

T. A. W.'s OBSERVATIONS FOR THE GROWER

Daffodil Breeding

The final paragraph of our Seattle notes, page 1046, read as follows: "Samuel Goodell, a Seattle man, is raising some of the finest English Daffodils in this country. The color of these Daffodils is exquisite and they measure 4 1/2 in. in diameter. They are not the original English variety but originated by crossing some of the best English Daffodils and are far superior to their parents."

Such is the note and it comes as a rift in a dark cloud. It discloses the fact that at least one man realized a few years ago that America ought to stand in the development of the Narcissus family. What Mr. Goodell secured the finest and latest novelties as were in commerce in England, five or six years ago one knows not. He alone can tell us what varieties he used for crossing, and by that it will be, perhaps, possible to judge how far behind the British raiser Mr. Goodell is.

The report of the R. H. S. Daffodil Show held in London, April 13, in the H. A. reads: "For years past, it has been said that the limit of improvement with regard to Narcissus had been reached; it would have been amusing if the makers of such remarks could have been placed in front of Messrs. Barr & Sons or Mrs. Backhouse's seedlings, some of which were streets and streets ahead of anything previously seen. One very successful raiser declared he had never seen such wonderful things in his wild-est dreams."

During the war, no special Daffodil shows were held in England but throughout that period, all the breeders were, each season, flowering successful batches of seedlings and doubtless it was these seedlings that were shown at the recent exhibition. No one, whose knowledge does not extend beyond varieties, such as Emperor, Empress, Seagull, Albion, Van Waveren's Giant, King Alfred, and so forth, can possibly conceive what stage of development has now been reached.

The report referred to states that Mrs. R. O. Backhouse (presumably a relative of the pioneer Daffodil breeder), "contributed a small but truly wonderful collection of her own raising. The feature of this exhibit was the wealth of red cups; there were Incomps, nearly as large as Sir Watkin's with huge all brilliant red eyes. This was one of the choicest collections of seedlings ever seen at the R. H. S. Show."

Only those who are familiar with the startling but weak variety, 'Will Scarlet', can imagine what these Backhouse seedlings are really like and as Will Scarlet has been in commerce more than a decade, one may safely assume the advance to be amazing.

Have we no enthusiasts, equal to those who are devoting themselves to orchids and Roses, who will take up the cultivation and show us modern Daffodils such as have been developed by the British, Australian and New Zealand raisers?

It is too much to expect that home productions in Daffodil novelties, can equal those of Barr, Engleheart, Backhouse, Wilson, Pearson, Bath Chapman and others, some of whom have been breeding for 25 years or more. The period that elapses between crossing and sowing, gives these raisers fully six years lead, even if one invests in their latest productions.

Some of the British raisers are always prepared to sell the entire stocks of their best seedlings and, it may be added, a stock of a few bulbs costs considerably less than has been paid for many orchids. The highest price ever asked for a single bulb of a variety put into commerce was \$250, this being the figure that prevailed for several seasons for bulbs of Mrs. Krelage, a large white trumpet of Dutch origin.

Many a stock of a good seedling has changed hands for \$100 or less, and not a few cut flower growers have invested in such stocks to enable them to control the cut flower output of such varieties. Some of these seedlings are eminently suitable for the cut flower trade, having foliage like a flag Iris, stems over 2 ft. in length and flowers of enormous proportions and extraordinary substance.

The Lily Tulip

The Garden Magazine for the current month contains a brief but lucid dissertation on this new type of Tulip, written by Joseph Jacob, a well known English authority on bulbs. The Lily Tulip is of hybrid origin, raised by E. H. Krelage & Sons of Haarlem, Holland, by crossing T. retroflexa with various Darwin varieties.

Those familiar with T. retroflexa can readily conceive a general idea of the Lily Tulip. The shape is similar, the petals when expanded in full sunshine recurving to form a Lily-like flower. The blooms, however, are larger and the stems longer than of the parent retroflexa.

The first of the new type was exhibited in 1912 at one of the R. H. S. shows when it gained an F. C. C.

The writer well remembers the exhibit; a large vase of rich rose colored flowers, intensely fascinating and well named "Siren." Two other varieties of the same type have since been introduced, namely, Adonis, deep rosy red, and Artemis, carmine with white base. These Lily Tulips, together with numerous rare varieties of other types, are being grown at the New York Botanical Gardens, and their flowering period is almost due.

