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Albert C. Burrage Fund

March 11, 1932

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06-1122

Chicago Botanic Garden
2002

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London. Published October 1 1825. by Rudock & Joy, Paternoster-B.

A PLAIN AND PRACTICAL
Treatise
ON THE
CULTURE AND MANAGEMENT
OF THE
AURICULA;
WITH FULL DIRECTIONS FOR
PREPARING THE MOST APPROVED COMPOSTS;
RAISING PLANTS FROM SEED,
&c. &c.

FOUNDED UPON TWENTY-FIVE YEARS SUCCESSFUL EXPERIENCE.

BY ISAAC EMMERTON,
NURSERYMAN AND FLORIST,
LATE OF BARNET, HERTS.

LONDON:

Printed by C. H. REYNELL, 21, Piccadilly;
AND SOLD BY BALDWIN, CRADOCK, AND JOY, 47,
PATERNOSTER-RROW; AND BY ALL THE NURSERY-
MEN NEAR LONDON.

1815.

TO
THE MOST NOBLE THE
MARCHIONESS OF SALISBURY,
THIS SMALL WORK,
ON THE
CULTURE OF THE AURICULA,
IS MOST HUMBLY INSCRIBED,
AS
A TRIBUTE OF RESPECT AND GRATITUDE,
BY HER OBLIGED,
AND MOST DEVOTED SERVANT,
ISAAC EMMERTON.

Paddington Green,
Aug. 1, 1815.

PREFACE.

THE following Treatise contains a series of plain rules, founded on many years practice and experience, relative to the culture of the Auricula, which I have been induced to publish for the benefit and instruction of every admirer and grower of this most beautiful and most delightful of all the spring flowers. For it is generally admitted, that there are fewer good growers of the Auricula than of any other flower, though no flower, I believe, has been cultivated with so much care and pains as this universal favourite. There are not, I

conceive, more than a dozen persons at this time in the neighbourhood of London, who are in any degree celebrated for growing strong healthy plants, producing fine rich blooms ; or, in other words, who can bloom this flower in perfection ; and they have to boast of recipes and nostrums, arcana unknown to all but themselves. And where is the man we find ready and willing to disclose the secrets of his trade, business, or profession, by which he obtains his livelihood, and by which he has acquired a superiority over his fellows ? If any one should by chance succeed in obtaining a good and suitable compost, he most likely will fail in some other essential point. I have known many persons grow this plant tolerably well till the time of blooming, and then fail, for want of knowing its proper treatment at that critical

period. It is a mistaken notion altogether, that the *Auricula* is of a tender and delicate habit; I always have found it as hardy as any of the *Primula* tribe, and to stand the cold as well. It can withstand, uninjured, the coldest dry air in winter, as well as in the spring; its greatest enemies are the heavy rains in the autumn, and the continuation of wet weather in the beginning of winter; these frequently will destroy it, if then exposed, by what florists call the rot.

Now I can safely venture to affirm, that if the directions which I have given are duly followed, both with respect to mould and treatment, it will be almost impossible not to succeed; you will keep your plants in health, you will see them grow vigorously, and you will have little or nothing to apprehend from the rot. If you raise plants for sale, you will

find your interest in adopting my plan; and if you cultivate only for amusement, you will have the pleasure of beholding large trusses of fine bloom to repay your care in the spring, the season when the mind, tired of the dreary scenes of winter, hails even the sight of the wild primrose with joy, and contemplates the renovated beauties of nature with the most lively satisfaction.

I have known several gentlemen and ladies at different times come to view my stage of Auriculas when in bloom, who, struck with their magnificent appearance and dazzling beauty, have entered strongly into the fancy, and have been at considerable pains and expense to procure a collection of fashionable sorts, that is to say, those in most request at the time; and, in the course of one or two years, have either lost the whole

of them, or so mismanaged what did survive that time, that they have expressed to me their very great mortification, as well as surprise, that they could not succeed with them in the way I generally did.

There are many people, who for want of thought and observation, foolishly imagine, that because a plant is set in mould it ought to grow in it, exposed in all seasons, wet or dry, hot or cold, whether it be tender or hardy, indigenous or exotic, whether it be a native of the mountains or an offspring of the valleys ; never considering that different plants require different soils or earths, as also different aspects and climates ; some require strong soils, others light, some like to bask in the sun, others thrive best in the shade, some plants will stand any flood of rain, while others require moisture only occa-

sionally—from which it is pretty evident, that one and the same general system of culture for every kind of plant can neither be right nor proper. To mix, temper, and harmonize different soils, so as to form a compost suitable to each plant, to know their peculiar situations and proper treatment, their best mode of propagation, &c. is what shews and distinguishes the skilful and experienced gardener from the common blue-aproned pretender.

“ Nec verò terræ ferre omnes omnia possunt.
Fluminibus salices, crassisque plaudibus alni
Nascuntur, steriles saxosis montibus omni,
Litora Myrtetis lætissima, denique apertos
Bacchus amat Colles, Aquilonem et Frigora
taxi.”

VIRG. Georg. Lib. 2.

“ Nec veris blandi spernit decus, Auricula
umbram.”

So much by way of preface in defence of my Treatise, to which, by the reader's leave, I will add a few lines about what is termed scholarship.— Since I have announced my intention of publishing this small Work, it has been repeatedly buzzed in my ears that no one should turn author, or presume to publish what he writes, unless he be a grammarian from Oxford, or Cambridge, or, at least, from King's College, Aberdeen, if he means his work to take:—now if this be so, I see very little chance of success for myself, for I frankly confess, that I know no more of alma mater than I do of my grandmother, who died before I was born. And I am also pretty well aware, that if I did not make this confession, my harsh phraseology as well as tautology, now and then, would inevitably betray me.

My avowed object is to give plain and simple instructions and directions upon the growth and culture of the Auricula; and in doing this I fear I shall now and then be guilty of a solecism, misapply an epithet, and offend against the rules of Dr. Syntax, but I hope nevertheless that I shall receive that learned gentleman's pardon.

As for your very severe critics upon language, and your commonplace cavillers about words, I judge it best not to trouble and alarm myself too much about them; but I am bold enough to challenge all criticism upon my system of growing the Auricula—for to prove it will be to approve.—Yet I cannot help wishing, that I had the requisite ability to produce my Treatise as well written, to meet and please these critics, as I

have been able to produce strong, healthy and beautiful plants of the *Auricula* in bloom at our prize exhibitions, to meet the minute inspection and severe criticism of our able judges—the high priests of Flora.

With all due submission then, I do humbly entreat the kind indulgence of the candid reader, and most respectfully solicit his patronage and support, as on the success of this small Work the Author's means of subsistence, at present, entirely depend.

I have only to add, that before proof of the excellency of my system can be obtained, the strongest recommendation this Work at present can possibly receive, are the names of those subscribers who rank as the first nurserymen, gardeners, florists, and seedsmen, in and near

London, who have known me personally for years, and who are the best judges of its merit.

Treatise
ON THE
CULTURE AND MANAGEMENT
OF
THE AURICULA,
&c. &c.

*Of the Auricula, its Name, Classification, and
Place where it was supposed to have been
first discovered.*

THIS plant has been named the *Auricula Ursi*, or *Bear's Ear*, from the fancied resemblance of its leaf to the ear of that animal. It has been classed by Linnæus among the *Primula Veris, foliis serratis glabris*, and it must be allowed to have all the characteristics of that tribe of flowers: he has pronounced it to be a native of the Alps, in Switzerland.

All authors do not agree in this respect, yet the majority seem to coincide in opinion with him. Some of the German botanists maintain, that it was first discovered on the Carpathian Mountains, in Hungary, while some of the Dutch affirm it to have been a native of Flanders; the assertions of the latter have obtained but little weight with most of its genealogists, though it must be admitted to have been introduced into Holland and Flanders as early as any where, and, as it were, to have been naturalized in those countries. All, however, agree in this, that it is a native of some of the mountainous parts of Europe; its nature, habit, and temperament, are certainly by no means suited to a warm climate. It was first introduced into England in the year 1597, and has been cultivated with more or less care and attention ever since.

About a hundred years ago the passion for this flower was greater, if possible, than at present. We had the credit then of supplying the Dutch florists with an endless variety of new sorts; whereas, latterly, we have been in the habit of receiving supplies of this plant every year from them, till the late war at last closed all communication between the two countries; and I have not yet had an opportu-

nity to ascertain, since the return of peace with Holland, whether the Dutch florists cultivate it with the same pains and care as formerly, and whether they have raised any new and elegant varieties from seed, fit to stand in competition with our present favourite sorts. Be the origin of this flower as it may, there can be no doubt but the first that were found in their wild state were not without beauty, and thought worthy a place in the garden, of which it has been since one of its greatest ornaments. But the Auricula, like most other plants, owes its present perfection to the care and cultivation of the gardener and florist. There are many individuals, as private florists, to whom the admirers of flowers are greatly indebted, who, having more time and leisure to bestow on their cultivation than gardeners in general have, whose occupation is various, and not confined to the management of one particular plant, &c. have wonderfully improved many that were at first single and simple, and have increased their variety, size, and beauty, to an extent almost incredible; nor must I forget to mention the sportiveness of Nature, that *Lusus Naturæ*, which sometimes reverses and changes its own established

laws, both in the vegetable and mineral world, and which so much puzzles and confounds both the naturalist and philosopher. Instance only the daisy, the ranunculus, the anemone, the stock, the wall-flower, the pink, the carnation, the Siberian larkspur, the rose, &c. I cannot here omit to mention in particular the very fine varieties of double Scotch roses, raised from seed within these few years by the Browns and Dicksons in Scotland, which retain every character of the two diminutive single red and white Scotch roses, as to wood, spine, leaf, &c. except in the extreme doubleness of flower. The four adjudged superior sorts,—the white, red, blush, and purple,—have been obtained after many years patience, perseverance and trial, by growing the old Scotch roses, which are as single and hardly as large as the common dog rose or wild briar by the side of double roses of other countries, having been married by that little officious insect the bee, and the farina of one rose impregnated with that of another. Dame Nature, I believe generally, if not always, gives her vegetable productions at first single: all variations from this rule are termed anomalies, and accounted monstrous; but the truth and causes I will

leave to the learned naturalist to investigate, as this bears no reference to the title-page of my book.

There is something truly miraculous in the great variety of the colours, and the diversification of the shades and hues of this flower; and it is also no less singular than true, that out of a hundred Auriculas raised from seed there shall not be two alike, and yet, in all its aberrations, it sports in the most pleasing and unexpected manner.

To guard against degenerate offspring, I have treated largely on this head in a succeeding chapter.

THE SORTS OF AURICULAS.

The Dutch florists divide their Auriculas into two sorts, the self or plain coloured, and the painted or striped. The self or plain coloured are those that have but one colour besides that of the eye; of this kind there are many beautiful and exquisite flowers of various colours, such as scarlet, crimson, purple, violet, of different shades; also a great variety of yellows, that they resemble the richest velvets, the eye of them are of a clear white,

and others of different shades of yellow. Fashion (I was going to say folly) has in a great measure banished these self coloured flowers from our modern stages. I own I cannot pay so great a regard to *fashion* as to remove these smiling beauties, for in my opinion a collection intended for a stage is far from being complete without them; they are certainly very charming in themselves, and serve, if properly disposed on the stage, to contrast and set off the beauties of the painted flowers.

The painted or striped sorts are almost without number, every year producing many seminal varieties, and from the various tints and colours in the stripes of the flowers, one might suppose they had stolen their beauties from every other flower in the garden.

Botanists in general agree, that the stripes of different colours, which appear both in the plants and flowers, proceed from distemper and weakness; and in support of this opinion they say, that whenever plants alter thus in their colours, and become variegated, they do not grow so large, and are more tender and less capable of enduring the cold. I shall not attempt to controvert so received an opinion; but every day's experience convinces me that

the Auricula is by no means a proof of this doctrine, many of the striped and variegated flowers being much larger, and their plants full as vigorous and healthy, as the self coloured or plain ones. I must therefore attribute their stripes rather to the sport of Nature,—in which she does not in any degree either weaken or exhaust herself,—than to any other cause; but let the cause of these stripes proceed from what it will, when their colours are bright and distinctly marked, they are not only very beautiful, but are likewise very valuable. Before I give directions for the culture and management of this plant, I must trespass on the reader's patience, whilst I describe the general properties which the best judges attribute to a good Auricula.

The Properties of a good Auricula.

GREEN LEAVES.

The green leaves, commonly called the grass, should be of a moderate size, and proportionable to the flower stalk, they should be rather bent and falling backwards than straight; when they are too large and upright,

the stem of the flower is hid, and sometimes part of the flower itself.

As these leaves vary as much in their different shades of green, as their flowers do in other colours, I cannot make choice of any particular shade, but should wish that each grass might be that kind of green that would best contrast and set off the flower it belongs to. They differ much likewise in shape; some are indented, others are even and smooth at the edges; some are thick and fleshy, while others are thin. The variety of shapes they assume, I attribute to their culture and seminal varieties. This *variety of leaf* is of no small use to the skilful Florist, who is thereby often capable of distinguishing the different sorts of flowers, and is therefore not at a loss for their names, if by chance their marks or tallies should be lost or removed from their pots. Most of the grass or green leaves of these flowers, and indeed sometimes the whole plant, is covered with a sort of mealy dust or farina; but the bluish or pea-green leaves are mostly powdered with it, and this contributes greatly to the beauty of the plant, as well as to its preservation from the scorching rays of the sun in summer. The flower of the Auricula, like the

polyanthus, consists of a bunch or truss of small flowers, called pips or blossoms, supported by as many pedicles or little foot-stems, rising out of the top or main stalk.—The properties may therefore be divided,

First—into those which regard the pips or blossoms.

Secondly—those which respect the bunch or truss.

And thirdly—those which belong to the main stalk.

PIPS OR BLOSSOMS.

