Florists' Flowers.

The Auricula.—(Continued from page 104.)

The Auricula makes no growth in June and July. To get a good Auricula by the end of July you must have made the flowers in the shade as much as possible. Attend to watering, and the removal of decayed stems and dead flowers; it is of the greatest importance that the flowers should be kept off the plant at the end of July commences to repeat the plants. Growers ought to study the habits of the different varieties in the hope of discovering a way of keeping them in pots of a suitable size; plants of robust habit in pots rather larger. Strong blooms cannot be obtained with too much care and attention. A good plant ought not to be in a pot more than 6 inches across, and there are only a few varieties that a pot of that size will hold. I shall not undertake to be guilty of the other extreme.

My favourite pot is one with a hollow bottom. After potting them, I place them in the shade, and keep the stems covered with a wet cloth. When I have to pot them, I place one, convex side up, over the drainage hole, and over it some vegetable fibre to prevent the roots from coming through. If the plant be not full with the compost previously named. Turn the plant carefully on the pot, place the knife cut bottom up, and shake the soil on to the plant and the bottom of the pot until the soil is about an inch of the pot; then fill to within half an inch of the rim of the pot, and the same distance from the lower leaves. Remember always to have some of the fibres in contact with the side of the pot. While repotting, clean the stems of the plant. The offsets may be potted either singly in small pots, or two or three round the edge of a 4-inch pot. Label the pots clearly, and put them away to flower after labour afterwards. Use clean pots. Repotting should be finished by the end of the first week in August, and the flowers developing in their autumn growth, consequently they will require to be regularly supplied with water, and have abundant light.

Of late years autumn blooms have been very prevalent. Plots that throw up trusses at this season are very much to be desired. All that can be done in this case is to break over the head of the stem, and watch to pluck the stem away, and cut off the flower of the portion of the flower-stem is allowed to remain too long at this particular season, rot is almost sure to begin in the centre of the plant.

In October the plants will be approaching their period of rest. The supply of water will require to be diminished, and the plants dried of decayed leaves.

During November and December the plants are dormant, and all the attention then needed is to give them sufficient water and keep the leaves and give only as much water as will prevent the leaves becoming flaccid; shut all close during this period.

General Observations.—In past times I used to practise the old system of exposing the plants to the weather in autumn, and I cannot understand the sequence of continual losses among my own stock and among the most valuable collections of flowers in England. I think I have given this up. For many years past I have kept my plants under glass, taking care to give abundance of the necessary light and heat from the rays of the sun. I think I have always had my plants in the finest health. I have found the glass house the best for retaining the foliage through a very fine rose, which causes the water to fall like dew. Flowers cannot be too particular to prevent the lodgment of water in the centre of the plants. Nothing will induce rot sooner than water allowed to fall in this way. I should not at any time appear, it is easily detected. For example, when a plant begins to look sickly and the leaves begin to fall off, I know the plant that is affected. The remedy is to remove all the soil from the diseased part, and with a sharp knife cut away the pith of the round part of the rising stem, till the sound part is reached; then dress the wounds with wood charcoal, and expose the part to sun and air.

Another and the most fatal symptom of rot, when a plant shows the interior leaves upright and the exterior leaves drooping. In this case, dig the plant up and place it under water, and in the meantime put the plant that is affected. I have, by this treatment, saved plants that were on the point of being completely killed. When there are no fibres left, a little silver sand placed around the neck will cause new ones to start. If the plant is past curing, open up the soil, air it, and put it in a place where it will remain in health, as they are liable to communicate the infection.

The Auricula has a peculiar smell, and any grower who has once experienced it will remember it again. I am sure that plants ought never to be tried with those plants. I have known of collections being destroyed by the use of liquid manure, which is sure to bring about a disease, and just as sure to make them the worst for keeping them in health, although it will require more time to grow them up to full-stated plants.

My stages are mounted on stone blocks, a foot off the ground, and the pots stand upon shelves. This is the best and least expeditious way of giving the plants the free circulation of air under the plants. I have never found this injurious, but the reverse. These benches are kept in a state of perfect rigid cleanliness. George Lightbody, Fulkib, Jan. 9, 1860.

The Apiary.

DISENTY.—Having perused with much interest the papers which have appeared on the foregoing subject, I am induced to send you an account of the disenty, which I have experienced on my apiary, and to request the favour of your advice as to the means of preventing a recurrence of it. I should be very glad if you will be so kind as to peruse this letter if possible to prevent its recurrence. I am very fond of bees, but I am not clever enough to perform all the duties of a beekeeper, and I fear I am not doublety very easy. Perhaps as a "Lady" I may claim some excuse for any deficiency in the above discription.

Last winter and in the succeeding spring I lost five hives from dysentery or dyspepsy, or some similar disease, which I have never experienced before, either in changing the floor-boards, but without avail. The hives which perished were of the following description:-One in a celler; one in the yard; two in the Ettigemeister's; one in a neighbour's straw hive; one in the Lady's Observatory glass hive, also in a straw hive. This last hive had the disease worst of all; the smell from it was most abominable. On examining the combs, I found all the honey in the combs; some was good, but a great deal of it was as thin as water. The good honey-comb was melted down, after it was removed, and the remaining contents was burnt. I have often wondered if it was foul brood which caused the detestable smell. I am rather inclined to think it was not foul brood, but I am not experienced enough to be able to say what sort of state the combs were in.

The remaining hives, in some the comb was mouldy, and in others watery. All were more or less provided with honey.