

THE HYDRANGEA.



SOUTH of Philadelphia, the tender varieties of the Hydrangea, of which there are about a half-dozen popular ones, are grown in the open air; but at the North, with the exception of one or two varieties, they are only grown as pot plants, either in the house or conservatory.

The Hydrangea belongs to the Saxifrage family, and is a near relative of the well-known Syringa, or Mock Orange, of our gardens. Its name is derived from two Greek words, *υδωρ*, water, and *αγγος*, a vase, and thus signifies a water vessel, in allusion to the shape of the fruit. It is widely

distributed over the world, some thirty-three species being known, some of them natives of Eastern Asia, Java and the Himalayan Mountains, and some of them natives of North-west and South-east America. A variety known as *Hydrangea arborescens*, is found growing wild on rocky banks from Northern Pennsylvania to Illinois and southward.

One of the best and most popular varieties for pot culture is the one represented in our colored plate, viz:—

HYDRANGEA OTAKSA.—Nothing can possibly be more beautiful as a decorative plant on the porch or verandah than one or two of these plants, with its huge tresses of flesh colored flowers. These, in botanical language, may be described as disposed in large terminal, globose, leafless cymes. The leaves of the plant are opposite and deeply serrate. Where well-grown it reaches a height of about two and a-half feet, and is hardier than some of the other varieties. This variety was introduced from Japan in the year 1868.

CULTURE.—The *Hydrangea Otaksa* may be easily propagated by cuttings, and florists, therefore, often make them annually, and allow them to produce one head of flowers each, and then throw them aside; but, for the amateur, a much better way is to grow it as a shrubby plant to bloom for a number of years in succession. The culture is easy, and any one can succeed by attending to a few simple particulars. The soil should be rich and may be made of loam and decayed cow manure, in equal parts. One very important particular is to give it plenty of water during the growing

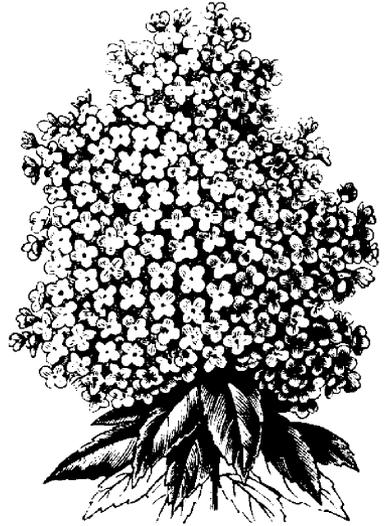


FIG. 1.—HYDRANGEA PANICULATA.