The pips or blossoms of an Auricula are its petals, each consisting of four parts, viz. the disk or outer rim, the eye or inner rim, the tube or pipe, and the thrum (so termed in the *florist's* language) but otherwise called chives, and apices by the botanists. These pips should be *rich*, of a lively and good colour or colours, such as may suddenly strike and captivate the sight; for this property is the foundation of all the rest. If therefore the colours make a faint or dead appearance, or are of an inelegant and ordinary tinge or hue, the flower is good for nothing, even though all its other properties should be most excellent. The colour in all painted or striped flowers ought to be so

equally distributed over the rim or disk, that there may be an equal uniformity amidst the variety; so that upon the whole the sight may not be in the least offended with any disproportion, or see one side of a brighter or darker hue than another. The edge of the rim ought to be round, or at least so near it, that the indentures may bear but a small proportion to the disk, for when these are deep, and the points of the petula stand in the star-form, greatly divided, the vacancies will affect the sight with an obvious deficiency; but the case is still worse in those pips which are subject to run out into a greater breadth on one side of the eye than the other: such an irregularity and disproportion are very disagreeable.

THE EYE.

The eye (which is the iris or annulus that environs the tube or pipe) ought to be formed like the disk, either perfectly or nearly round, and of an entire, clear colour; of a snowy or pure white in all painted or striped flowers; and either white or of a bright yellow, or good straw colour in self or plain coloured flowers. The farina or mealy property should be fine; if coarse, it will be displeasing to the sight. The eye should seem entire, though not sepa-

rate from the disk or rim, that is, it ought to be blended with or shaded into it, so as not to occasion any indistinctness between the edge of the one and the other.

In flowers where these two properties of the eye are imperfect, the lively contrast or opposition between the rim and the eye, which otherwise reciprocally shew one another off to advantage, is in a great measure destroyed. The face of the whole pip, rim, and eye, ought to be so opened as to lie exactly or very nearly flat, for when either it inclines inwards (which is called cupping) or throws itself backwards, as a Martagan lily, both the true form and colours are in a degree obscured, by being hidden and out of sight.

THE TUBE OR PIPE.

The tube or pipe should stand exactly in the centre of the blossom, and be truly circular or round ; it should be well filled with chives, and their apices in the form of a brush (generally called the thrum) arising even with the face of the pip or blossom, for when only the style or pointal rises like a pin, without being encompassed with the chives to the same height, the flower is called pin-eyed, and shews a chasm or vacancy so very unpleasant to the curious

eye of the florist, that such flowers, though they may in other respects have good properties, yet, failing in this central beauty, nothing can atone for it, and they are esteemed of small account.

THE THRUM.

The thrum should be of a bright colour, and the chives and apices, of which it is composed, clear and shining with little spangles, like gold dust; they should be distinct from each other, leaning inward towards the pipe; when they seem clotted together, or look battered or misshapen, the beauty of the flower is much impaired; this is often occasioned by the humble bees, who, in search of honey or food, greatly injure these flowers. I know not how to prevent this, but by catching and destroying them; and the remedy often proves worse than the disease, for by endeavouring to catch and destroy the bee, you often destroy the whole flower. The rim, the eye, and the pipe, ought all to bear an equal proportion to one another; for where any one of these is beheld either too large or too small with respect to the others, it will give the eye of the curious florist great offence. If the rim is too large, the whole pip will look heavy and clumsy, and the eye

appear narrow and mean; if the rim is too small, it will look abortive, and the eye monstrous; also, if the pipe is too wide, the thrum cannot fill it, and it will look vacant; and if the pipe or tube be too small or narrow, it will seem pinched, and the thrum will not have room, so that there will be an apparent want of due grace, air, and freedom. Perhaps the best proportion may be observed when the diameter of the pipe or tube is one part, that of the eye three, and that of the rim two, the whole pip or bossom making six, or near it.

BUNCH OR TRUSS.

It is an excellent property in an Auricula to be a good trusser, that is, one which generally puts forth a great number of pips from one stalk, for by that means the beauty of the flower is multiplied, and makes a more striking and delightful appearance.

PEDICLES.

The length of the pedicles, or little foot stalks, which support the pips in the truss, should be proportioned to the number and size of the pips that they sustain; for if the pedicles are very long, and the pips few and

small, there will be unsightly vacancies in the truss; or if they are short, and the pips many and large, they will be too much crowded together, so that neither the colours can be fully viewed, nor the other properties of the pips displayed. The pedicles should be sufficiently elastic, strong, and firm, that they do not droop with the weight of the pips, and fall loose and jangling into disorder, but support the truss firmly and close without either vacancy or crowding. They ought to be nearly all of the same length, so that the pips may stand together at the same height, and form a regular umbel, or rather corymbus, which is the formal perfection of the truss. The pips should be nearly of the same size and colour, so as not to be easily distinguished from one another, for otherwise the unity and harmony of the truss will be destroyed, and although ever so plentifully formed, would *appear* as if taken from different sorts of Auriculas. An Auricula ought to blow freely, and expand all its pips at the *same time*, for by this means the colours in them all will appear equally fresh and lively; whereas those that do not blow some of the pips till others have passed their prime, the whole appearance of the truss falls much short of that beauty which would otherwise be seen.

MAIN STALK.

The stalk which supports the truss, called the main stalk, ought to be elastic, straight, and sufficiently strong to bear it without drooping. It is an excellence in this stalk to be lofty as well as erect, for thereby the truss, and consequently the whole flower, will make a more stately and commanding appearance.

Every Auricula having the before-mentioned properties cannot fail of pleasing the *curious florist*; and as upon one hand an Auricula may be somewhat deficient in several particulars of the least consideration, and yet be justly esteemed a fine and valuable flower, so on the other hand, it will be a further addition to the excellence of an Auricula which has all these properties, that it naturally stands long in bloom, and wears its colours without fading or alteration.

Of Seed.

In order to obtain good flowers from seed, the following directions should be strictly attended to.

You should first of all make choice of such plants to save seed from as are young and healthy; for though young plants in general bear but small trusses, their seed pods will be large and full. The best proportioned and highest coloured flowers should be saved for this purpose, and their colours should be true and unchanged to the last, that is (as the florists call it) they should *die well*. Most flowers, whose ground colour is of a dark blue purple, *die badly*, those of a dark red purple *die well*. There are but few exceptions to this observation.

All ordinary flowers should be removed at a great distance from those intended for seed; for although the fresh varieties will be great, yet, if good and indifferent are suffered to remain together till the seed ripens, the flowers so raised from such seed will more likely degenerate than improve. Experience has taught us they will all produce something like themselves, and the only chance for them to produce superior is, by keeping the selected sorts apart when in bloom, and to procure seed from such only.

The present perfection in Auriculas has no doubt been obtained very gradually; yet the future prospect being unbounded, every florist

is in hopes of excelling. Fine properties, and especially the eye of the Auricula, ought to be minutely observed; fine colours without it will serve rather to disappoint than answer our expectations. Flowers saved for seed should not be on the stage for bloom at all; but so soon as the pips become expanded as large as a cowslip, those intended for seed should be removed to some other part of the garden at a distance of forty or fifty yards at least, so that they may not become impregnated with any other flowers whatever, but should be exposed to the open air, that they may have the benefit of gentle showers, and never covered but to defend them from excessive rains and violent storms, which would swell the seed too much, and cause it to burst the pods before it was near ripe, and thereby prevent its ever ripening at all: they should be placed in an eastern aspect, where they would have a sun till about eleven o'clock only, for the stronger the sun grows the less they should have of it. If your garden should be on so small a scale as not to admit those intended for seed to be placed at a reasonable distance from your general collection of flowers, I would advise you to place them in some adjoining neighbour's garden for about three or four weeks,

till all danger of impregnation with any other Auricula be over. I have been informed some people place some bright yellow flowers amongst those they intend saving seed from, thinking that the farina of these flowers may be conveyed into the seed vessels of the other plants, and thereby improve their colours. I never practised this myself, neither did I know the parties; but have been told that they thought they had success from this system. I by no means recommend, however, such a plan. This however I know for certain in regard to polyanthuses. I have raised seed from Nicholson's Tantararara in particular when growing near a bed of the yellow oxlip, and the seed when sown has produced the strangest mixture possible of red oxlips and polyanthuses, resembling any thing rather than the fine esteemed old flower, their mother.

I beg leave to impress upon you my system of raising fine seedlings, and at the same time; with due submission, shall continue to give you the best information I have been able to collect myself, as well as from others that have raised seedlings within my own knowledge; and am fully satisfied, after the great many years experience and practice I have had, that if my system for raising seedlings is perse-

vered in, the persons who will strictly follow it for seven or eight years will not fail of being well rewarded for their trouble; they will raise some first-rate flowers, worthy of being named after the greatest heroes or beauties of ancient or modern times.

In my opinion, the seedling *Auricula* are to be bred as high as the noblemen and gentlemen breed their fine race-horses; for that fine animal the race-horse is not bred in high blood, beauty, shape, make, and fleetness, without strict attention to pedigree, trouble, and a heavy expense. So it must be with the *Auricula*, if you wish to improve its beauty, symmetry, and fashion; but I do not mean to compare the expense of raising a few seedling *Auriculas* to that of breeding a beautiful fleet race-horse; all I want is to endeavour to the best of my abilities to lay down a system most likely to be attended with success, and to request a fair experiment of it, so that the number of good *Auriculas* may be increased and extended. I am sorry to say but very few florists have cheerfully entered into the spirit of raising *Auriculas* from seed; they have pursued the casual way, in which they have for the most part been disappointed; but whether this arises from negligence, or from want of

knowing a systematical plan to go by, I do not pretend to judge. I am certain if they had done it, there would have been at least fifty fine sorts of show flowers to one: at the present period I do not think we have more than five or six leading sorts that are shewn for prizes, among which is Metcalf's Lancashire Hero. I remember that flower coming out at two guineas for a good plant, and for one of a younger growth the price was one guinea and a half: this was from about the year 1782 to 1785, but I cannot charge my memory exactly to the date of the year. This I recollect, my father purchased one at two guineas of Mr. George Metcalf of Salford, Manchester; this now is about thirty years ago. I could wish all Auricula fanciers would endeavour every year to save seed sufficient to raise about four hundred seedlings, out of which I reckon they might lose about one hundred, making only three hundred to be brought to perfection as healthy blooming plants. To reduce this plan to a certainty, I think I can venture with truth to say, from sixteen to twenty young plants will produce a sufficient quantity of seed, on an average of seven years, to raise annually the quantity named in this; but if you have a heavy crop of seed, which will be the case

some seasons, that number of plants may produce a sufficient quantity of good bold seed to raise you six or seven hundred seedlings, say six hundred; if so, I calculate you will bring four hundred and fifty seedlings to blooming perfection: in fact, I have proved it, having from a practical knowledge been able to make a calculation on raising seedling *Auricula*. I do not hesitate to say, out of three hundred seedlings saved on this system, you are at a certainty of raising five superior or first-rate flowers, besides seven or eight (if not more) second-rate flowers, all of which will be an admirable ornament to your collection of other flowers that are intended for the stage; and most likely the first-rate flowers will be worth from one guinea to one guinea and a half per plant, after you have increased a sufficient number for sale; besides, the second-rate flowers will be of considerable value, and all the inferior sorts, viz. selfs, &c. will fetch you from twelve to fifteen and eighteen shillings per dozen, if planted out in small sixties, so called by the pot manufacturers round London. But if you save your seed in the present customary way, you must not expect one fine flower out of a thousand seedlings; and it takes no more time, trouble, or a greater quantity

of compost to plant out three or four hundred curious and well-bred seedlings, than it does those which I term badly bred. I knew a florist, a good grower and a fine bloomer, but he knew nothing about saving seed till I informed him of my system. He saved a lot of seed in the customary way; they were pricked out in May or June, 1800, to the number of fourteen hundred, out of that immense quantity he assures me he did not raise a single flower worth keeping for the stage, much more a first-rate flower. After he took to my system he was very successful, and now has to boast of good flowers of his own raising. I have saved seed from Grimes's Privateer (true); out of about seventy I one year raised two very superior first-rate flowers, which are not yet sold out. Although I did that, it is rather too small a number to insure success from. On a fair calculation you have no right to expect above two first-rate flowers out of one hundred seedlings, of course out of three hundred you will be able to raise six, and so on. So that, if any florist will take the trouble to persevere on with my system for seven or eight years, there is very little doubt but he will have risen forty-two new sorts of the finest flowers in *England*, besides as many second-

rate, all of which will pay the florist well for his trouble, as the number amounting together, of first and second-rate flowers, to eighty-four new varieties, all of your own breeding. It is hope always that gives a spur to industry, and makes the most toilsome labour appear light. I particularly recommend this mode of raising from seed to the young florist.

I shall now give you my opinion as to the sorts that come within my knowledge, as best adapted at the present day to save seed from; but if my plan of raising seedlings be strictly followed, I am well convinced, in the course of five, six, or seven years perseverance, you will have raised so many beauties of your own, far superior to those I shall name, that you will be induced to raise seedling *Auricula* from your own stock. In fact, you will find your own seedlings so excellent, and to rank so high, that every florist will want to become a purchaser of a Lord Nelson, a Duke of Wellington, or some other hero bearing your name. If you are inclined to raise three hundred seedlings annually, you had better select out of your collection about eight or ten pots of Butterworth's Lord Hood, and eight or ten plants of Grimes's Privateer, in all, say from twenty to twenty-five young plants.

I have proved these two sorts with success, having raised seedlings from them separately, but am of opinion they will breed finer flowers if impregnated together. Lord Hood is a flower of fine symmetry, and the Privateer has a strong ground colour, and dies well to the last; but Grimes's Privateer of itself brings the seedlings nearly all self-coloured flowers, and nearly the whole ill-shaped, and of middling quality, whereas Butterworth's Lord Hood does not.

