

## CHRYSANTHEMUMS

THE past year made it most evident that there was a great revival of interest in the chrysanthemum, and the interest is being well sustained. Long may it bloom, say I. No flower I ever grew has afforded me more genuine pleasure or brought me in touch with so many enthusiastic worshipers at its shrine.

In preparing for the future I look upon the probationary period out in the frames as the foundation of the plant. The chrysanthemum is naturally a cool growing, hardy plant, and getting it out in the open air (for the glass should always be entirely removed during the day) is merely getting the plant back to its natural conditions, and the result is seen in a close-jointed sturdy little plant that is started in its way rejoicing with a vigorous constitution, and with the glow of health on its shining foliage.

We generally plant out about the middle of May, and a few days earlier or later, as the young stock may need. As regards the soil, the Mum is not over particular, though a light loam is better than a heavy soil. In heavy soil, unless one is very careful with the watering, the plants are liable to be caught too wet some time when a rainy spell sets in, and leaf spot appears in consequence. It will be found a good plan to incorporate about a sixth part of burnt refuse from the garden with the soil at planting time. This refuse is rich in potash and lime, both essential for the building up of the plant, and they help to leaven up the cruder loam.

After the benches are filled, set out your plants ten inches apart each way, and then pound the bed down solid. Don't be afraid of getting it too hard. Make it firm, as your aim should be to keep your plants as short-jointed and dwarf as possible, and this they will not do if they are permitted to run too readily through the mass of new soil.

Just now I said plant ten inches apart

each way. This distance is about as little as it is wise to give if you are looking for the extra quality flowers, though some varieties that, like Lunderbruck, droop their foliage down close to the main stem, may be planted an inch closer. It has been said that the man that makes two blades of grass grow where only one grew before, is a benefactor. This rule cannot be made to work out in growing exhibition Mums. In this case, the man that tries to grow two flowers where his neighbor is only growing one will always get lost in the shuffle when it comes to the prize-taking.

The question of when, how and what to feed his plants is often the most difficult problem confronting the novice. When to feed is a question that the condition of the plants themselves will best answer. As long as they are keeping a dark healthy green and making large foliage they will not need feeding to any extent. We generally commence feeding about ten weeks after planting, which is, say, by August 1. At this time a top dressing of bone meal and rotten manure is applied, and from then on liquid manure is constantly given. Some growers think it better not to feed before the bud is set, but while, as before stated, you must be guided by your plants, whether the bud is set or not is of little importance if the plants are needing nourishment. We always use a Kenney pump in applying liquid fertilizers and find it saves much labor. We use chiefly sheep manure for making liquid, with a change to sulphate of ammonia or nitrate of potash in between, using these last in the proportion of one pound to a 50-gallon barrel of water.

As each variety shows color, we discontinue feeding, as experience has taught us to keep well on the safe side, and feeding too long means a soft, flabby, easily injured flower, if nothing worse.—*American Gardening*.