

✧ The Garden and Lawn. ✧

CACTUS NOTES.

Epiphyllums.



THE next best known are the "Epiphyllums," or Crab or Lobster Cacti, with flat stems notched as one leaf or stem growing out from another; the flowers are formed at the joints. These are rapid-growing satisfactory plants, and their cultivation, soil, watering, etc., similar to the "Phyllocactus."

As their long slender branches are of a drooping habit they are often grafted on the "Pereskia," or Barbadoes gooseberry (a woody shrub though a cactus and the only species that has true leaves) or on some of the varieties of "Cereus." When grafted on stems a foot high they make beautiful umbrella-like plants, and when covered with blossoms in winter, as they generally are, there are few plants to compare with them. Besides making handsomer plants grafting prevents damping off at the neck, a danger with young plants if injudiciously watered. The original plants of this class were only two, with scarlet or crimson flowers, but they have been so successfully hybridized that there are now many different colors, and even the shape of the flowers has been changed. The original form was two or more tubes growing out of each other, but there are now flowers like a "Cereus," or "Phyllocactus." Every one should have a Crab cactus.

Cereus.

The "Cereus" next claim attention, a large and beautiful class of about 200 varieties with strongly dissimilar forms from "Cereus giganteus," the giant of Mexico, a straight column sixty feet high, to the creeping rat-tail "Flagelliformus," common in dwellings. To attempt to give a description of the numerous varieties would be more lengthy than profitable, as these notes are only by an amateur for beginners in cactus culture.

A large number are of a semi-climbing habit requiring support. Of these the best known are "grandiflorus," "coccineus," "Macdonaldsii," "Nyclicalus," and others, and a description of the first named may serve for this class. "Cereus grandiflorus," "The night-blooming Cereus," "The grandest flower that blooms," are the names variously applied to this plant. The stems are almost cylindrical, nearly an inch in diameter, with four to seven slight ridges or angles, which bear numerous small tufts of wool and short spines. The flowers appear on the sides of the stems, principally the younger shorter ones. The first sign is a little wooly tuft, and you will be unable to know for a few days whether it will be a flower or a branch, but keep in the sun, and if a flower the stem will increase to about six inches in length; watch then for its opening about