

those who wish to try and winter over a chrysanthemum plant.

After cutting down the old flower stem to within an inch or two of the surface of the soil in the pot, do not put the plant away down in a dark cellar as is often done. As a rule if this is done the plant is either allowed to dry up completely and die, or otherwise it is kept so wet that the plant is rotted away by successive waterings, given at a time when very little water is needed.

The best place to keep chrysanthemum plants after cutting them down is in a window in a cool room, where the temperature is about 45° or 50°. Plenty of light and sunshine will be beneficial to the plant so long as the room is not too hot to induce a weak premature growth of the young shoots that usually appear on the surface of the soil before the plant is cut down. As much fresh air should be given it as possible on fine warm days, avoiding cold, cutting draughts or winds. By keeping the plant in a cool place as described and by giving it all the cool air possible without chilling it, the growth of the young shoots before mentioned will be retarded and hardened. These last two points are the main ones to be considered to attain success, as the tendency and nature of the chrysanthemum is to grow all the time; unless given as nearly as possible the same surroundings it receives when growing naturally out of doors in winter, in the more temperate climates than ours where these plants are natives.

If kept in a cool place as described the growth of the young shoots can be retarded until well on into winter or perhaps early spring. Sufficient water must be given the plants to keep the soil in the pots only fairly moist. Water the plants so as to moisten all the soil when water is given, then withhold water until the plants show signs of dryness again. The top of the soil usually indicates by its lighter color the time when

the plants require water. Give the plants air on fine warm days.

When growth commences pinch off the tips of the shoots when the latter are three inches in length. This pinching should be repeated as often as required—usually every three or four weeks—until May, when the plants can be placed out of doors on fine days in a sheltered position to harden off the growth.

In a week or two the plants can be divided up into two or three pieces, if the size of the plant will warrant this treatment, and each division potted into a small sized pot. Or the whole plant can be potted into a pot one or two sizes larger, or it can be planted out in the open ground to grow on during the summer. The tips of the growth in any case should still be kept pinched off every three or four weeks as required until July, when they may be allowed to grow on without pinching or topping.

If young plants are required, instead of pinching the young shoots, they should be

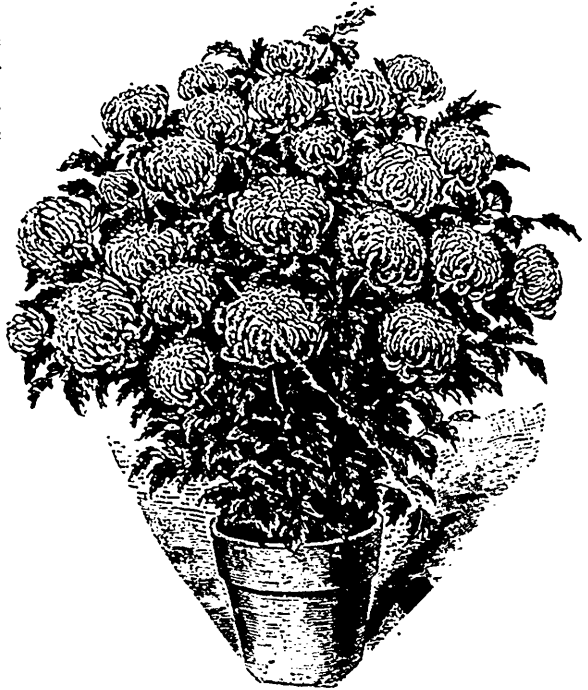


FIG. 2529. CHRYSANTHEMUM.