

approach the form of the uncombed chrysanthemum.

In color China asters have long since obtained the limits of their widest range; the modern evolution of the plant is in the direction of habit and form of flower. Some type varies, suddenly and without apparent cause, into some novel form, retaining, however, its normal color. The "sport" becomes a fixed variety by the florist propagating from its best and most stable specimens. Soon other colors appear, until finally the entire range is obtained. So it happens that there are various well-marked races or types, each with its full and independent array of colors. The Comet type, the most admired of asters, appeared on the market about 1887, with a flower of a full white overlaid with pink. The pink tended to fade out after the flower opened, leaving the color an unwashed white. The rose-colored Comet next appeared, and the blue was introduced from Paris in 1892, and this represents the highest artistic perfection of the China aster.

In such a range of types great variety of choice is presented. For deep and glowing colors the Truffaut asters, variously known as the Perfection and the Peony-flowered, are recommended. They have a beautiful pyramidal habit, and a comely, high-centred, incurved flower. In this type the shades of red are most admired. The Comet asters are usually given first place in a collection. Their habit is dwarf and compact. Their great merit lies in the flat, long, soft, spreading rays, which give the flowers a freedom and novelty of outline not found in any other aster.

China asters are easily raised. If early flowers are wanted, or if the plants are to be grown in pots for exhibition, the seed should be sown indoors, or in a frame, as early as the middle of April. But, if the plants are to be grown in borders, it is quite as well to sow the seed in the ground where the plants are to grow. The China aster is essentially an autumn flower, and should not be forced into competition with midsummer flowers. They may be sown as late as the middle of June, if the soil is good and the plants are

carefully watched. Besides the Comet and the Truffaut varieties, the Simple, Washington, Victoria, Mignon, and Queen of the Market are excellent kinds to grow. The last is early and of very graceful outline, and is one of the best for use as cut flowers. The Crown, also, is odd and attractive. Amongst the quilled asters the various forms of German quill-

ed, Victoria, Needle, and Lilliput are esteemed. Dwarf-tufted asters may be represented by the Dwarf Bouquet, or Dwarf German, and Shakespeare.

Two or three insects prey upon the China asters, but they do not appear to be very general. There is a rust, or fungus, which is a much more serious difficulty. It attacks the underside of the leaf, and raises an orange-colored pustule. Timely spraying with a copper fungicide will keep this disease in check. The ammoniacal carbonate of copper is better than the Bordeaux mixture, for the latter discolors the plants.* Spray the underside of the leaves especially.



Asters.