

CACTUS CULTURE.

Could you give a sketch about the management of Cacti at the different times of the year; when to water or not; and when they should flower, and how to make them flower, and any other point that may be useful. I am yours truly, F. DANN. *Selkirk, April 9th, 1888.*

(Reply by N. Robertson, Superintendent Government Grounds, Ottawa.)

THERE are two things that are imperative in order to be successful with cacti, viz.:—a season of perfect rest, and the most perfect drainage. During the winter months, they should be put in some place where this can be attained; if in a greenhouse, some dry shelf, away from amongst other plants; if in a house, the garret or some out-of-the-way corner, where the temperature does not fall below 45°. Never give them water unless you see them shrivelling up, and even a little of this is better for them than moisture. Evade any cold, damp place above all things. In their native habitats they are found growing on the arid plains and mountain sides, where they are almost burnt up during six months of the year. Such positions give them perfect drainage also, as when the rainy season comes

no water can ever stagnate about them. Much has been said about the proper material in which to grow them. What I use is a good free loam, mixed with lumps of old lime, rubbish and charcoal. I do not know that those things last named are necessary only to ensure perfect drainage and keep the soil open, but with this the usual method of plenty of crocks in the bottom of the pots must be carefully attended to. And when the spring comes, give them a good washing to cleanse them from dust and insects, put them in a warm sunny position, don't be afraid of too much heat, they will stand a very high temperature and be benefited by it. Water sparingly at first, and increase as they begin to grow. If you have not a high temperature your watering must be carefully done. Cold and dampness are the greatest enemies they have.

Mexico and Brazil are the principal producers of many of them, although they are found in several other tropical regions of America.

To enumerate the many different species of them would perhaps be superfluous in the eyes of many of the readers of your Horticultural paper. In a botanical collection in England, there are over nine hundred species, but I will take only a few of the species most frequently seen.

Phyllocacti are those frequently seen in collections and houses and are known

