, small, well-established plants may be procured at the principal metropolitan nurseries, and may be obtained at prices ranging from three to ten guineas, according to the rarity of the species and the size of the plant.

In purchasing Masdevallias, it will be well to bear in mind that, like other orchids, all those at present known to English collections vary considerably in the beauty of the flowers, and in every case it is desirable to buy them when in flower, although the trade growers usually assort them, and fix the prices in an equitable manner.

A very few words will suffice to convey a clear idea of their cultural requirements. As no one requiring information respecting their cultivation will have a sufficient number to require a house especially devoted to them, it will suffice to say they are quite at home with the Odontoglots and other cool orchids, which succeed best in a structure the temperature of which is maintained between 40° and 45° during the winter, and 50° and 60° during the summer season. An open compost and efficient

drainage are both essential, for abundant supplies of water will be necessary, and the proper means must consequently be resorted to for preventing the material about the roots becoming sour. A mixture of sphagnum moss and fibrous peat of good quality, chopped up moderately and well incorporated together, will suit them admirably; indeed, nothing better could possibly be had. The pots will require filling to about half their depth with clean crocks, and the largest pieces put in the bottom, with the



MASDEVALLIA IGNEA.

smaller ones spread over them. In repotting established plants, the loose material must be removed, and the outside roots loosened slightly, when it can be done without the slightest injury to them; and in all cases the base of the pseudo-bulbs must be raised slightly above the level of the rim of the pot. They at all times require liberal supplies of water, and from the end of February until the beginning of October they will require watering every day. During the winter the watering must in a great measure be regu-



lated by the needs of the plants and the weather. In other respects they thrive under the same conditions as the *Odontoglots* and other orchids with which they will be associated.

The undermentioned are those which can be the most heartily recommended to the notice of cultivators. In addition to these, a few have been imported and described, which can only be regarded as curiosities.

*Masdevallia chimera*, a splendid species; flowers large and handsome; colours orange, yellow, and white.

*M. coccinea*, a very pretty species; flowers brilliant red.

*M. coriacea*, a pretty dwarf-growing species; flowers creamy white, spotted with purple, less attractive than some others, but very interesting.

*M. elephanticeps*, a grand species; flowers large; colour crimson, beautifully shaded with magenta.

*M. Harryana*, a superb species; flowers large, and generally of the richest shade of magenta. There are several varieties of this species, and some produce flowers of a brilliant red shaded with magenta.

*M. ignea*, flowers of medium size; colour bright red-scarlet, shaded crimson.

*M. Lindeni*, flowers of medium size; colour rich magenta-crimson.

*M. Tovarensis*, inferior in beauty to the others, but desirable in a collection; flowers pure white.

*M. Veitchiana*, very attractive and beautiful; flowers scarlet and orange.

## YELLOW ROSES.

(Concluded from page 167.)



**NOISETTE.**—The leader in this important section is the far-famed *Marechal Niel*, of which we presented a portrait and biography, and certificate of character, in the May number of the *FLORAL WORLD*. It is the finest of all the yellow roses, and has the additional merit of a good constitution. For growing under glass it is admirably adapted, being tender enough to enjoy the shelter; but it should be planted out in a good border, for it is too vigorous for pot culture, except when young or when particular attention can be given it, for the development of its full power. It thrives on any kind of stock; but its own roots are the best roots, and, happily, it strikes as easily as a *Boursault*, and when on *Manetti*, if planted rather deep, it readily makes roots above the point of junction with the stock.

The commanding splendour of *Marechal Niel* has diverted attention from certain other varieties of the same great section, which the enthusiastic rosarian will value when he has learnt to manage them. Among the yellow *Noisettes* there are a few which will thrive any-

July.

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MASDEVALLIA HARRYANA.