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**The Garden: an illustrated weekly journal of gardening in  
all its branches**

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were cultivated; but the fashion has now changed, and the growth of single varieties is now the rule and the double ones the exception. Some throw away their Hyacinths after they have done flowering, which is a mistake. I always utilise mine by planting them out in the mixed border, or in any suitable place, putting them rather deeply in the soil and with some good soil about them, and mulching and watering them during the summer. They soon establish themselves, and will throw up good spikes of bloom for several years if a little attention be given them. There are many odd spots in a garden in which a few Hyacinths can be so planted with advantage.—R. D.

**Amherstia nobilis.**—What a pity it is that this superb tree cannot be successfully flowered in ordinary stoves! But I should judge that anything short of the great conservatory at Chatsworth, or the greater Palm House at Kew, would be inadequate to its free development. In such structures, with very little care, it might be made to unfold in profusion its glorious, almost if not altogether matchless, blossoms. Growing in the garden here is a plant of it 18 ft. high, and as much through the branches. It is a low-stemmed, much-branched, small tree; and though not in the best of health, owing to the poverty of the soil at its roots, it is highly ornamental and effective, on account of the quantity of immense drooping, loose, ovate panicles, each from 15 in. to 20 in. in length, and from 9 in. to 18 in. in diameter, of scarlet-vermilion leguminose flowers, which terminate and depend from the branches. This tree has been in bloom for two months, and many of its blossoms are still in the bud. The flower is so remarkably beautiful (though, unfortunately, scentless) and so little known, that now, having the opportunity, we may try to interest your readers by briefly describing it. Each panicle, inclusive of the pliant peduncle, is from 2 ft. to 2½ ft. long, and consists of from twenty to twenty-five florets, which are borne on compressed, horizontally-extended, scarlet petioles. From the stigma of each flower to the rachis is a distance of 7 in., and almost exactly half-way between them are two very showy crimson oval-lanceolate bracts, 2½ in. long and 1½ in. in diameter. The floral organs consist of four oblong and linear-oblong, revolute crimson sepals, and three (normally five, two being abortive) erect petals; the wing petals being spatulate, 2 in. high, crimson, broadly tipped with canary yellow. The standard is equally high, the lower half long-cuneate, delicate white, marbled with red on the face, abruptly widening into a transversely reflexed blade, which is broadly blotched with canary yellow. But a description such as this signally fails to convey any but the very faintest idea of the gorgeous loveliness of a flower that has already not inappropriately been extolled as “unrivalled” in its beauty. I may remark that the effect of the whole is greatly enhanced by the purplish-brown of the gracefully drooping bunches of young leaves, which hang long and limp from the ends of the spreading branches. This is the only species of the genus *Amherstia*, and is a native of the Malayan Peninsula.—G. SYME, *Castleton Bot. Garden, Jamaica*.

**Electric Light in Plant Culture.**—This is a subject that has a certain attraction for horticulturists with a scientific turn of mind. It was not unknown till now that artificial light exerted an influence upon plants, though to Dr. Siemens belongs the credit of having actually cultivated fruits and flowers by it. The question now turns upon its practicable applicability. If we could turn a sun upon our Vinery and Peach house roofs during a fortnight or three weeks of dull weather when the trees were in flower, that would of itself be something to be extremely thankful for, but a thing not likely to happen so long as the electric light cannot be used for such necessary purposes as lighting our streets and dwellings. I do not at present believe in the electric light for horticultural purposes—“the game is not worth the candle.” Those who have advocated its use in plant houses during the night have not told us anything about temperature. Heat as well as light is required to force Strawberries; and as the electric light affords little or none of the latter, is an extra quantity of coal to be consumed in order to balance matters? How would the light act on a Peach tree or a Strawberry plant during a frosty night when the temperature inside the house sank to 40° or 45°? To equalise matters under such circumstances we should want twelve rows of hot water pipes instead of six rows to sustain the temperature. No doubt, too, the usual plagues—spider and thrips, &c., &c.—would thrive in a proportionate degree under the combined influence of artificial light and artificial heat, and the plants would want double the amount of watering and attention. Forcing would have to be conducted by relays of workmen, the same way as in the coal-pits—there would be “night shifts” and “day shifts.” On the whole I am afraid the electric light men are counting their chickens before they are hatched.—J. S. W.