Slater's Cheshire Hero breeds very inferior flowers, with thin eyes; Salter's Garland also breeds bad flowers; and Cockup's Eclipse the same. My friend and brother florist, Phineas Borritt, Esq. No. 6, Suffolk-place, Islington, informed me that he bred his very fine beautiful violet seedling, which he unfortunately lost, from Foden's Victory; this admirable seedling was very superior to Cockup's Eclipse, and had all the properties a first-rate Auricula should have; for as to the Eclipse, every connoisseur in flowers must be acquainted with its great defect in point of the large size of its tube or bore. I should recommend eight or ten plants of Foden's Victory to be placed out for seed; for although the pip throws itself back, it is no rule but it should breed fine violet-ground coloured flowers, in a style of great

beauty. The greatest difficulty is to find out those sorts for seed that will breed good flowers; for I am confident some sorts will breed much finer ones than others. There would be no great difficulty in making choice of four or five sorts; take of each five or six plants or more, place them in separate parts of the garden, at a distance of forty yards apart or more, that *the bee* and *the air* may not impregnate one with the other; by this means you save your sorts distinct. When you sow the seed, number it as you do that of any other flowers, by this plan you will be able to ascertain by practise what sorts of named flowers breed the best. To raise a less number than one hundred seedlings of a sort would not be giving any one sort a fair trial. Should you be fortunate enough to raise but one out of the number that excels, you then will be able to give your brother florists the true *pedigree* of its breed. Another great advantage there will be in this system, after you have proved two or three sorts that have produced good flowers, you can cross the breed, by placing them out together by the side of each other, for the purpose of improving the breed still further.

I have been told by Mr. Cockup, that his Eclipse was raised at Edgeware, Middlesex,

and it stood high for many years with the florists round London, chiefly on account of its beautiful violet-ground colour and green edge (when bloomed finely). It was raised from a very old sort, called Grundy's Cool Zephyr, which possessed a violet ground with green edge, but a starry ill-shaped flower; and did I wish to raise violet-ground coloured Auriculas (which I must allow are very beautiful, and much wanted in the fancy) I would recommend Foden's Victory in preference.— Amongst other fine flowers for seed, I would strongly recommend Barlow's King; it has not been much patronized by the London florists, but is a fine Lancashire sort, and was raised near Manchester; it has a beautiful green edge, and fine ground colour, with every other good property, and if placed by the side of Grimes's Privateer, or Butterworth's Lord Hood, either separately with each of them, or even with those fine sorts both together, I have no doubt but the three varieties would produce some great beauties. Another very beautiful old sort, called Foden's *Fair Rosamond*, which is now become scarce, ought to be revived and restored to the first rank on the stage; it is distinguished for its peculiarly beautiful and rich crimson ground colour, with green edge,

very round pip, fine eye, and all other good properties you have a right to expect. It must have been greatly admired, as appears from an old catalogue, as it came out at one guinea and a half per plant. This plant in particular, as well as many others, have been greatly neglected—the cause I know not, except from its being rather a delicate grower; but if your compost is rich and well prepared, it will flourish as well as any other: I strongly recommend it to raise seedlings from, on account of its very fine brilliant crimson colour: fine ground colours in this way are greatly wanted in a select collection, and are equally as valuable and scarce as the fine violet grounds which I have recommended to be raised from Foden's Victory. By no means place these two last sorts by the side of each other, or with or *near* to any other sort whatever, as by so doing you would cross the breed, and, in my opinion, would be defeated in your attempt to raise these two ground colours distinct. I beg the favor also of giving you one more hint, that greater attention ought to be paid to that fine old sort, which likewise has been neglected, it is called Keynon's Free Briton; the character of that, as also, Foden's Fair Rosamond, is well known to Phineas Borritt, Esq. who is account-

ed a complete connoisseur in Auriculas, Tulips, and Carnations.

Having briefly given you my opinion in what manner fine green-edged flowers ought to be raised, I now beg to offer you my opinion in what way silver and grey-edged flowers should be raised; for to place this last-named sort among green-edged flowers would be highly improper, when your desire is to breed fine green-edged ones, although silver and grey-edged ones are very beautiful, and should be cultivated as well as other sorts; for a stage of Auriculas cannot be complete without them, as well as some tastefully selected self-coloured ones. The only flower I know at present best calculated to raise the latter sorts from, is Popplewell's Conqueror, whose merits it is unnecessary to dwell upon, as it is a flower so generally known.

Those flowers that you have expressly determined to breed seed from are by no means to be treated after the manner of the directions given in this Treatise, for your large strong blooming plants, that you intend to exhibit on the flower stage, but should, after the middle of March, be treated more after the manner of a Primrose or Polyanthus, by placing them at this season in an east aspect (by no means

a north as yet) and there to be left to grow and bloom in their natural way. At all events, I never suffered my flowers that I intended for seed to remain longer in their winter quarters than when they began to expand their master pips; I never allowed them to remain in the frame till they were completely blown. Flowers that are permitted to bloom and remain under glass any length of time, or that are placed on a stage, will seldom produce *bold strong seed*. This is one chief cause why Auricula seed is so very scarce, as few persons treat this plant in a way to produce a large crop of seed. Those large strong plants that are bloomed very fine under glass, and afterwards are placed on a stage, seldom or ever have a perfect, sound seed; the pods will apparently thrive, and swell to a large size, but when you come to open them in the season, to take out a large crop, as you naturally would expect, the seed turns out to be so delicate, thin, lean, and weak, that they have not sufficient body or substance to vegetate in the ensuing spring.

I recommend about twenty-five young plants to be placed out every spring for the express purpose of bearing seed, and to be suffered to be exposed to the rain, and other moderate weather, similar to a Polyanthus, only a little more

caution ought to be taken in any violent storms of hail, sleet, &c. Take all the middle weak pips out early, by this means the stronger outside pips will produce you a fine crop of seed ; this number of plants will, I expect, produce a sufficient quantity of seed, for one year's sowing, for any private lady or gentleman. It will be with this as in the growing of wheat and other grain, more prolific and plump in some seasons than it is in others.

I strongly press the raising of seedlings, as I am convinced great improvement can be made, and this flower be brought to higher perfection ; and I trust my readers will see from the hints I have given, that too much care cannot be taken to select their plants of various ground colours, for the purpose of raising new varieties therefrom.

Your Auricula seed will ripen in July, which you will know by the pods turning brown, and beginning to open: look over your plants every day, and gather them as they ripen, lest the seed be shaken out by the wind or other accident, and lost. The whole truss will not ripen together, therefore cut off each pod as it grows ripe, and put in a thin paper bag, placing it in a window in the sun for two or three days to harden, and prevent its growing mouldy. The

seed should be kept in the pods as much as possible till the time of sowing.

Some sow this seed in September, but this practice I quite disagree with, therefore would recommend about the middle of February, or not later than the 10th or 12th of March. Your seed should be sown in small pots, about six inches over the top, and about six inches deep, or what are termed by the potters about London, flat thirty-two's; the hole at the bottom of the pot should be broken with a hammer and made larger than usual, after which it should be covered with a hollow oyster-shell, or a piece of tile made to lie hollow, or a piece or two of garden pot, which will drain off the water from the pots. Your pots should be filled about two inches and a half with coal ashes or small cinders, about the size of coarse gravel, which will greatly assist in draining off the water, and at the same time prevent the worms getting into the pots, and disturbing or injuring your choice seedling plants. Fill the pots with the same kind of compost, sifted finely, that you use for your blooming plants, within about half an inch of the top; shake the pot well to settle the mould, then smooth the earth, and let it be tolerably well pressed with the bottom of an empty pot, or something flat,

that will fit the top of the pot, then sow the seed as equally as you can, taking care that the wind does not blow away any part of it; have some of your earth very finely sifted, and not too dry, which cover over with your hand very regularly to rather better than the thickness of a shilling, giving it another gentle pressing with the pot, &c. and make the surface quite level. Many persons never cover any earth over the seed; this I have tried, but unsuccessfully, not that they did not come up well, but because the roots, not having sufficient earth to lay hold of, got exposed to the air, and by that means perished. Your pots thus sown should be placed in a situation quite excluded from the sun, except in the morning, placing closely over it a crown glass shade, or what is called a striking glass, so as to fit the inside of the pot; this will cause the seed to vegetate much sooner; and by pouring the water upon the top of the glass, the earth will receive sufficient moisture, so that there will be no occasion to remove it. If convenient, I would recommend the front of a green-house or a cool frame for the seed-pots to be placed in, but by no means a hot-bed, or if not that accommodation, a hand-glass, having tiles or slates placed underneath to keep the worms

out of the pots; great care being taken to keep the earth in a regular moist state. In about four or five weeks—perhaps three weeks if in a green-house—the seeds will break ground, and when the leaf begins to appear you must take care by degrees to admit air, first by raising the glass a little on one side by a small piece of wood or tile, which can easily be removed when it is found necessary to give the plants water, which should still be done by pouring it over the glass, by which means you run no risk of washing up the plants, and every part of the earth will get a sufficient degree of moisture, after which air can again be admitted; and, as your plants advance in size, more air can be given by raising the glass quite level all round, and as they get strength let it be raised higher by degrees, and when they appear with four leaves, it may be entirely removed. You must then let the plants be exposed to gentle rains, but by no means to very heavy ones; take care to keep them clear of weeds, and the sooner you do this the better, before your *Auricula* roots spread so as to be liable to be disturbed by your weeding: a very little attention will serve to distinguish the young weeds from the seedling plants. When your seedling plants are young, consequently

tender, they should be kept entirely from the sun, for when they first appear an hour's strong sun would destroy your whole crop; nor should they have the sun during the summer months after ten or eleven o'clock, even if they are grown strong. The *Auricula* delights in cool shade, under a north wall or pales, &c. but by no means under the droppings of elder or other trees, and in the winter season only requires the comfortable and invigorating heat of the sun.

As soon as your plants appear with six leaves they should be carefully pricked out, preserving all the roots you can, into pots about five inches over, or what are called about London by the potters, forty-eight's, filled with the same sort of compost they were sown in, about four or five in a pot. Early in the spring following, they should be again removed; the best time is from the 1st to the 12th of March; and I would particularly recommend them to be put singly into small pots, or what are called upright sixties (and there to remain for bloom) which will be of a sufficient size to carry them through the summer, particularly the strong plants; those that are very weak I would keep two or three in a forty-eight pot, till another season, as they may not bloom till the third year.

It may appear extravagant to place so many single plants in pots at an uncertainty, but at any rate you no doubt will get a great many fine coloured self and beautifully variegated flowers, and by being in single pots they will assist to set off the stage, or if you are inclined to dispose of them they will fetch 12s. 15s. to 18s. per dozen to dealers in flowers, which will amply repay you for your extra expense and trouble. When your seedling plants shew flower, you must carefully and attentively look them over to distinguish those that merit your care from those that deserve it not; but be not too hasty in your determination; if a flower has every good property but that of colour, do not throw it away, for when it blooms again the next year its colours may improve, especially if it shews its first bloom towards the autumn, as Auriculas at that season never bloom well. You may with safety put away all your pin-eyed flowers, as there is no chance of their improving; but they will do well for flower borders, and will there make a shew, and serve to cut for nosegays.

List of Flowers recommended for Seed:

Foden's Victory,

Foden's Fair Rosamond,

Grimes's Privateer,
 Partington's Sir Solomon,
 Butterworth's Lord Hood,
 Barlow's King,
 Keynon's Free Briton,
 Popplewell's Conqueror.

Of Soils, the different Sorts used, and their proportionate Quantities, with Directions for preparing them, &c.

This is the first and principal object, which ought to be most strictly attended to, it being the foundation of the whole: without proper Compost it is in vain to attempt to grow Auriculas. The trouble will be endless, and your time and expense thrown away; you cannot have the least chance of success without knowing this. I write from practice not from theory; and do assure my readers that all the rules, remarks, and observations in this small Treatise have arisen out of that practice. Good Compost, I again repeat it, is indispensibly requisite—it is the food, the very life, as it were, of the plant—without it you may almost

as soon expect a broomstick, set in a heap of sand, to take root and grow. And surely no lover of flowers will think it too much trouble to prepare a few barrowsful of mould every year in succession, which is sufficient for any private fancier; but a dealer in Auriculas will want, of course, a greater quantity: now ten or twelve barrowsful, when rotted down (allowing for waste) will pot off and mould up from two to two hundred and fifty large blooming plants, or thereabouts, and I should recommend it to be mixed up in the month of March or April. Every plant and flower hath its favourite soil, in which it delights most and thrives best, and the *soil* which gives life and vigour to one flower, would starve and be almost certain poison to another. The Auricula requires a very *rich soil* that will nourish and support it, properly tempered and sweetened by the *sun, frost, and air*.

After having, during many years practice, tried almost every kind of soil recommended for the culture of the plant, I have found the following Composts best agree with it, and which I shall hereafter describe under the heads of different numbers, viz. No. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, &c. The earth that moles have turned up in dry pasture ground, or rich

maiden down, where the earth is free from stones and gravel, may be taken, or the top spit of fine strong yellow loam, or in defect of that, good black maiden mould, such as is fit to produce you a fine crop of wheat. There is no country, I think, where one may not find some one or other of these kind of soils, but the loam that is inclined to be heavy or strong I would give the preference to, as the other mixtures, when rotted down, will cause the Compost to be light enough.

This Compost should lie together at least two winters, otherwise two clear years if mixed up green, before it be used, which is the cause why I recommend it to be put together in March or April; by this means their several parts will be properly incorporated together; it should be turned, stirred, and mixed together often, by so doing you will destroy all the pernicious grubs or other insects that are apt to breed in it; it likewise kills all bad smells, and gets the mould sweet and in fine condition, as plants do not like sour mould, more than we do ourselves like stale animal food or sour beer. I will venture to say ten or twelve barrowsful of Compost can be turned and stirred over in less time than an hour, and this it will require every four weeks, or there-

abouts, during the whole year, by doing this the Compost will become sweet and in fine order; it also will be clear from weeds, which is very requisite, and all insects will be destroyed that are apt to breed in it, which are pernicious to all plants in pots. Very few people pay proper attention to the situation in which they place their Compost, but thinking a heap of earth a disagreeable object and offensive to the eye, they place it where it may be most out of sight; this generally happens to be under walnut, elder, ash, or some other shaded trees, or under some north wall, where the sun seldom or ever shines. A heap of Compost thus situated, instead of nourishing, must prove very injurious to all sorts of flowers kept in pots. Your Compost therefore should be laid in an open place, and exposed to a full *south aspect*, where it may partake of the benign influence of *sun* and *air*, and imbibe all its nitrous particles; it should be laid not more than two feet and a half thick, that the rays of the sun may warm and penetrate through it; frost will have a good effect also on the Compost.