The Lily Tulips have proved to be perfectly hardy and rapid increasers; moreover, their force as readily as Wm. Cowland, a Darwin variety often sold as Sweet Lavender.

Other colors in this new type are being developed and these, in company with numerous cross breeds raised by the late Walter T. Ware, bid fair to create a still greater interest in Tulips.

Reverting to our contemporary, The Garden Magazine, this is particularly noteworthy for its beautiful pictures of garden and other scenes. One depicts the famous General Sherman, the giant Scout elephant, said to be the largest living created object in the world. It was 2000 years old when Christ was born when last measured it stood 270 ft. high and had a circumference of 102 ft.

A view of the Cryptomeria avenue at Nikko, Japan, is also of great interest. This avenue extends for 2 1/2 miles along the highway leading to the tomb of Ieyasu, father of the second Shogun of the Tokugawa dynasty. The avenue was planted as a memorial, being completed in 1651. It took 20 years to complete.

White Fly

This pest is recognized a serious one, inasmuch that neither spraying nor fumigation with Tobacco products are effective against it.

Cyaniding is considered to be the only remedy and this fumigant must be used at frequent intervals to insure the destruction of the successive broods of scale-like larvae until all are cleared. Some authorities here still recommend one-fifth to one-sixth of an ounce of cyanide of potassium for every 1000 cu. ft. but we understand sodium cyanide is to be preferred, as it is less liable to injure the plants. A well-known gardener, writing to The Gardeners Chronicle, London, says he has found the most effective method of treating white fly is with sodium cyanide 1/4 oz.; phosphoric acid, 1/2 oz.; water 1 oz. to every 1000 cu. ft., used in an Edwards' cyaniding machine.

These quantities will not harm the tenderest plants, including Cucumbers, Melons, Tomatoes, Heliotrope, Poinsettia, Cyclamen, Schizanthus and many others. The best temperature for cyaniding is 50 deg., and all plants must be perfectly dry.

As with the sulphuric acid-cyanide combination, the water must be placed in the vessel first, then the acid, the cyanide last; for safety reasons this chemical should be dropped into the dishes from the outside.

The special machine referred to, is not essential, although advisable.

Double Cinerarias

A contemporary writer records the fact that a grower, F. A. Volz of Chertot, Cincinnati, Ohio, is paying considerable attention to double Cinerarias which, he thinks, will go toward replacing the Azalea. It is open to some doubt as to whether the Azalea can be replaced, least of all by any form of Cineraria.

Respecting double Cinerarias, it must not be inferred that these are something novel or new. Double Cinerarias are as old as the hills, but have never won favor because they lack the grace and charm which many single forms possess. It must be confessed, however, that even the singles have, in late years, depreciated in popular favor and the various stellate forms have not materially assisted the Cineraria into old time esteem. Their tendency to softness makes them fall short of being good market plants, although for conservatory decoration the Cineraria is decidedly showy. Its attraction for greenery, is another of its drawbacks. Double Cinerarias, as stated, are not so showy as the singles, and to get them with certainty they must be propagated from cuttings.

There is little likelihood of a really reliable strain of doubles being developed; seedlings are naturally variable, and this is quite understandable, because the greenhouse Cineraria is considered to be a real hybrid, more than two species being concerned in its origin.

Unless the strain referred to is a real break away from the doubles of the past, one cannot conceive them creating much enthusiasm.

Timing a Flower Crop

Our Pittsburgh correspondent refers to the fact that some people are inclined to the extent of meeting an abnormal demand on one particular day and set it back to normal the next day. Plants are living things and their development cannot be hastened or stopped in the same way as an auto is speeded up or stopped.

There is, however, much in the art of timing and it will usually be found that the most successful growers are those who get their crops at the maximum around a given date.

Cultivation does not Affect Rainfall

A more or less popular belief that cultivation has noticeably affected the rainfall in recent years, is disproved by the records tabulated by the National Weather and Crop Bulletin. The records dating back 50 years of North and South Dakota, Western Minnesota and numerous other States, make it evident that what increased crops have been produced are due to better farm methods and proper crop rotation, rather than to increased precipitation. Cultivation prevents evaporation and the soil is thereby able to retain its moisture.

So far as we are aware there is no means of increasing the natural rainfall, except by tree planting. Records from various parts of the world show that climatic conditions and particularly rainfall, are influenced by trees. For this reason the European forestry experts are all for planting millions of trees to replace those cut down during the war.