**New Hybrid Primula.**—I herewith send a truss of a new Primula raised by Mr. Lindsay, Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh, from *Primula ciliata* crossed with some border *Auricula*. It is a fine dwarf variety, a very profuse bloomer, and sweet scented. I have

just received a first-class certificate for it from the Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society, under the name of *P. ciliata* Lindsayi. It is certainly the best of all this section of Primulas—I mean of the dark coloured kinds.—ROBERTSON MUNRO, *Abercorn Nursery, Piersonhill, Edinburgh*. [A very pretty and distinct variety.]

## THE COBÆAS.

(With descriptions of two new species.)

ALTHOUGH the species of *Cobæa* are not remarkable for the brilliancy of their flowers, there are few herbaceous climbers so useful. For rapid growth some of them are unsurpassed; and if their flowers are not gay, they are large and striking, and produced under favourable circumstances in the greatest profusion. These remarks apply more particularly to the original *C. scandens*, but several of the others are equally as ornamental, and all of them are singular and interesting plants. I propose giving here as complete an account of the genus as I can from the material in the Kew herbarium and library. The genus is referred to the Polemonium family, with which it best agrees in its botanical characters, though it is perfectly distinct in its climbing habit. Two of the species have been regarded as forming a distinct genus to which the name of *Rosenbergia* has been given. *C. penduliflora* was the type of this genus, which was characterised by the long, narrow segments of the corolla, and long exserted stamens; but there is a gradual transition from this species to the familiar *C. scandens*.

***Cobæa scandens*** (Cavanilles' "Icones," I., p. 11., t. 16, 17; Andrew's Bot. Rep., v., t. 342; Bot. Mag., t. 851; var. *albo-marginata*, "Flore des Serres," t. 1467).—About ninety years ago, at a period when horticulture and botany were flourishing in Spain, this species flowered in the Botanic Garden of Madrid, and Cavanilles founded the genus upon it in the work quoted above. It appears to have flowered for the first time in this country in 1803, in the collection of the Honourable Charles Long, of Bromley Hill, Kent; and Andrews figured it under the name of *Cobæa scandens*, stating that it was a native of the East Indies, and must be kept in a hothouse. According to Aiton, however, it was introduced by Sir Edward Smith in 1792. This species is easily distinguished from all the others by its broad, almost orbicular sepals, and its broad, violet-purple corolla. A native of Mexico, where it bears, or bore, the name of *Yedra morada*, or Violet Ivy, it is an invaluable plant in large and lofty conservatories, for it grows with such astonishing rapidity that it soon covers a large space; moreover, if a plant gets foul it may be taken away bodily and replaced. How useful it is one may see at the Crystal Palace, in the Winter Garden at Kew, &c. The variegated-leaved variety is very handsome.

***C. stipularis*** (Bentham, "Plantæ Hartwegianæ," p. 45; "Botanical Register," 1841, t. 25).—One of Hartweg's numerous introductions, which seems to have disappeared from our gardens. In habit and foliage it closely resembles *C. scandens*, except that the lowermost pair of leaflets of each leaf are much smaller than the others, and more like stipules. The flowers are yellow, tinged with green, and as large, or larger, than those of *C. scandens*. As an ornamental plant it is scarcely equal to the latter. Also a native of Mexico. Dr. Coulter's No. 928, Zimapan, is this species.

***C. macrostema*** (Pavon, Bot. Mag., t. 3780; *C. lutea*, Don, Edin. Phil. Journ., 1824, p. 112; *C. acuminata*, D.C. ex Hook, Bot. Mag., loc. cit.).—A native of Guatemala, introduced into this country by G. Ure Skinner in 1839, in the autumn of which year it flowered in the Glasgow Botanic Garden. It has large yellow flowers, with the stamens exserted some 2 in.; and the short lobes of the corolla are sub-erect instead of being rolled back as in the two preceding species. There are specimens in Kew Herbarium collected by Skinner, Hartweg, Salvin and Godman, and Bernoulli, in Guatemala, up to an elevation of 5000 ft.