I beg leave to impress strongly on the minds of my brother florists, to pay strict attention to the management of Compost, as I have too

frequently witnessed great negligence in this respect. To some of my readers my practice of turning the Compost over once every month may appear unnecessary, but I have every reason to believe that I have found the greatest utility from it. I remember the time when I did not pay that attention to stirring it so frequently, not knowing the serious consequence of my neglect, and I used to lose a great number of plants by the rot and canker, which I attributed to the cause of not having my mould *sweet* and in fine condition. I have only to observe these last ten or twelve years, since I followed this system of turning it over once a month, or *thereabouts*, that I have seldom or ever lost any plants by the rot; besides which, when your Compost is in fine condition, your plants will increase as fast again. Whenever I lost any plants by the rot, it chiefly originated from a continuation of very heavy summer or winter rains, and when this happens, they should be protected by some temporary covering for a few days; a covering made of old sail-cloth kept tarred, or old oil-cloth, might answer for such a purpose for your choice and most expensive sorts, others you may risk. Some persons use sea sand, and if that cannot be got, sand from a river

may do for a substitute, but by no means sand from pits. I, living at a great distance from the sea coast, could not procure sea sand conveniently, although I have used it, and shall give you the quantity requisite. I do assure you I grew my flowers these last ten or twelve years as well without sea sand as with it. One thing is to be observed, my Compost was very high and rich of itself, so as to require no additional salts, and I will venture to say but little (if any) improvement can be made on the No. 1. and No. 2.

This receipt, in certain situations, may be found difficult to be put into practice, for want of the ingredients at hand; but if two florists agree, the one living near a butcher's, and not above two miles from the other, might prepare one part, and his friend the other; and then afterwards, with little trouble, mix up the whole; but, for the accommodation of all florists, I have given several other good receipts for Compost, nearly equal to my No. 1. and No. 2; but, to be candid, I must confess the Compost, No. 1. and No. 2: were my favourite soils. For my part, and I assure you without the least exaggeration, I never saw such very large healthy plants as these two sorts of Compost used to grow; the leaves in April and

May were of such magnitude, and of such a thick fleshy substance, that they at all times and seasons used to delight and surprize the generality of Auricula growers; besides which, I steadily remarked for years that the pips were always very large and bold, and remarkably brilliant in the colours (I should be sorry to praise myself too much) but I seldom, if ever, saw Auriculas bloom with such magnificent pips, and such very strong, beautiful, lively colours—it is impossible to express their great beauty here. The best thing I can do, is to recommend my readers to turn florists, if they have a suitable situation, and try the experiment of this little Treatise, which, I will venture to say, will in no shape mislead or deceive them.

The way I used to prepare my Composts, was to have a hole dug in the garden at a moderate distance from the house, its size about 3 feet over and 18 or 20 inches deep, or not more than 2 feet. I then used to procure from some peasant or a neighbouring farmer about two barrowsful of *goose dung* or pigeons' dung; but the dung from geese, I am persuaded, is by far the best, and if the animals have been up fatting, the dung, I should imagine, is no worse. I then had these said

two barrowsful (or more) put into the hole above-mentioned, after which I used to procure from a neighbour, who was a butcher, every week one pailful of bullock's blood, or perhaps two, as might be convenient, to these two or three barrowsful of goose dung; I used to put the bullock's blood in with it, and took care that it was well stirred and mixed together. To prevent *dogs* from going to eat the blood, which they otherwise would do, I have had a common hurdle well bushed laid over the hole. This putting a pailful of blood I practised every week for three or four months, the exact time I cannot say; if I could have procured a larger quantity, I should have got the goose dung well steeped in much less time.

So soon as I got plenty of bullock's blood, and the goose dung was well absorbed, and became almost the appearance of mud, this was all I wanted; when this was the case I left off, and let it remain in the hole till it become of such a stiff substance as to admit of its being taken out after the manner of spit dung, I would let it remain for a month or six weeks, or longer, if required; it then became quite solid, so that it could be wheeled to any distance without the least difficulty, taking care at the

same time to have some fine strong yellow loam and some sugar-baker's scum in readiness by me. This said Compost of goose dung and bullock's blood, &c. I used to mix up myself, for I trusted to no one to mix my fine Auricula mould, neither would I at that time allow any one to see me mix up the separate quantities, although I had frequently been asked in the course of my lifetime (perhaps five hundred times) how and in what manner I mixed and prepared my soil, and what it consisted of.

Should you happen to live in a part where goose dung cannot easily be obtained, you may substitute sheep dung.

It may appear somewhat singular, that I measure the different soils by the barrow instead of the bushel; but it is well known that the working gardener always has his barrow at hand, and generally metes out his loam, dung, &c. by it.

COMPOST, No. 1.

- 3 Barrowsful of goose dung steeped in
bullock's blood,
- 3 Ditto of sugar-baker's scum,
- 2 Ditto of fine yellow loam.

Just one fourth loam,—observe, sea sand is not required,—if you like you are at liberty to add it, but it must be at the same time you put the whole together, or soon after; 2 pecks of sea sand to the above quantity is quite sufficient, and let it all rot down together. My reason for hinting to you to have the sea sand mixed at the time is, that if added at the expiration of a year, I am apprehensive it may prove injurious, instead of beneficial, to the plants.

Being a private fancier, I grew *Auriculas* not for sale but for my own amusement; and though I shewed for prizes, it was more from a desire to excel others than for profit. This was the only reason for my mixing the Compost in small quantities; so that if a person be a regular dealer in this beautiful flower, he of course must mix up double or treble the quantity. If your mould contain any grubs, insects, or worms, add a peck of quick lime; that made from stone is preferable, as it contains less of magnesia; lime not only will destroy them, but will hasten putrefaction, and make the Compost sooner fit for use; and if you wish to force the Compost still more, spread it about four inches thick in the hot months of June, July, and August, and rake it over fre-

quently, that it may become finely pulverised by being exposed to sun and air, which will sweeten it and extract all its noxious qualities; and if your Compost is even completely rotten, and two years old, I particularly recommend you before you use it, to lay it thin as before-mentioned for a week or ten days, raking it once a day, or oftener, as it is not worth while to run a risk of losing a single plant that is scarce and valuable, by not having the Compost perfectly sweet; for I have observed that mould, if it is laid in a heap any time, will create an acidity which is prejudicial to plants in general, and which can be only removed by being spread thin, and turned frequently, before potting.

COMPOST, No. 2.

- 2 Barrowsful of goose dung steeped in
bullock's blood,
- 2 Ditto of sugar-baker's scum,
- 2 Ditto of night soil,
- 2 Ditto of fine yellow loam.

I have sometimes varied my receipt for the Compost, No. 2, and do assure the reader with very great success. I have got six or eight barrowsful of fine strong yellow loam, and

having procured some fresh night soil, which I mixed up in a hole dug for that purpose, and let it remain there for ten or twelve months. After this process, I threw it on the surface of the ground, and let it remain till it got dry and stiff enough to barrow away and mix with other soil. The proportionable quantity of this soil comes nearly, or quite, to the same quantity of loam as used in No. 2. which is one-fourth. I therefore shall give this as my second receipt, and also class it under the head of

No. 2.

- 4 Barrowsful of loam steeped in night soil and urine,
- 2 Ditto of goose dung mixed with bullock's blood,
- 2 Ditto of sugar-baker's scum,

- 8 2 Pecks of sea sand.

Having given you an account of the process for preparing the Composts, No. 1. and No. 2. (which by some may be considered foolishly troublesome and unnecessary; but this I venture to assert, that it is not to be excelled) it causes the plants to thrive, and increase as rapidly as *couch* or *quick grass* in the fields.

However, to make it easy and convenient for any person to become an Auricula grower, I shall hereafter add some very excellent receipts, some one or other of which may be easily obtained and prepared by all. The next receipt I beg leave to give is that of my late Father, and which he grew them in for upwards of thirty years with the greatest success. He was allowed to be at that time as good a grower and bloomer as any man living: he seldom got beat when he shewed for prizes.

Some of the following receipts I shall give on a small scale as to the quantity of earth, for the use of new beginners, or those persons who have not a wish to keep more than fifty or sixty pots of plants; but it will not be worth while at any time to mix up a less quantity than four barrowsful.

My late Father's Receipt.

No. 3.

2 Barrowsful of night soil,

1 Ditto of cow dung,

1 Ditto of fine yellow loam,

4 1 Peck of sea sand.

The same for 8 Barrows.

No. 3.

4 Barrowsful of night soil,
2 Ditto of cow dung,
2 Ditto of fine yellow loam,

8 2 Pecks of sea sand.

Having given you my late Father's receipt, which is an excellent one, and who has been dead twenty-five years. In the latter part of his life, I have frequently heard him say, that he, in his opinion, could improve his Compost, which in my own humble opinion I think I have done. Probably it may be necessary to make, occasionally, a little change in your soil, as much so as it may be to change your arable land from one sort of grain to another. The goose dung and sugar-baker's scum, from great practice, perseverance, and careful remarks, as to the way they acted on my plants, in my firm opinion are not to be surpassed, and that either one or both should always be used, if it be possible to procure them.

COMPOST, No. 4.

1	Barrowful of night soil,
1	Ditto of goose dung,
1	Ditto of cow dung,
1	Ditto of fine yellow loam,
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4	1 Peck of sea sand.

The same for 8 Barrows.

No. 4.

2	Barrowsful of night soil,
2	Ditto of goose dung,
2	Ditto of cow dung,
2	Ditto of fine yellow loam,
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8	2 Pecks of sea sand.

A couple of hampers of goose dung may easily be obtained, and conveyed at a trifling expense by a waggon, from some neighbouring village where geese are kept, within ten or twelve miles of London. I am told it is to be met with in Whitechapel, Mile End, or Bow, as great quantities of geese are brought up from Lincolnshire to fatten at Michaelmas. Care should be taken by those who pur-

chase that no one imposes on them, by substituting hen, pigeon, or other dung, for the same.

The Compost, No. 3. and No. 4. are very excellent, and easy to be procured in the country. The Compost, No. 5. may not so easily be got at, on account of the sugar-baker's scum; the latter soil is always, I understand, to be met with in London, Bristol, Liverpool, &c. &c. The sugar-baker's scum might be easily packed in an old hogshead, and sent down into the country at a trifling expense, if conveyed by water carriage; it will amply reward any one for his trouble. I understand the sugar-baker's scum consists of the dross of sugar, a portion of the West India mould, fine clay, bullock's blood, lime-water, &c. What is very remarkable, I always observed wherever sugar-baker's scum was used with other manure, I seldom or ever saw any pernicious grubs or insects, or the hard yellow wire-worm. The scum of itself will not harbour worms and other insects like any other manure; whether it is the lime-water used amongst it that destroys them, I am rather at a loss to know, but have reason to believe it is the case.

No. 5.

- 1 Barrowful of goose dung,
 - 1 Ditto of sugar baker's scum,
 - 1 Ditto of night soil,
 - 1 Ditto of fine strong yellow loam,
-
- 4 1 Peck of sea sand.

The above Compost, if you refer back, you will find is mixed up after the same manner as my No. 2. (save and except the goose dung being steeped in bullock's blood); and by the same rule you can prepare a Compost after the manner of No. 1. (the blood excepted).

Having given you already five receipts of Composts for growing very fine Auricula plants, where, on a calculation, only one-fourth loam is used, I now beg leave to introduce three more receipts, where I recommend one-third loam, and which I have practised with equal success. Some florists, I have been told, use no loam whatever; this system I entirely disagree with. I once tried the experiment with the major part of my stock of Auriculas with only one-seventh part of loam; they grew very fine, and increased well, but bloomed with such very small debilitated pips: the cause of this I attributed to the Compost being

thin and of too light a texture, and was very glad to go back to my old system of one-fourth, or one-third part of fine strong yellow loam, for without a proportionate quantity of loam, you have no fixed substance of *solid earth*, without which, in my opinion, your plants cannot grow well or produce fine large bold flowers.

No. 6.

- 2 Barrowsful of goose dung,
- 2 Ditto of sugar-baker's scum,
- 2 Ditto of cow dung,
- 3 Ditto of fine strong yellow loam,
-
- 9 $2\frac{1}{2}$ Pecks of sea sand.

On a calculation it is 2 quarts of sand to a barrowful.

No. 7.

- 2 Barrowsful of night soil,
- 2 Ditto of sugar-baker's scum,
- 2 Ditto of cow dung,
- 3 Ditto of fine strong yellow loam,
-
- 9 $2\frac{1}{2}$ Pecks of sea sand.

This Compost, No. 7. is very easy to be obtained at a trifling expense by the London florists.

No. 8.

- 2 Barrowsful of night soil,
- 2 Ditto of goose dung,
- 2 Ditto of cow dung,
- 3 Ditto of fine strong yellow loam,

- 9 $2\frac{1}{2}$ Pecks of sea sand.

Having given instructions for the mixture of the three last named Composts, I am certain if either of them be put in practice, each will be highly approved of. With respect to strong loam, I have every reason to believe the second spit, where the land is of a deep staple, rich, and free from stones, will answer equally well as the first, especially if sea sand be used; but the latter I never gave myself any concern about, notwithstanding I have given you the proportionate quantity to be used.

