

NEW VEGETABLES.

BY GEORGE GORDON.



MOST of the leading seedsmen at this season of the year are issuing their lists of new flowers and vegetables, and as every one will shortly be purchasing their seeds for the forthcoming season, it will be of some assistance to those who speculate in new vegetables if a few comments are made on those likely to be the most valuable.

Messrs. Sutton and Sons, the well-known seedsmen, of Reading, offer a new pea, under the name of *Emerald Gem*, which they state, after several years' trial, to be as early as *Ringleader* or *First Crop*, which is well-known to be the earliest in cultivation, and possessing the advantages of surpassing that variety in productiveness and appearance on the table, and to be of finer flavour. It is certainly worth a trial, for any improvement in the quality of the first early peas should be accepted with thankfulness, especially by those who have a predilection for rich sugary peas. McLean's *Best of All*, which was distributed a short time since by the above-mentioned firm as one of the best for main crops, has proved during the past season to well deserve a place in the most select collection, for it is productive, handsome, and of fine flavour, and, as it only attains a height of three feet, it is well adapted for suburban localities, where sticks are scarce. Several authorities speak highly of Messrs. Sutton's new potato *Hundredfold Fluke*, which is said to be a heavy cropper, and of good shape and fine flavour.

Messrs. Veitch and Sons, Royal Exotic Nursery, Chelsea, offer a new beet, under the name of the *Chelsea Beet*, which is a decided acquisition. The roots are of medium size, perfectly symmetrical, and of a deep rich crimson shade. The flower is also exceedingly good, and when exhibited by Messrs. Veitch two years since, in company with other leading kinds, it was considered one of the best flavoured beets in existence. Celery, *Major Clarke's Fine Solid Red*, offered by the same firm, is a fine type of red celery, and one that can be highly recommended for table use. Some examples exhibited at South Kensington in December were exceedingly good. It is of medium size, very solid, and of the most excellent flavour. In support of the opinion here expressed, it is worthy of mention that respecting it Mr. Barroa, Superintendent of the Royal Horticultural Society's Gardens, at South Kensington and Chiswick, says:—"I have grown *Major Clarke's Red Celery* frequently at Chiswick, and it is in my opinion the best red celery that I know of. The plant is of medium growth, not so tall as the *Manchester Red*, but taller than the *Incomparable White*. It is of the same habit as the latter—i.e., robust and compact, forming very solid hearts, which blanch very easily. The leaves are small, deeply serrated, and of a deep green. It is very crisp, and of excellent flavour, not a large-growing show variety, but an extremely useful reliable sort, which will nearly always turn out well. As a companion to the above, *Veitch's Silver White* is worthy of mention. It is solid and crisp, and possesses a

fine flavour and hardy constitution. This is not a new variety, as it has been in cultivation several years, and it can therefore be all the more heartily commended. There are several types of the *Batavian Endive* in cultivation, some with leaves not much broader than the common dandelion, and of a very indifferent flavour, whilst others, like *Fraser's Improved Broad Leaved*, have broad leaves, and are when well blanched of good flavour. It may be assumed that the greater the breadth of the leaf the finer the flavour when blanched, and the nearer the approach to a well blanched cos lettuce; and therefore the *Improved Round Leaved Batavian* may be considered a welcome addition. This variety is said to have much broader leaves than the broadest of the *Batavian* types, and a more compact habit. It is certainly well worth a trial by those who grow endive for winter salading, and to me it appears difficult to have a salad worthy of the name without a plenty of good endive. This also is in the hands of Messrs. J. Veitch and Sons.

New peas are plentiful this season, and Messrs. Hurst and Sons, Leadenhall Street, E.C., offer a set of four varieties, raised by Mr. Laxton, and which have been selected from the collection sent out for trial last season. They are:—*William the First*, a dwarf wrinkled marrow, of excellent flavour and appearance; the pods are handsome, and well filled. *Popular* is recommended as a useful variety for main crops, the pods being large and well-filled, and the peas of a good colour and flavour when cooked. *Omega* claims attention as a late pea, and may be described as a dwarf *Ne Plus Ultra*; the usual height is thirty inches, and although sticks are necessary the expense will be trifling, as very short sticks will suffice. The last on the list is *Superlative*, which is remarkable for the size of the pods only, and is not desirable for small gardens, as the pods, although large, are by no means well filled.

Of new broccolis, *Cooling's Matchless*, in the hands of Mr. Cooling, of Bath, and *Watts' Excelsior*, in the hands of Messrs. T. Watts and Son, 56, Gold Street, Northampton, are both first-class varieties; they are large, of good colour, and in flavour very excellent. Samples of the former, exhibited last spring at South Kensington, were of gigantic proportions, and, as regards colour and appearance, were as near perfection as they possibly could be.

STRELITZIA REGINA.

BY WILLIAM COLE,

Head Gardener, Ealing Park.



THIS fine old plant, notwithstanding its interesting and attractive character when in bloom, is but little known, and it is a rare occurrence to meet with it in any but large gardens. At the present time, we have in the stove here a large specimen which has been in flower or some time, and will continue to produce its flowers throughout

January.