Horses vs. Autos

Manufacturers of auto trucks are invariably able to demonstrate to their own satisfaction that motor haulage is far and away superior to horse traction. The one real thing that counts is cost and, from a circular issued by the Horse Association of America, we are interested to find that one big manufacturing concern in this city is of the opinion that for all but really long hauls of town hauls the horse is the thing.

This firm has used some 24 horses for the past 30 years, but recently invested in two 2-ton trucks, costing \$5500 apiece, and offers some words of service the feeling is that the horse costs less to run and, for all but long journeys, is equal to the auto truck for speed. Even during the worst of the storm period when trucks were in difficulties the horses got through. Under actual city conditions the speed of the auto truck goes for nothing.

The firm referred to has devoted much attention to costs of running and, while open to conviction otherwise is of the opinion that the working costs of horse traction are much easier to follow and that the service save on the long hauls, is better than the truck.

New England News

CAMBRIDGE, MASS.—Harold A. Ryan's large block of greenhouses is situated in a most favorable location, right across from Mount Auburn cemetery. Under the energetic management of Mr. Ryan the greenhouses always present a prosperous outlook, being kept scrupulously neat and clean. They are filled with a supply of seasonal crops in rotation, all of which are made use of on the premises. Mr. Ryan is preparing an immense stock of Cyclamen and Begonia for Christmas. The plants are in fine condition, so are also large blocks of Roses, Hydrangeas and bedding plants for Memorial Day. One house each of Stocks and Petarwits will come in useful when the great rush is on.

Mr. Ryan claims that a large part of his success is due to persistent intelligent advertising in the right papers.

CROWELL, CONN.—Considerable damage was done to plantings of A. N. Pearson when a large tract of woodland, owned by Luther Ralph and A. N. Pearson, caught fire on April 20. Men from the greenhouses were sent to put out the fire.

SPRINGFIELD, MASS.—The engagement is announced of Miss Sarah Clark, one of the popular Dwight St. florists, and Paul B. Wiley, a graduate of New Hampshire State College. Mr. Wiley saw two years' service in the U. S. Army and is now connected with the N. K. Fairbanks Co. of Boston. Wedding in June.

BURLINGTON, MASS.—The Walker homestead and farm on Wilm St., which has been in the possession of the family for nearly 250 years, has been sold by the owner, Fred E. Walker, ex-Commissioner of Animal Industry, to Thomas Dobbins and his brother Wm. J. Dobbins of Woburn. The Dobbins brothers are well-known market gardeners and florists.

Mr. Walker has conducted the farm for 28 years. The late owner has under consideration an offer from Harry S. Kelsey who has recently purchased several thousand acres of Everglades lands near Tampa, Fla., where he will develop market gardening and floriculture. He has tendered to Mr. Walker the position of superintendent of crop production. Mr. Kelsey has already placed in charge of forestation work ex-Superintendent of the State of Massachusetts.

WATERBURY, CONN.—Wm. T. Manning, chairman of the city improvement committee on April 21 distributed several hundred dollars' worth of seeds, shrubs, trees and evergreens to help along in the "City Beautiful" campaign. Mr. Manning and Arnold B. Lamson started the distribution at 10 o'clock in the morning. The shrubs come from the Elm City Nursery Co. in New Haven and the trees from Frederick S. Chase of Middlebury.

BARRE, MASS.—The greenhouses formerly owned and used by George R. Simonds will soon be taken down and the land cleared. This leaves the town of Barre without a florist and market gardener. Mr. Simonds supplied the town for many years.

Springfield, Mass.

The Market

The demand for cut flowers is still good; in fact it is keeping up with the supply which is growing each day. Potted plants also, are selling readily at to-morrow prices.

Funerals and weddings are numerous, while corsage bouquets and boutonnières are wonderfully popular at present. Roses are wholesaling from 14c up to 25c; Carnations are bringing 12c to 15c; Sweet Peas go for \$2 per 100; Callas and Lilies sell for \$2 per doz.; Snapdragons from \$1 to \$2.

The high prices are confining the street and doorway flower sellers to a small amount of poor much-handled stock.

News Notes

Dainty May baskets prettily arranged with cut flowers, attracted much attention at the flower store of L. D. Robinson.

Percy Steele reports a gradual increase in business at his new store on Main St.

The Holyoke and Northampton gardeners and Florists' Club will meet next Tuesday evening at the home of D. J. Gallivan, Smith's Ferry.

N. W. P.