As no doubt but to a great number of florists it would be attended with very great inconvenience and expense to procure my favourite *soil*, called sugar-baker's scum, I have recommended an excellent Compost, as the last, under the head No. 8. where every different manure may be procured without the least inconvenience. Having said thus much on the different *manures*, as in my opinion it is here

where the generality of florists have been defeated, by not knowing the different qualities of soils or manures fit for the Auricula, and more particularly the *exact* proportionate quantity of each sort to be put together (they trusted too much to *chance*) for by putting too much of some sorts of manure would prove almost *poison*, and rather serve to kill and destroy your plants than to nourish them. I know two instances of this, the one was with night soil, and the other with sugar-baker's scum.

A few days ago, when I was with an elderly gentleman and an old brother florist, 30th April, 1815, Mr. H——s of Hampstead, and whose name stands high among flower fanciers; he is considered a fine bloomer both of Auriculas and carnations. Unfortunately the worthy old gentleman was full of complaints as to his Auricula plants, they having gone on badly ever since the last season, and his stock having decreased by dying off in great numbers. I then interrogated him very closely as to the Compost he grew them in this last season; with some reluctance he at length candidly confessed, the Compost he had procured and planted them in was all *haphazard*. I replied, Haphazard was considered a fine race-

horse at Newmarket, but would be considered a bad name for a *florist*. Although you have the best receipts in the world, if your Compost is not stirred and turned over frequently, I do not promise you success; it is from this that it becomes sweet and in good condition for use; it will be the means of throwing brilliant colours into the pips, as well as giving vigour and life to the plants; as much so as fine old Port or rich Madeira wine does to the human constitution.

Frost, sun, and air, are of infinite utility to Compost; but by many the intense heat of the sun is thought to destroy the rich qualities of the earth; this is a mistaken notion, it acts quite the reverse, and the Compost receives great benefit from it.

There may be no impropriety in my hinting here, that a load from the slaughter-house, consisting of blood and manure, can always be procured in London, Birmingham, Bristol, or other very large towns, at a trifling expense; so that any person situated near to those places will find it to answer his purpose well, as the blood, when rotted down with other manure, does wonders beyond all conception, and constitutes a most excellent *mundungus*.

I shall now close my remarks on soil, and pro-

ceed next to give you the best information I am able in what way the plants should be treated, so as to bloom them in fine perfection, with large flat or level pips, and beautiful trusses.

I beg leave to introduce here, for the information of my readers, the three last Composts. No. 6, 7, and 8, will answer extremely well for double crimson, double white, and any other sorts of primroses or polyanthuses, as the very choice sorts require nearly the same treatment as the Auricula. My reason for recommending the three last Composts is, that primroses require a greater portion of loam. They bloom far superior to those planted in the ground, and the choice sorts are so liable to perish in the winter, if left out on the natural ground. They are easily increased, if attended to about the last week in May, or beginning of June, by dividing the crown with a sharp knife, and cutting the grass short after the manner of pink pipings. Although they have little or any root, place a number of them in a large pot, or in the ground, and place a hand-glass over them without heat, in a cool situation, and in the course of eight weeks they will be fit to pot off in single pots; of course, polyanthuses may be increased in the same way.

The choicest sorts of Double Primroses are,
viz.

Double Dark Crimson,
Double Brimstone coloured,
Double White, very tender,
Double Lilac, very hardy,
Double Scotch.

Winter Situation, &c. &c.

Having given you the instructions for mixing up Composts best calculated for the growth of the Auricula, I shall now lay down my plan for blooming it, which I consider very different from the system generally pursued about London. About the middle of October I made choice of a full southern aspect, and in general put my pots of plants into small frames of about $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 feet long, and each light about 3 feet wide. My reason for having the frames on so small a scale is for the convenience of any youth being able to pull them up or slip them down in case of heavy showers of rain, snow, or hail storms.

So soon as they are placed in their winter situation, during the autumn and winter months, even down to the 5th of *April*, or thereabouts, I expose them, during the day, to as much air as possible, by having the lights entirely off (except in rainy weather) while some people make a point of keeping their lights on, and giving them air behind only; at the same time be careful to observe, during the months of November and December, it is necessary they should be kept very dry, and more so in December, as in case of a severe frost the weather has less power on the roots of the plants, for it frequently happens during those two latter months you have three or four successive wet days; if so, it is very requisite the lights should be kept over the flowers, but by no means kept close shut down, as this will serve to injure your plants materially, therefore give them all the air you conveniently can behind, as the *Auricula* itself is quite as hardy, or nearly so, as the common *Primrose*, but they cannot stand the *heavy* autumn and winter rains—the greatest enemy this plant has, it is *death* to them. I have seen much mischief done by their being suffered to be very much exposed to wet during this season of the year; if it does not immediately kill or rot your

plants, it will cause them to look of a sickly yellow hue, and if so, they will not recover till about the 10th of March; a trifling frost will not be a quarter so injurious as heavy rains in November and December. These flowers do not require to be treated as green-house plants, by any means: my exposing them to all the air imaginable, during the day-time, I have every reason to believe promoted their health, vigour, and hardihood, and consequently insured a good bloom in the spring.

I have noticed many persons' flowers which were kept more confined, by having the lights more shut down, and their plants, when first put into the frame in October, were sufficiently fine, strong, and healthy withal, but for want of more *natural air* their flowers have been feeble, and not by any means rich and brilliant in their ground colours. I have heard several of the London florists say, why, your *air* at Barnet is so fine and clear, that is the cause of your Auriculas appearing so brilliant in their colours; when at the same time the *natural air* they do possess round the metropolis they will not permit their flowers to enjoy, but keep the lights on day after day, when they should be clear off and exposed to the air; and if a little sun should peep out, all the better; *foggy*

weather will never injure these plants, provided they are dry. I beg to repeat, they are not that tender plant as many persons round London suppose them to be. Towards four o'clock in the afternoon the lights should be pulled over the flowers at this season, and shut close down, with about two or three mats thick thrown over them, and so to remain till about eight or nine o'clock next morning, when, if it does not rain, snow, or hail, they should be exposed to the open air in the usual way; but if it rains, take off the mats only, this gives light to the plants, which they delight in, and at the same time give plenty of *air* behind.

As I have given you the best information I am able to do for *October*, *November*, and *December*, during this next month, *January*, and most likely the greater part of *February*, so much depends upon the depth of snow and the intense frost. Some winters are more favourable than others; if the season has now the appearance of open weather, you may treat your plants nearly in the same manner as the two last months; but if you have snow, and the weather is now a severe frost, you must be rather more cautious as to the exposure; a trifling frost is of no serious consequence to these hardy plants, but I do not recommend

you to have the mould severely frozen in the pots, as by the end of *January* the bloom, I expect, is formed, although very low in the heart of the plant, and to get them severely frozen, would be risking too much with those choice sorts you intend to exhibit for a prize, or even to keep for your own amusement; for if the mould in the pots be very wet at this season, the severe frost takes more easy hold of it, and is one cause why they should be kept dry; and if severely frozen it tends to injure the bloom in the spring; but if there is likely to be a continuation of frosty weather, and the plants have been close shut down for three weeks (it may now be the 18th day of *January*) if so, I should recommend the snow to be taken off the mats (if any) and the lights taken off for a few hours only in the day, or give plenty of *air* behind, as a little light and free *air* will greatly refresh them; if the sun should break out for two hours, by all means let them enjoy it—it will nourish them at this cold season of the year—as consider they very likely have been closely shut down for more than three weeks, and are in absolute want of a little *atmospheric air*. Although the weather is sharp and frosty, a little fresh air will not by any means injure your plants; in fact it freezes

little or none in the south aspect in the middle part of the day when the sun is out; but I would take care at this season, was I absent from home, to leave some careful person, to cover well up as early as three o'clock in the afternoon; and on the first week in January there would be no impropriety to add an extra mat or two, but this I shall entirely leave to my reader's own discretion.

If the weather has become mild and open about the 18th or 21st of *January*, your *Auricula* plants at this time are very dry, *if not so*, they ought to be, from the caution I have heretofore given: you must allow them to have but very little rain, and not too much water from the water-pot during *November* and *December*. If that be the case, you may now about this time (18th or 21st of *January*) give them some water, or allow them to have three hours moderate rain, provided it comes from the *south-west*, and let it be repeated every other day till the mould has got moderately moist, as I have no desire to have them *very wet* just yet.

Spring Earthing.

FEBRUARY.

About the second week in this month (if it be mild weather) or as soon after as the weather will permit, you should new dress and clean your plants, by carefully taking as much earth out of the top of your pots as you can without damaging or disturbing the roots, and putting in fresh from any of the Composts prepared ; this will be of great service to your plants, it will strengthen and invigorate them much. Be careful not to fill your pots too full of the fresh earth, but leave at least half an inch from the tops empty, that the waterings given to your plants may sink to the roots, and not run over the edges of your pots ; by doing this you will likewise, with more ease, be able to take off the rotten and decayed leaves round the plant. Take the offsets out of your small pots with all the ball of earth about them, remove a little of the earth from the top, and place them into larger pots for bloom also ; this should be done in open mild weather ; and your plants *now* should be *exposed* to all the gentle rains in *this month*, and at the same

time carefully defended from frosts, and *hail storms*, that they may shoot fresh fibres the sooner, for they at this season begin to vegetate fast. The plan hitherto laid down should be attended to till about the 10th or 12th of March, from this time; to bloom them very fine, they want warmer clothing, for fear of frosty nights; but to add more *covering till then* might spoil the good effect that is intended, and perhaps serve only to injure your plants.

MARCH AND APRIL.

Great care and attention are now required to defend the coming bloom against frost, from the 12th March to 25th of April, or thereabouts.

To bloom your Auriculas well, too great attention cannot be paid to them for about four or five weeks, viz. to use the language of a florist, to prevent them from being set, when all trouble and danger will be completely over. This strict care commences about the 20th or 22d of March, and ends, as I calculate, by the 25th of April, or thereabouts, so much depends on the season, when the flowers in and near to London will be in such a forward state as fit to be placed on the stage, and in the course of a few days will so much improve, that they will have attained their greatest perfection and

beauty. No flower can be considered in full bloom till the middle pips are expanded; and most likely in Lancashire and Yorkshire they are not so forward by seven or eight days. To draw these flowers up by glass or any other artificial heat is highly improper, I having tried the experiment frequently, but without success. It is not as with roses, pinks, &c. &c. they will neither answer with fire nor dung heat—they will not stand forcing. I admit they want more attention during the blooming season, than probably the whole year besides. Around London, so many fine plants of the choicest sorts have always been spoilt by nursing them as they do their geraniums, that is, by keeping their plants under glass so many weeks, night and day. Many florists keep their lights continually over their flowers, day as well as night, from the 1st of January till the 1st of May, and only admit a current of air behind their frames—this is the rock, fatal to bloom, so many split on.—This mode of treatment, I am convinced, is highly improper; it draws up the flower stem, and renders it weak and spindling, in a state unfit to bear or produce a bold truss. To bloom an Auricula in perfection, it does not require to be continually under glass night and day longer than twenty-four

days, or thereabouts ; as a criterion, say from the 4th to the 28th of April; you will find your middle pips expanded, or nearly so, and well adapted to be exhibited on the stage at this time ; but I do not pretend to be correct to two or three days. I advise you to be careful these two last months to protect them from snow, sleet, and hail storms. By this treatment you will find the leaves of your plants grow very thick and fleshy, and the grass of them will shine, and carry a fine healthy appearance; the pips, when they begin to expand, will be fine and brilliant in their colour. Sometimes the sun has been so powerful by ten or eleven o'clock, about the 23d of March, as to make it requisite to put the lights over them, and shade them a few hours with an old thin mat, which admits the glimmering rays to the glass, and warms and cherishes them very much without over heating them ; however, so soon as an opportunity offers, I would throw them open and expose them to the natural air again. As I have before said, they want attention now, if you have a desire to excel. I do not approve of having the plants flagged by the sun at this season: I never regarded a little trouble, five or six small lights are soon put on or taken off.

By observing these few hints you will preserve your plants with strong stems and leaves : so soon as the 4th, 5th, or 6th of April arrives, or thereabouts, it is requisite they should have glass completely over them night and day, till they are in full bloom ; but during their stay under glass you must admit a proper portion of air behind the lights, and shade them, if requisite with a thin old mat, in preference to a new one. This treatment will be for ten or twelve days (till about the 16th of April); much depends now on the state of the atmosphere, but I expect by this time a full south aspect is much too sunny; and will over hasten the bloom, and serve only to fade your fine colours; should this be the case, I most particularly recommend an immediate removal to a full east aspect (by no means a north as yet, it would endanger the bloom) if the weather will admit, under a privet hedge, garden wall, or a pale fence, about eight or ten yards in length; this will contain a single row of hand-glasses, of about ten or twelve in number, which will serve to bloom all your earliest flowers, to the number of sixty or seventy plants; and by their remaining under those hand-glasses ten or twelve days, or thereabouts, I have no doubt but your earliest blossoms will be in such a

state of forwardness by the 26th or 28th of April, as to be fit for removal to a full north aspect on your Auricula stage or any other shady situation you may think most proper.

To make those hand-glasses secure and convenient, you should procure some long pieces of deal lath, but broader and rather stouter than a common pantile lath; after this, procure some old coach-wheel spokes, or other suitable stakes, drive them into the earth, leaving six inches clear out, and then nail the stout laths on the top of the stakes: this method you will find the most convenient for keeping your flowers during the last fortnight, as well as for watering and placing the pips in handsome form, which may be assisted by a slip of smooth deal, made flat, about half the width of a match, &c. The laths may remain in this situation, if not an eye-sore, till the ensuing season; and your hand-glasses will immediately come into use for ridge cucumbers or other purposes.

Having recommended this east aspect as a finish for blooming, the mats, &c. should be taken off the glasses about seven; and if it proves sunny, they should be shaded at half past nine in the morning till about twelve or one, when the sun will be of this aspect: of

course the single thin mats should now be taken off. You should have your hand-glasses washed inside and out before you place them over your flowers, as the dirt and dust they have collected will only serve to injure the blossoms; besides, you will be able to see the flowers through the glass, and have no occasion to take them off so repeatedly; for at this season you may naturally expect all lovers of flowers to pay their visits.

