

## EXPERIENCE WITH CANNAS

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THE advent of Canna Austria marked an important era in the culture of these semi-tropical plants, which are now considered so essential to every lawn. The foretelling of its glory impressed me favorably, hence a fine specimen was duly installed in a prominent bed in my garden. Somewhere I had read that the variety "did best in poor soil." This I did not in the least believe, for I had had long and intimate acquaintance with cannas of many kinds, and had fully demonstrated their ability of appropriating for personal glorification the desirable elements in the richest and strongest soil which the ingenuity of man could concoct. Consequently I expected to break all previous records of the new acquisition.

Cow manure was liberally spread over the bed and the soil forked over and thrown out. Just what the excavation was filled with I positively refuse to tell. However, the reservoir was to serve as bank account for the plant to draw from later on. The soil was then thrown back and the bed got in shape. All went well for a while. Fine fresh leaves unrolled rapidly, but after a little they blanched strangely, turned brown and withered.

"Drench it with plain straight water," was the advice given, but of no avail. The roots had struck the reservoir, and deluging the soil only choked them with a bigger drink. My "center piece" was facetiously commented on. The roots were lifted in the fall, and as they were sound, but not vigorous, were ensconced in a 10-inch pot, given indifferent soil and placed in a sunny bay window. Liquid fertilizers were dutifully passed on to more appreciative cannas,

nevertheless nothing but leaves resulted; these were good to look at, and Madam Crozy and Gen de Miribel made up all deficiency of bloom, showing what a canna should and could do indoors in midwinter.

Last spring I cut down the stalks and divided the root growth into thirds; two of these were repotted in ordinary soil and a moderate allowance of liquid fertilizer given occasionally, but out of door pot culture was no more fruitful than that indoors, in fact the foliage was less luxuriant, owing to the more rapid evaporation of moisture in the open air. The third section was located in the poorest vein of soil my garden could furnish; some water was of course given, but assuredly the subject was not "fussed with." As a result thereof there stands in that usually barren spot a robust plant stretching its glorious spikes of clear yellow to a height of six feet. Individual flowers measure fully six inches across, and the larger petals are fully two inches wide. Obviously Canna Austria is a law unto itself, a fact demonstrated at the expense of a little personal conceit.

A dwarf canna (Nellie Bowden) growing close by, looked quite like a small edition of its "lily-flowered" superior. It is the only canna which might properly be called dainty looking, and it is that in leaf and flower, as both are small, trim and slender. The color is a little deeper yellow and lacks the clear transparency of petal; the two smallest petals are stained with red much deeper than the faint dots of Austria. This is also a free bloomer out of doors, but has never done anything indoors. The extreme height thus far attained is 38 inches.—*Amer. Agriculturist.*