

CHRYSANTHEMUMS. Since we have two named varieties of chrysanthemums on our distribution list, it is important that we consider how to plant them to obtain the best results. Any one who has attended the chrysanthemum shows, brilliant with their profusion of magnificent blooms of immense size and peculiar character, such as have been held in our cities during the past few years, will be full of enthusiasm over the possibilities in store before us in entering upon the growing of chrysanthemums, and will unite with me in the hope that our society will be able to attempt a chrysanthemum show of our own on a small scale in the autumn of 1897, if not before.

The little plants now given you should be planted at once in three-inch pots in good rich soil. Rotten sod enriched with one-third manure makes the best kind of potting soil. Be sure to firm the earth well about the roots of the plants, water and then fill up with loose earth. Set them in the shade for a few days and afterwards bring them to a sunny window. From the first to last the chrysanthemum needs an abundance of water and plenty of sunshine. As soon as the roots of the plant reaches the sides of the pot, shift to a pot six inches in diameter. This transplanting can be done without any shock to the growth of the plant, because a ball of earth will remain attached.

Sometime in June when conditions are favorable to growth, the plants may be set in the open ground for the summer, and lifted into larger pots, say nine inches in diameter, sometime in September in which they may be left to bloom. Another plan is to shift them into larger sized pots in the month of June, instead of planting them in the open ground, and to set these pots in a bed of coal ashes, where they may remain until about the first of October when they should be housed. If rain is lacking, water them frequently and never allow them to remain dry.

If you want fine blooms, one important point is thinning the buds. The enormous specimens which we see at chrysanthemum shows have been produced by removing all buds except the one which is to produce the exhibition bloom, and thus the whole strength of the plant is thrown into the one bloom. But for ordinary purposes, this method is not desirable. A better plan is simply to pinch back the leading shoot so as to secure free branching, then allow one terminal bud on each branch to mature a bloom. It is better to do this than to allow all the buds in a cluster to produce flowers.

After blooming is over, cut down the stem to within six inches of the ground and winter in the cellar. The name of the variety may be written on the pot.

I have thus attempted to give you a few brief directions for the cultivation of these flowers which we are distributing during the present season, directions which I am sure will be of as much value to myself as to any other member of this society. We hope to learn much by reading, by experience and by comparing notes with each other at our meetings, and trust that, as a result, greater skill in the production of beautiful flowers will be attained by the members of our society.

KINCARDINE.

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