***C. minor*** (Martens and Galeotti, Bulletin Acad. Brux., xii., part 2, p. 276).—A very much smaller and slenderer plant than either of the foregoing, probably growing only a few feet high. When out of flower one might be pardoned for taking it to be a broad-leaved Vetch. The relatively small, deeply-lobed, spreading flowers are borne on stalks shorter than the leaves. The colour of the flowers is not given in the description, and I believe this species has never been in cultivation. It is a native of the Peak of Orizaba in Mexico.

***C. campanulata*** (Hemsley, n. sp.\*).—This is allied to *C. macrostema*, with which it has been confused in Kew Herbarium, but it differs in its very much smaller corolla with short rounded lobes,

\* *Gracillima*, præter calycem cito glabrescens, ramulis angulatis, foliis trijugis obovato-oblongis acuminatis 2-3-pollicaribus basi oblique cordatis vel interdum fere truncatis, pedunculis gracillimis quam folia multoties longioribus, calycis segmentis lineari-lanceolatis acuminatis hirsutis quam corolla dimidio brevioribus, corolla lutea anguste campanulata usque ad sesquipollicari, lobis brevibus rotundatis erectis, staminibus styloque breviter exsertis.



much shorter stamens, &c. It is possible, however, that it may be an extreme state of it; but, besides the differences indicated in its character, it is a native of a different country, being from Atacames, in Ecuador.

**C. Trianæi** (Hemsley, n. sp.\*\*).—At first sight the dried specimens of this species might be mistaken for *C. scandens*, but the oblong-lanceolate calyx lobes at once distinguish it, and the corolla lobes do not appear to turn back as in that species. Except that the foliage is narrower, there is little difference. I am not aware that this has been in cultivation. It inhabits New Granada, and Purdie collected it at Ibaque on the Quindiu; Jervise at Antioquia; Goudot at Tolima de Nevado; and Triana without any special locality. I have dedicated this species to my friend Dr. José Triana, a native of New Granada and an accomplished botanist, whose labours on the rich flora of his native country have unfortunately been interrupted for want of funds.

**C. penduliflora** (Hooker, Bot. Mag., t. 5757; our figure, herewith given); *Rosenbergia penduliflora* ("Karsten Flora Colombia," i., p. 27, t. 14).—In the form of its corolla this species is very different from the foregoing, the tubular portion of the corolla being short, whilst the lobes are very long and narrow. The accompanying figure is a reduction to one-third of the natural size of the "Botanical Magazine" plate. *C. penduliflora* is a graceful and



*Cobæa penduliflora.*

singular plant, though, like its congeners, it cannot boast of brilliantly-coloured flowers. It has a yellowish-green corolla, sometimes tinged or striped with purple, purple filaments, and yellow anthers. The relative length of the corolla-lobes and stamens varies; sometimes the former are longer than the latter, sometimes the reverse, their greatest length being about 5 in. It was sent to Kew from Caraccas by Mr. Ernst in 1868; and Messrs. Haage & Schmidt now have it in stock.

**C. gracilis** (Hemsley); *Rosenbergia gracilis* (Ersted, "L'Amérique Centrale," p. 17, t. 15).—Similar to the last, but slenderer, and having flowers only about half as large. It inhabits Costa Rica.

W. B. HEMSLEY.

**Sydney Exhibition.**—Amongst the awards made by the judges at this exhibition, and published in the *Colonies and India* (p. 6), is one "Carter Brothers, London, First, for seeds." It should be Messrs. James Carter & Co., High Holborn, a correction which we trust will be made in the proper quarter.—Messrs. J. B. Brown & Co., 90, Cannon Street, have, we hear, received a gold medal for galvanised wire netting at this Exhibition.

\*\* Habitu foliisque *C. scandentis*, præter calycem fere omnino glaberrima, foliolis trijugis ovato-oblongis vel obovato-oblongis 2-4-pollicaribus duobus infimis fere sessilibus et basi late semicordatis, pedunculis quam folia longioribus, calycis segmentis ovato-lanceolatis acutis quam corolla triente brevioribus entus glabris intus secus margines pubescentibus, corolla viridi-purpurea campanulata ad bipollicari, lobis brevibus rotundatis, staminibus breviter exsertis.