I have recommended the flowers to be placed in this east aspect by about the 16th, 17th, or 18th of April, but have taken the average of seasons.—In the year 1805, was the earliest season I ever noticed, or carefully remarked: my flowers at this period were so early as to require them to be placed under hand-glasses on the 10th day of April, they were in such a state of forwardness.—As soon as the master pips are about the size of a full blown cowslip, or thereabouts, it is necessary they should be removed to an east aspect, under hand-glasses, as I hinted before, if you wish to bloom them with their rich colours, and run no risk of their being in any shape faded. Of course the weather and north-east winds must be carefully attended to, as when the wind is

in a south-west aspect it is much more congenial to the blooming part of Auriculas.

I presume it is understood that they are to receive all moderate rains from about the beginning of February till about 25th of March; although the trusses at this time may be very forward (provided the blossoms are not yet open) three or four hours heavy rain will greatly encourage the swelling of the pips, also will add greatly to the size of the foliage, provided you will be at the pains, so soon as the rain is completely over, to shut them close down, and cover them up warm, in a manner for which I shall hereafter give directions. If you should have a dozen plants, whose blossoms begin to open, they can soon be removed to a temporary place for three or four hours.—This experiment I tried in 1806 with very great success—it answered beyond my expectations:—from about the 12th of March, once or twice a week, if a *warm sunny day*, I used to water my plants at three or four o'clock in the afternoon, with a very fine rose, all over the leaves, after the manner of gentle rain; immediately after, I would cover them up warm, *while the sun was warm on them*; the next morning they would have a very lively appearance. Many persons

are fearful of watering them in this way; but it is a mistaken notion; for in their growing season they delight in being moderately watered with soft water; and more especially, so soon as their blossoms begin to open, they should then be kept moderately moist to encourage the truss. You will, perhaps, scarcely credit it, but in this particular state of the weather I have watered moderately twice and thrice a day, and more particularly if the wind blew full south or south-west. The treatment at this period, and that in the month of December, is far different, it is then requisite they should be altogether kept as dry, almost parched for want of water.

Be careful to cover up very warm, for one night's severe frost would destroy your whole year's care.—On the 18th of April, 1807, the frost was so intense (it being a late season) that it got through the wood of my frame to the bloom; the glass at top was covered up with two blankets, six mats, besides hay, &c. however, it injured about eighty of my blooms—so much so, that they became quite set, and never would expand and get flat. But several of my brother florists, that season, suffered in the same way, to the number of eleven or twelve, within my knowledge. Ever since, I have always

recommended brick-work for your choice plants.

After your bloom is completely over, I must beg to recommend you not to be too free with the water-pot—to say more on this is quite unnecessary.—But above all, while your flowers are in their height of blooming, never, if possible, suffer them even to get chilled. If so, it is all over, and you cannot shew for prizes that season.—I am sure there is no chance of your winning a ten-guinea silver cup—which I did on the 25th of April, 1805, at Islington—it was given by Phineas Borritt, Esq.; nineteen or twenty pair of flowers were shewn on that day. In fact, I had the three first prizes at three different shews that year. The second prize was won at the Greyhound, at Dulwich. For these last fourteen or fifteen years, I subscribed to four or five shews, and always had a prize of some sort, either first, second, or third. My mode of blooming was always successful—good compost and good management are not to be beaten very easily.

As there are a number of different sorts of Auriculas which produce a multiplicity of pips, while others produce a less quantity, all those kinds of flowers you intend to speculate in for exhibition for a ten-guinea silver cup, or other

prize, it is highly requisite they should be thinned out, and that as early as possible, after the same manner that a gardener does his forced grapes, in a grapery or hot-house. I shall name Gorton's Champion of England as a sort that produces a large quantity of pips, if the plant has not been suffered to breed offsets, ~~for it~~ ^{and} is a fine healthy old plant: this large plant may produce you from thirty to thirty-five pips, if the whole were suffered to blossom. So soon as the truss has risen out of the heart about half an inch or so, then you may begin to thin out; get a piece of hard wood, viz. box or yew-tree, reduce it to the size of a small skewer, with a sharp point, or a piece of stout wire, placed in a stick, filed sharp, might answer equally well; with this instrument, or a pair of tweesers, you must pick out three or four pips every day, or every other day, and more particularly out of the middle part of the truss; but if you omit this opportunity, and suffer the stem to get nearly to its height, you may thin them out with a pair of scissars, but their points for this purpose must be both alike. This large truss of flowers is to be gradually reduced to the number of ten or eleven, thirteen, or not more by any means than fifteen pips. I have always

observed an odd number forms the handsomest truss of flowers ; if, by accident, you take two out at one place, where you only intended to take out one, it will prove of no consequence, if thinned out very early : all those that remain by the time they are in full bloom, will have grown to large and magnificent pips, and the truss of flowers will appear more splendid than if a greater number of blossoms had been suffered to blow ; for although you do not have them in quantity, you have them in magnitude. If a truss of flowers would produce only eighteen or nineteen pips, your own judgment will inform you in what manner they should be thinned out, say rather more than one-third. I should recommend the truss to be reduced to ten or twelve pips ; this mode of thinning out must be of great utility to a flower that is inclined to be *short-fingered*, besides, it gives a greater opportunity for the pips to grow round, and come well shaped : nine, ten, and eleven large pips of Grimes's Privateer, is plenty to shew for a prize. All those flowers you intend for the stage, or any other shady situation, do not require thinning out ; it being only requisite for the choice sorts you intend to exhibit for prizes,

The remarks I am about to make, may be of great service to a young beginner in this fancy, but to one who has had many years practice, they may be considered too trifling; but, by way of giving a young florist an equal chance to shew against an old sportsman, I beg to inform him what quantity of *strong blooming plants* it is necessary to keep, to give him the same prospect of coming in for the first, second, and third prize, among fifteen or twenty pair of flowers. I am confident, having for years made a calculation on my own shew flowers, that you are not able to get out of those flowers, you intend to exhibit for prizes, more than *one* superior, or first-rate bloom, out of four strong healthy plants. If you think you can get one out of three, you will be deceived, the risk is too great, it is giving away your chance; I therefore recommend four plants of each sort to be kept at *least* (if not five) it is as well to reduce this to a certainty; the remainder of your flowers are fine and healthy, and no doubt delightful for the stage, but what I consider second and third rates, and not fit to shew against an experienced grower: but I will venture to say, if you will follow this plan, you will stand an equal chance with him. I remind you, that at all times you will have many good

flowers to contend against, and many middling, perhaps not less than fifteen or twenty pair; above all, never lose sight of your choice compost: this, with care, does *wonders*, and if you do not always come in first, you will stand a chance to be the second or third.

The number of strong blooming plants you would like to keep, must rest entirely with yourself: this I have to say, if you keep ninety-six, or not exceeding one hundred, very strong single blooming plants, and do not encourage too much (if any) increase on them, this number will produce twelve pair, or twenty-four first-rate flowers, such as there will be very great difficulty to excel; by the same rule, if you keep about fifty plants, they will produce you six pair, or twelve first-rates; at the same time remember to preserve about one hundred and fifty young offsets always by you, to keep up your stock, or a number proportionate to the quantity you bloom. For my part, I think they keep too few sorts about London, for there are many beautiful sorts of Auriculas that would do to shew, were they to persevere and keep four or five plants of each sort; whereas, by having only a single plant, it is not giving a flower by any means a fair chance:—much might be said on this head, but I am fearful of making this

Treatise too long.—Besides the selected sorts I kept to shew for prizes, I used to lay by not less than forty or fifty other sorts, perhaps three and four plants of each sort; and, together, the variety was great. I seldom or ever had a less quantity of blooming plants than from two hundred and fifty to three hundred; by this means I had a succession of blooms throughout the season: as they will not all be in perfection at one time, by some this might be thought to occupy too much time and trouble. I do assure you, in my opinion, they by no means occupy more than half the time and trouble as the same number of common *geraniums* do—they do not require watering so often; another great advantage in this beautiful *spring* flower, is, it requires no fire heat, not even a common green-house, during the severity of the winter, and but little labour: it need only to be kept dry in the winter, with plenty of natural air.

To prevent the humble, or any other bee, getting to your bloom while under the hand-glasses (for they will do great injury to the eye of the flowers you intend to shew for prizes, I have had so much damage done by them to a first-rate flower, as not to be able to shew it) I got two or three yards of yellow or green

canvass, such as is calculated to make blinds, and tacked it to the frame-work between the ground and glasses; to put any thing more substantial, would prevent a sufficient current of air reaching the flowers. I had also damage done at night by the small slugs, chiefly by their crawling up the pot, from thence to the leaves, until they reached the blossoms; the consequence was, they crawled all over the pips, injured the eye materially, as well as ate the thrums out. To prevent this, I recommend the tiles or slates, where the flowers stand blooming, to be sprinkled with two or three handfuls of salt at night, just before you cover up; unslacked lime might answer the same purpose.

*Spring Night Covering, after the 12th or 15th
of March, or thereabouts.*

The plan I am about to lay down, is not practised by any to my knowledge, but is one that will repel the cold frosty air in the night, which is highly requisite for this flower at *this very critical season*. This artificial covering is also done for the express purpose of assisting the bloom, and preventing its having any check from frost and cold. Spring heat is supposed

to be from 45 to 50 degrees in the day, and during this time your flowers ought to be exposed to the *natural air*; and when covered up at night, the grand object with me was to keep them as warm, or nearly so, as they were in the course of the day, which is about 50 degrees of heat: this is only to be done by an artificial covering, as fire heat will not answer the purpose. The keeping them so warm at night, from about the middle of March, prevents any check to vegetation; and another great effect this peculiar mode of covering has, that as soon as the pips begin to open, they go on cheerfully, expand freely, and come level, fine, and nearly flat as a shilling; but if once they get a complete *chill* by cold night air, their blossoms will not expand flat, but on the contrary ruffle or furbelow.

I never took the trouble to ascertain what the degree of heat was from the warm cloathing at night, by a thermometer, which might be known by hanging one in the frame, or under the hand glasses; this I am informed by an optician, that in the months of March and April, when the wind shifts from the south-west or from the south, to the north or north-east, it makes the weather colder by six or eight degrees. Under those circumstances, I caution

you to be more sparing of water than you otherwise would be, if the wind blew a soft air from the warm quarter; south by south-west, and rain from the same quarter, must be more nourishing to plants, than from the north or north-east aspect. I have often with pleasure remarked, how very fast the plants would grow, and how freely the pips would expand themselves, when the wind blew south or south-west; when this happened, I used to give the plants a plentiful supply of soft water, perhaps twice a day; at this period they require it; I never found it do them the least injury, for it is my firm belief, that more fine plants get *diseased* and *killed* by bad *unwholesome Compost*, than any thing else.

The covering I made use of, were two good old thick Wilton blankets, and laid them at night next to the glass; if this happened to fail, I got three or four of inferior quality; if neither of these are to be obtained, I recommend as a substitute some good warm hunter's horse-cloths of the best woollen quality, otherwise some sheep-skins, to be placed next the glass; it is wonderful how this woollen texture will *repel* the cold frosty night air. After this, I used to throw over them about five or six mats, which protected the flowers, as well as kept

the rain from doing the least injury to the blankets. I also recommend, if your small frames are made of wood, and not of brick-work (which I before suggested) it is then requisite you should have hay or fern on the outside, to repel the frosty air getting through the wood-work, as the intense weather served me on the 18th of April, 1807, which I before remarked.

In the winter season, to adopt this warm covering, at least sooner than about the middle of March, might serve not only to injure your fine strong blooming plants, but spoil the good effect it is meant to have, in assisting nature, to bloom your flowers in fine condition, gradually, as the season approaches.

Having laid down the plan for blooming my Auriculas, which were in a style superior to most florists, I next will proceed with a few remarks for any new beginners, and trust they will be of service.

Offsets.

The manner of propagating Auriculas by offsets, is thus:—you may separate offsets from the mother plant any time between February and August, according as they are in size, or

are wanted for increase ; if there are many offsets and large, we can expect but a poor truss from that plant, but if the plant be of a choice and expensive kind, the increase, to many, is of more consequence than the bloom ; and were it not for that, the offsets ought not be suffered to remain. The offsets are so often situated, that by removing a little of the earth, they may be slipped off the mother-plant with your fingers, or with a sharp piece of box, yew, or other hard wood, made for that purpose in the shape of a knife, without taking the plant out of the pot ; this will do the plant little or no injury, and should be done if practicable ; but offsets will not always separate thus easily : when, therefore, the suckers are large, and so united to the mother-plant that it is difficult to separate them with your fingers, so as to preserve a sufficient quantity of fibres or small roots to them, you need not fear taking the plant out of the pot, and dividing the main root with a sharp knife, into as many parts as there are suckers. This operation, likewise, is the safest for two reasons : first, because the suckers, being difficult to be severed, will not by that means be so much in danger of spoiling ; and secondly, being thus separated, they will certainly bring away more small roots with them than if they

were torn off. Sometimes the operation of the knife is not necessary, and yet the offsets cannot be so well separated without taking the old plant out of the pot; when this happens, and you have slipt off the offsets, trim the fibres of the old plant, and replace it again into its pot; if this can be done without disturbing many of the roots, the old plant may blow the stronger for it. If there is not above an offset or two, and you want a strong bloom from the mother-plant, take them off without removing the old plant; if this be not practicable, let it remain till the plant has done blowing, it will then be time enough to remove the offsets. Plant the offsets, immediately on taking them off, on the side of pots called (about London) upright forty-eights; they are about four or five inches over at the top, three inches and a half at the bottom, and four or five inches deep; these pots should be made taper from the top to the bottom, so that the plants may easily slip out, with all the earth round them; the inside should be made with a descent from the sides to the centre, where there should be a hole, not of less size than a halfpenny, by which means the wet will drain itself off, which is very requisite, after having too much rain or waterings; a hollow oyster shell should be placed on

the hole, with a small piece of broken pot for the same to rest on, this will cause a complete hollow drain.