## PARAFFIN AS AN INSECTICIDE.

IF only a few of the many insecticides that within a limited time have made their appearance—and which have each been represented as infallible agents in destroying all kinds of parasites that prey upon plants—had been equal to the character given them, it might be supposed that scarcely anything in the shape of insects would now be in existence with which to contend. But still insects seem as troublesome as ever, and, as they affect plants grown under glass, there need be little hesitation in saying that the labour involved in the incessant war with the insects that prey upon them costs much more than anything else connected with their cultivation; the expenditure in labour, too, is not all, for most of the different articles that are used cost something considerable. Recently a good deal has been said about the use of paraffin for the destruction of insects of many kinds, both such as attack plants cultivated under glass and those grown in the open air; and, like most other things employed for a like purpose, there is much difference of opinion expressed respecting it, some who have used it insisting that it is the most efficacious remedy for the destruction of insects, particularly those that affect plants grown in artificial heat, where the insects are usually the most difficult to kill without injury to the plants, by reason of the latter being more tender through the conditions under which they are grown; others who have tried paraffin condemn it on account of the harm they allege it does to the plants. After repeated trials on such plants as I have an opportunity of experimenting upon, and personal observation of its use by others, I feel satisfied that the oil (or oils) generally sold under the name of paraffin, when employed with the care that such a powerful agent needs, is one of the greatest boons to gardeners for the destruction of the many insect pests with which plants are beset. But it is well to be quite clear what is meant by paraffin. The true article is very different from the various rock oils, of which, I understand, ninety-nine hundredths consist that are now sold as paraffin, and the difference in the effects reported by those who have used something or other called paraffin may be accounted for by the confusion of different articles under the same name. From what I have experienced in its use, I have no hesitation in saying that the best and safest is the rock oil, not much purified, as in this condition it mixes much better with water than when highly rectified; in proportion to its purity, it has a greater tendency to float on the top of the water, and in this way is liable to reach the surface of the leaves in an insufficiently diluted state. This view of the matter is held by a friend of mine who, for some years before anything was said in the gardening papers about the use of paraffin for the destruction of insects, had been experimenting and using it largely to an extensive general collection of plants, both stove and greenhouse, as well as for outdoor subjects.

I find that for all ordinary purposes in the destruction of mealy bug, brown scale, thrips, red spider, or aphides, a large-sized wine-glassful to a gallon of water is enough, and it is much better to use it diluted to this extent than stronger; for at this strength it will kill every insect it touches, and, even if it is applied in a stronger state, it will, like other similarly applied remedies, generally fail to reach the whole of the insects at the first dressing, consequently necessitating a second application, so that nothing is gained by using it at a strength likely to run the risk of injuring the plants. I may here remark that this oil is of such a nature as not to admit of its being employed in a careless off-hand manner, or by people who are not sufficiently acquainted with the various degrees of susceptibility to injury which cultivated plants possess; and I have no doubt that where injury has followed its use the cause is traceable to want of care. The oil has such a determined disposition to float on the top of the water, even when used as I have already suggested, in only a partially refined state, that nothing less than keeping the water briskly and continually stirred whilst it is being applied, either by an ordinary garden pump or a syringe, will suffice.

An acquaintance of mine who uses it in his Rose house, where a good many of the plants are planted out, fills his garden engine, which is on wheels, and runs it into the house, one person stirring it up all the time the other is pumping and directing the oil-impregnated water through a fine hose all over the plants; this is done not only in the summer, when the leaves are hard, but in the early spring, when the forced foliage is tender, as often as insects make their appearance. But care is taken that the liquid is not pumped all out, or so as to empty the tub lower than about 6 in. of the bottom, for, stir it up as you will, it is so little disposed to mix with the water that very much more than a proportion of oil, such as is safe to come in contact with the plants, will still keep on the top, and which if the whole was pumped out, would thus reach them. When a syringe is used care must be taken that, in addition to the water being continuously stirred whilst the work is going on, each syringe-ful is drawn from below the surface, and that at last 2 in. or 3 in. of the water from the bottom is not used without the addition of more water. For a like reason, it is not as well to dip plants in this liquid as it is to