When you have thus planted your offsets, trim the fibres of your mother-plant, and replace it again into its pot, adding a little fresh earth to supply the place of that which is removed in trimming the fibres. Give the plants and offsets, so removed, a gentle watering, and place them in the shade (the warmer the weather, the more shade and water they require) perhaps a little temporary artificial shade may be necessary. Be careful not to place them under trees, the water that drops from trees, both in showers of rain and afterwards, is very pernicious to all kinds of plants and flowers; the plants, thus managed, will be strongly rooted before winter. By no means remove the offsets after August, for they have then done shooting, and are become inactive; and the winter season coming on, without a great deal of nursing, they seldom come to much.

Transplanting.

Some florists transplant their Auriculas early in the spring, others remove them every year at the latter end of August, or beginning of

September; but certainly the best time for so doing is soon after they are out of bloom, say about the 22d or 23d of May, and more especially if the weather is a little inclined to be rather showery; but I have transplanted my flowers with great success from the 29th of May to the 12th of June, even also as late as the 10th of July; on no account remove a general collection a week later, at least those you intend to bloom very strong; by this means they will have time enough to be well rooted before the winter, and if you transplant them early in the spring, it will be so near their time of blowing, that the check they will receive by transplanting will prevent their blooming strong.

I should much object to their being removed every year; for although the young offsets, and young plants in their small pots, must be removed as before directed, yet the large, strong blowing roots should not be removed more than once in two years; to do it oftener would be to run a risk of not having any fine flowers to exhibit on your stage, or even to shew for a prize; because these plants never thrive rightly, till the roots have reached the sides of the pots, and it seldom or never happens that they get sufficiently well established, in a

full-sized Auricula pot, in one year; but a difference must be made between such as throw out many suckers and offsets, and such as do not. In the first case you must transplant the oftener, removing the offsets and paring many of the suckers or young shoots close to the neck. I beg to impress strongly on the mind of my brother florist, if he prefers a very strong superior bloom of flowers to increase, he must not suffer any offset to grow on the stock of the mother plant *without fibres*, but rub them off when they are about the size of a hemp seed; but those that spring up below the surface of the earth, you are at liberty to use your own pleasure about, and I hope this last remark will be strictly attended to, especially if it be your desire to excel in fine blooms; but if you are growing for profit alone, this system must be reversed; at all events, the generality of the sorts of Auriculas are by no means expensive, compared with many other flower-roots. Many florists will differ from me in opinion respecting a general shaking clean out the earth from the plant, and removal of their large blooming plants every year. I am well aware that it is a general custom to remove those strong blowing plants every year; but that does not appear to me to be at all necessary.

I candidly confess it was my practice to remove them annually, but provided the compost be of a rich quality, in my opinion the large blooming plants that are in the full sized pots do not require it, for the reason I before stated.

As a proof that the strong blooming plants do not require removing every year, provided they are *healthy* and like the compost (for when plants are growing and doing well, then let *well alone*) on Monday, June 10th, 1805, I began to transplant my large blooming *Auricula* plants, which was completed in three or four days; the mould was entirely shaken clear from the roots; the weather at this period was showery, and continued so for a length of time; the plants grew delightfully fine, and bloomed well in the spring, 1806. This season I had no removal of large plants, but suffered them to remain in the pots; they grew remarkably strong and fine during the summer and autumn season; but were fresh earthed on the 21st of May, 1806, after the same manner as in February, which was also done a second time about the 16th of July in the same year. The strong blooms they threw up in the spring, 1807, were beyond my expectations; the plants were very healthy, and grew during the months

of April and May to that amazing large size, that they were not to be equalled. One observation I have to make, they were planted in my Compost, No. 1. and No. 2, and I am perfectly satisfied they would have grown and bloomed finely, if they had been suffered to remain in those pots another year, making together three years, but by no means longer. I beg to remark, that proper care and attention were paid to the plants during the summer months, by having them frequently fresh earthed, as before described, and but a few offsets were allowed to grow on them. I always kept a certain number of plants for the express purpose of increase.

My reason for having treated so largely on this point, is, that I and many others have been too fond of frequently removing our large blooming plants; once in two years, or not more than three, will be found sufficient. By no means remove your large blooming Auricula plants in dry hot weather, as by shaking the mould clean out of the plant the roots will not freely draw fresh fibres, except the weather is inclined to be showery, and what is termed a cool moist air. I am satisfied dry hot weather is an improper time, except they are fine young maiden plants, in small pots,

which should be slipped out of the pot with the whole ball of earth, and then immediately planted in a full-sized blooming pot for the ensuing season; in this last case I used to pay no attention whatever to the dry weather—every old florist must know it is but of little consequence. By no means part with your strong well-established blooming plants, except you can get a high price for them. An old *Auricula* plant, if healthy, will bloom finer at six and eight years old than at two or three years. By some, old *Auricula* plants are despised and cast aside.

In the remarks already made, I hope that I may not be misunderstood, as it is not my intention to set up my judgment in opposition to other florists, but let it be considered I have given my opinion only to the best of my abilities, after many years successful practice; for I have never been able to ascertain from any one, and firmly believe that no general rule can be laid down, or particular direction given, for transplanting the *Auricula*: but that they must be treated according to the state and condition you find the plant in.

If your plants have not been removed for two or three years, their small roots will have filled the pots, and probably their large, or what is

called by some the carrot root, may be grown so long as to require shortening; in this case the plant must be taken out of the pot, and the earth entirely shaken from it; you will see what is necessary to be done; shorten the carrot root, if necessary, for if you suffer it to remain too long, it will either get rotten at the end, and always keep the plant weak, or will be too long for an ordinary pot; besides, it would want shifting every year, and never produce fine strong flowers. Reduce their small roots to about ten or a dozen, leaving those that are nearest the leaves, they will be sufficient again to support and vegetate your plant. If you perceive any canker or rottenness in the root, cut it boldly to the quick, till it appear fresh and lively, and no spots or symptoms of decay remain; put on the wounds a little mastich to heal and dry them; leaving as many fibres to it as possible.

Mastich is made with the following ingredients: set it over a gentle fire in a common brown pipkin or a large gallipot, and keep stirring it with a small stick or iron spoon:

- 2 oz. Bees wax,
- 2 oz. Turpentine,
- 2 oz. White rosin.

The wound may also be exposed to the sun,

which makes it crust over, and it is really the easiest and best remedy you can apply to plants tolerably rooted and inclined to strike again.

N. B. If a large blooming plant, or any other one you remove, has been in the pot but one year since it was last transplanted, you must slip it out of the pot with all its earth about it, and although its fibres may have reached the outside, they will not be so large and numerous, or so matted together as the older plants that have remained in one pot two clear years. You need not therefore shake the earth from it, but with a sharp knife cut the fibres and earth away till you reduce it to the size of a cricket-ball, or rather larger, as much depends on the size and age of your plant.

But some will say that this is not a complete remove, because there is a ball of old earth left about the root; this is true; but the earth, old as it is, hath not lost its virtue, none of it is eaten out but that which is next to the sides of the pots, where the roots run in great numbers. The large root, of which these are the branches or fibres, having used this remaining ball of earth only as a passage leading to the sides of the pot, draws very few of the salts from it; and did I not experimentally know that the earth in the middle of the pot did not

lose its virtue under three or four years, I should appeal to the judgment of those who are well versed in the laws of vegetation, who all agree that the nourishment is not drawn by the great root, but only by the small ones.

Pots.

Pots for large blooming plants to be made as under :

8 Inches high,

$5\frac{1}{2}$ Inches diameter at the top,

$4\frac{1}{2}$ Inches at the bottom.

The pots, as named above, should be of that size when burnt (or nearly so) with a handsome plain full rim, by no means ornamented, they will be in shape deep and upright, which is best calculated to set off this beautiful flower on the Auricula stage. The pots that are intended for young maiden plants must be made in the same shape, but of a size in proportion. New pots, taken immediately from the fire, have a certain heat, which they retain a long time, and should never therefore be used till they have lain twenty-four hours in cold water : this heat, if suffered to remain in the pots till the small roots reach their sides, would prove injurious to the plants, for the earth of

which the pots are made is calcarious and of the nature of lime, though less quick and lively; this is clearly proved from the bubbling of the water in which you put a number of new ones. Very few florists attend sufficiently to this circumstance, but the reasons here given seem to make it very necessary. When you transplant your roots, place by the side of the hole a small piece of tile, and over the hole a hollow oyster-shell resting on the edge of the tile (this plan drains off the water so well) after which fill up two inches deep with pieces of old loam, but not sifted; if it has been absorbed in manure, it will be no worse; after this fill your pot about three parts full with the prepared compost, and let it be well shook down on your potting board; this is often neglected, but it assists the settling down of the mould, and will prevent the plant sinking down in the pot, which is an eye-sore: trim the small roots or fibres to about three or four inches long, and be careful to spread them as horizontally as possible; press the earth tight round the edges of the pot, as well as in the middle round the neck of the plant; it ought to be firmly fixed, to facilitate its growth; the mould, if kept in a shed, and is as dry as gunpowder, is the better for potting. Water

those plentifully that have not been much wounded with a knife, by placing your pots in a tub or other vessel of water three parts up their sides; if the compost be dry, the water will by this means draw up to the roots sufficiently, which you will observe by the dry earth on the top turning black; those that have been much wounded should have water more sparingly, lest it cause them to rot. So soon as they are transplanted, place them all in a situation where they may not be exposed either to *sun* or *wind*, if possible, till they have drawn fresh root. If they are well watered when planted, they will require no more for ten days or a fortnight, especially if it be a moist air, and the wind is inclined to be south-west; after this they should be kept moderately moist, but not so wet as when the blossoms are expanding themselves. Your plants will strike fresh root in about a month, you must then water sparingly, it is not much required with this plant; but water in very dry hot weather early in the *morning*, with a *very fine rose* made for the purpose, all over the leaves, will be essentially necessary, and by ten o'clock the sun will have dried the leaves. Many persons apprehend this method will rot their plants; it is a mistaken notion, provided

the compost is sweet and in good condition. Let your plants have the benefit of moderate soft showers as often as possible; if they should offer to flower in autumn, they may be allowed to run the stems up to their height, then nip them off immediately just below the flower buds, the flower stalk will then wither, or heal over at top, which is requisite; if it be dry weather, or if it is placed two or three days in the sun for that purpose, the plant, by so doing, will receive no injury, but this you must not do until you perceive a new heart rising by the side of the flower stalk; if the latter does not heal over at the top, it sometimes runs down to the heart of the plant, and will cause it to decay.

The Auricula Stage for Bloom.

I shall briefly give directions how this stage may be best contrived for the benefit of your plants. It should be built with yellow deal or other wood, and ought to front a full north aspect; the back part *may* be, but the sides *must* be so contrived with a sort of shutter to slide up and down occasionally as to admit the air; there should likewise be some light frames for the purpose of straining the canvass over,

or a sheet or two, otherwise Russia mats to be placed on the frames in front of the stage, to defend the flowers from frosts and wind at night, which frequently happen before as well as when they are in full bloom. The shelves on which you place your flowers should be constructed like stairs, about six inches wide, and raised two or three inches one above another; the roof or covering may be made of wood, and should be lofty in front, from 7 feet to $7\frac{1}{2}$ feet, or higher, if you think it more advisable; it should be thick and durable, to prevent the heat of the sun penetrating through it, which would draw up the flower stems of your plants and weaken them much. Your lowest shelf should be 3 feet from the ground, and the whole to consist of six in number, not more, that your flowers may be within easy reach. The length of your stage in the front should be about 9 feet in the clear; I calculate that each shelf will then contain about fifteen pots of your largest plants, and the stage, when completely full, will hold from about eighty to ninety large pots of flowers; this I trust may be considered large enough for the generality of *Auricula* growers. I used to have a large looking-glass placed at one end of my stage, which reflected a double appearance

to the flowers, and had a very charming effect. Let the inside as well as the outside of your stage be painted with some dark colour, which will serve as a back-ground to your flowers, viz. a dark chocolate or black, or any other colour you fancy; as a well chosen contrast renders their appearance more beautiful and lively.

Your plants, now placed on the stage for bloom, will, with their beautiful and delicate appearance, and sweet-scented smell, amply reward you for all your care and trouble, each flower striving which shall please you best; but they will still require your steady attention. As their blossoms have or are nearly expanded, let them have the morning sun for two or three hours, by opening your stage to the south, but shelter them from the heat by about nine or ten o'clock; let them have as much air in cloudy mild weather as possible, otherwise their stems will be drawn up too weak to support their flowers, but they must be assisted with a stick and a piece of wire placed in it to hook round the stem. Air may be given by opening either side of your stage occasionally. If the wind and weather be such that you are obliged to keep but one side of your stage open for some time, the flowers

will be apt to yield to the wind; when you perceive this turn your pots, which will bring them straight again. They should now have gentle waterings often, perhaps every day, so much depends on the *heat* of the *weather* at this time, for if neglected, they will go off bloom much sooner, and lose their brilliant colours. The water should be given from a watering-pot with a small crane-bill spout, by which means you may prevent any water from falling into the center of the plant or among the leaves.

Whilst the flowers are in bloom, cover the earth on the top of your pots with the flat or top shells of oysters, which will serve to keep the plants moist, so that they will not require watering so often; and they may have water given them with the watering-pot before described without displacing or making holes in the soil on the top of the pots, which would appear disagreeable. Never suffer above two trusses of flowers to blow on one plant: one truss is sufficient, unless your plant be very vigorous. I also remind you not to let two or three leaves grow on a truss of flowers; but so soon as you perceive more than one, take them off very early with scissars, leaving the one that grows at the back of the truss; this

often adds to the beauty of the blossoms, but if more, it only debilitates the truss of flowers.

In placing your pots on the stage, contrive to range them so that two flowers of the same kind, or nearly the same ground colours, may not stand together; by this pleasing mixture of colours you will give a delightful variety to the whole, and each flower will serve to contrast and set off its neighbour. I beg to remind you, that self-coloured flowers of the first-rate quality add to the splendour and beauty of a stage of variegated flowers; without them there is too much *sameness* and equality.

Now is the time, whilst your plants are in bloom on the stage, to make a general reform in the collection, by turning out flowers that you do not wholly approve of, or your own seedlings that have been tried, and are not worthy of preservation.

Each flower should be marked with a tally of lead, and stamped with numbers; or if more convenient, a slip of deal should be procured, and rub in with the finger, or a small brush, some white lead, and immediately, while wet, write the name or number with a black lead pencil, this will remain clear till the deal stick becomes rotten: a gallipot of white lead you

should always have by you, as it will serve for green-house and other plants, and will be found convenient to gardeners as well as florists.

Write out a list or catalogue of your flowers, in a book kept for that purpose, specifying the name of each flower, and the number belonging to it; by this means you will know each flower when out of bloom, and it will prevent any mistake in disposing of your plants. In this book you may likewise enter occasionally memoranda and observations relative to the culture and management of them. I confess to you candidly, if I had not done so, I should not have been able to render the information I have already given, which will, I trust, prove deserving of your study and attention.

Nothing hurts Auriculas more than keeping them too long on your stage; by so doing they get a fatal mouldiness or mildew, and often perish. You must not therefore fail to remove them as soon as you perceive the flowers are fading, and place them in a shady situation, and in a full north aspect.—In an early spring, as the year 1805, having a good stock of flowers, I was able to fill my stage from the 26th of April to the 10th or 12th of May; but in a late season they will remain without injury in

this shady situation from fourteen to sixteen or seventeen clear days. The pots should be placed on bricks, slates, tiles, or coal ashes, to prevent worms and other insects getting into the holes of the pots. Here they may remain till October; but if wet weather in September, they must be removed, for a time, to an eastern aspect.

Be attentive and keep them clear from weeds and rotten decaying leaves, as they are now taken from the stage, and are getting into an inactive state. You must be more sparing of water. In October they must be removed into their winter quarters;—I have already given full directions for their management there.—It is requisite, after the flowers have been brought from the stage, and the stems become a little hardened to the natural air, that the tops of the trusses should be taken off in a dry day, as rest assured they will produce no good bold seed; besides which, I have given very particular instructions in what manner seed should be saved, if it be your intention to raise first-rate flowers.

Summer Treatment.

I am sorry to say, I have seen very great neglect, during the summer months, with this plant; and but little notice taken of it after the beauty of the bloom was completely over:—it is ungenerous not to weed, and supply it with water four or five times a week, if dry weather, during the end of May, the whole of June and July; as for the month of August, if it is a little neglected, the fine dews which fall at night will greatly assist it. I will venture to say, during the summer months, they will not require more than half the trouble that many common geraniums, or some other green-house plants, would do; and they are by no means to remain confined on the stage, or deprived of a full current of natural air.

I shall now beg to give my opinion as to the best time calculated for the days on which to shew for prizes, in and about London; I shall name four days; by reason, I subscribed to four annual shews. I have also calculated the average of seasons for seven or ten years. It is a very bad custom to fix your shew day too soon: it has been customary to have a shew at Islington on the 23d of April; this, in

my opinion, is too soon by three or four days ; you have not that prospect, or even a chance of having a choice of first-rate flowers in full bloom, and in their highest condition, as you otherwise would, provided you were to postpone it a few days longer. This flower cannot be hurried into bloom for reasons before stated : and it is well known to a good connoisseur, after the middle pips are fully expanded, that if placed in a full north aspect, and supplied with water, &c. that their brilliant colours will remain unchanged twelve days at the least, and are well calculated to remain on a stage eight or ten days longer ; but in prize flowers there should not be even one single faded pip. It ought to be known, that after the petals of a flower are completely expanded two or three days it very frequently improves with many sorts ; the pips get larger, and quite flat and level, and sometimes more lively in their colours. Each shew day should be so arranged as to be three clear days apart, at least, so as to allow you an opportunity to attend a little to your business or profession, as well as to pleasure.

I am sorry to say, that some of our best florists keep too few sorts, as well as too small a stock, which is the cause why they

and their visitors are so frequently disappointed in their expectations; and it very often happens that they lose a prize by being deficient in numbers; but when a person is determined, and cannot conveniently keep more than four or five sorts for the express purpose of exhibiting at subscription shews, let me advise him to keep ten or twelve blooming plants of each sort, say fifty, at least; I do not mean by this he is to keep fifteen plants of one sort, and only five of another. If you follow this plan, I am certain it will answer your expectations, as also gratify those who are admirers of the Auricula.

I shall now name a few leading shew flowers, or what will do for the time present; but finer new sorts may be raised from seed, and introduced as first-rate flowers in the course of five or six years—that is impossible for me to foresee—this I hope, that there will be some seedlings raised far superior to those I shall hereafter name. I remember to have seen a single bloom of a seedling, raised by a gentleman unknown to me, it is now named Chilcott's King—it is indeed the King of Auriculas—the ground colour is in the same stile as Cockup's Eclipse, of so much

renown for many years round London—and, in my opinion, as far as I could judge, it is ten to one before it in all respects ; the whole of the pips being very brilliant in their colour, even the middle pips have plenty of green edging, and the whole forms a superior truss of flowers ; and were I in possession of four or five strong healthy plants, I would engage to shew against any Cockup's Eclipse in England, for fifty guineas : this flower is to be met with in the neighbourhood of Islington, it being raised there ; also at Mr. Franklin's, who is a dealer in Auriculas and Carnations, and resides near the Shepherd and Shepherdess, City Road, Islington ; it is at present new and scarce, and but little known, being in very few hands. I should not do justice to Mr. Hedges, Florist, Hampstead, Middlesex, were I to omit mentioning to the reader his fine seedling, called Hedges' Britannia, a flower possessed of equally as fine properties, and as well calculated for prize shews as the former, but in quite a different stile—it is a truly rich and magnificent flower. Dyson's Queen is a fine variety, and reasonable ; if a stock of this sort is kept, you would find it occasionally to answer well your expectations ; it is to be met with, as also any other

sorts of Auriculas, Carnations, double Primroses; likewise the choicest sorts of Lancashire Gooseberries, at moderate prices, of Mr. Harry Thomas, Florist, Middleton, near Manchester, whom I always found an honourable man, as a dealer in flowers, during the sixteen or eighteen years I purchased of him.

The sorts, best calculated at present, are as under: I could name a few other fine old sorts, which I am sorry to say have been very much neglected, and are become scarce.

The Sorts best calculated for Prize Exhibitions.

Lee's Colonel Taylor,
 Grimes's Privateer,
 Gorton's Champion of England,
 Barlow's King,
 Yates's Lord Collingwood,
 Cockup's Eclipse,
 Metcalf's Lancashire Hero,
 Kenyon's Free Briton,
 Butterworth's Lord Hood,
 Chilcott's King,
 Hedges' Britannia,
 Foden's Fair Rosamond,
 Dyson's Queen.

It is requisite there should be an article in every society, to prevent any flower, or pair of flowers, being shewn a second time the same year for a prize, provided either one or both have been shewn at a public meeting, and won the first prize. This is the custom in Lancashire, and a good one, for by mere accident it may so happen that a florist has such a superior pair of flowers that season (and to which I have been an eye-witness) as to enable him to win all the first prizes at the ensuing shews, and deprive many, equally meritorious, of that *honour*; besides, it will have another good effect, it will oblige many florists to keep a larger stock, and probably a better assortment, than they otherwise would do, as also to be more choice of their old established plants.

*The best Time for Shewing around London,
will be nearly as under, viz.*

26th of April for the first,
29th of April for the second,
2d of May for the third,
5th or 6th of May for the fourth.

But if in the country, and where there is only one shew in or about that neighbourhood,

it should not be earlier than May-day, or on the 3d or 4th of May. You have no occasion to be apprehensive that your best flowers will be out of bloom, if placed in a shady situation, as I have before directed. At Middleton, near Manchester, the shew-day, in 1812, was fixed on the 8th of May; and many years ago there was a shew at Hornsey, Middlesex, as late as the 9th of May. Dulwich shew-day, in 1808, was on the 8th of May, and plenty of flowers were produced at this time.

The best Mode of conveying Flowers to the place of Exhibition.

When you convey the Auricula truss or blossoms to a distant place for exhibition, place a stick behind the truss in the same manner you would behind any other flower, draw the pips up very close together (do not be afraid) you will not injure them by so doing; after which place a small quantity of moss under the pips, and also a small bit round that part of the stem where the wet matting goes, to prevent its cutting or bruising. I beg to observe, the truss of flowers must be tied pretty firm and steady, for if the pips are a little loose, they will rub each other by travelling, and receive considerable injury; but

at this time it is requisite you should have assistance.

If you have not been accustomed to tie up flowers of this sort, it will be advisable for you to practice on two or three inferior ones a day or two before your intended journey, lest you should have an accident with the first-rate flower you intend to shew. So soon as you have arrived at the house appointed for the exhibition, take them into a cool room, and after you have *refreshed yourself* (which you will allow is no bad hint) take the next opportunity to clip the matting all round with a pair of sharp scissars, to liberate them; be careful in this last process: a little water also might serve to refresh them; place the pips handsomely with two very small slips of deal, and as near the form possible as they were before you tied them up, and in the course of two hours the pips (if a little relaxed) will have recovered, and become bold, firm, and stiff; but most likely they will have received no injury whatever in travelling. By this cautious method of packing, I do not recollect ever having had the slightest accident with my flowers, and I practised it for years.

The deal box was constructed to carry four pots, for fear of an accident; but as two

plants (one of each sort) are only required to be shewn, you can make your own election as to the number. The size of the deal box was from 18 to 20 inches high in the clear, on account of the pot being 8 inches high; it had four partitions, each of a size sufficiently large to hold a single pot, with a little spare room to admit some moss between for wedging the pot quite tight, with doors on each side to lock up; so that my flowers were always secure from being inspected before they were exhibited for the different prizes. By no means convey these flowers in a jockey, or what is called a taxed cart; an instance seldom occurred but that they received more or less injury in such a vehicle, and frequently could not be shewn at all. The best way to convey them is in the front of a single-horse chaise, placed between your knees, and it is most advisable to go at the rate of seven or eight miles an hour, at which pace the springs of the chaise would act more freely, and the flowers be less likely to shake than if you travelled at a slower rate. I have conveyed flowers in this expeditious manner for years to three or four annual shews without the slightest injury; as a proof of it, I carried the same flowers in this way to two different shews,

backwards and forwards, a distance of more than fifty miles; and have no doubt but the inside of a chariot, stage-coach, or on the roof of the same, or any other machine with good springs, will answer equally well.

Packing.

As these flowers, exchanged or purchased, must sometimes be conveyed from some distant part of the country, consequently they must remain out of the earth for some time, it will not be improper in this place to give particular directions for packing them up, a matter few people pay proper care and attention to, and in consequence often lose their best flowers, such as are not easily obtained again. If your plants are to be carried to a short distance, they may be taken in pots in a box or basket, with moss thrust in close between them; for this purpose, they may be conveyed in a cart or other carriage, where they will not be shaken. Plants sent from Lancashire or Yorkshire to London, or from the city of Norwich, or more distant parts, must be taken out of the pots, and wrapped up in stiff paper, with some choice dry moss carefully put about the roots, tying the same

round, but leaving the paper open at the head of the plant. Avoid bruising the leaves as much as possible ; if you bruise them they will grow rotten, and prove hurtful to the plants. Tie a small piece of parchment to each plant, on which write its name, otherwise a slip of deal, wetted with white paint, and written on with black lead pencil. After you have thus wrapped up the plants, place them in a box or basket, in such a manner as they press not one upon the other ; fill up all the hollow and vacant places in the box between the plants with rowen or aftermath hay, but dry moss is the best for this purpose. All sorts of green herbs and grass, which many persons use in packing, is almost sure destruction to them, if they continue any time on their journey. Nothing, therefore, is so good as rowen hay, if dry moss cannot be obtained ; but care must be taken to have it perfectly dry and fine.

I have already given directions how to plant and manage these roots when they come to hand, and in doing which no time should be lost.

Provided this Treatise meets with a liberal reception from the public, and an opportunity offers of publishing a second edition, I should most cheerfully receive, and would feel

very grateful, for any information respecting the treatment of this fine flower that any florist might be disposed to communicate. I have laid down every rule and observation that the experience and practice of many years have taught me, to be right in regard to its culture and management; and the experienced gardener may possibly here find hints worthy of his attention, and it is presumed that the young florist also may be sufficiently instructed. Should any one experience the same pleasure and satisfaction in cultivating this curious and beautiful flower the Author has done, he will neither think his money mis-spent, nor his time thrown away in the perusal of this Treatise.

FINIS.

CATALOGUE
OF
CHOICE SORTS OF AURICULAS,
AUGUST, 1815.

Grimes's Privateer
Gorton's Champion of England
Barlow's King
Chilcott's King
Brown's Mrs. Clark, a violet ground colour
Cluff's Defiance
Kenyon's Free Briton
Pollit's Highland Boy
Lee's Colonel Taylor
Foden's Fair Rosamond
Yates's Lord Collingwood
Buckley's Jolly Tar
Dyson's Queen
Butterworth's Lord Hood
Hedges' Britannia
Metcalf's Lancashire Hero
Poplewell's Conqueror

Hay's Lovely Ann, fine crimson ground colour, similar to Fair Rosamond
 Cockup's Eclipse
 Chilcott's Goliah
 Chilcott's Admiral Cotton
 Slater's Cheshire Hero
 Wild's Lord Bridport
 Foden's Victory
 Taylor's Lord Collingwood
 Scholey's Mrs. Clark
 Hughes's Lady Chatham
 Hughes's Pillar of Beauty
 Wrigley's Northern Hero
 Benbridge's Colonel Patterson
 Benbridge's Golden Fleece
 Benbridge's Fancy Bird
 Arden's Empress of Russia
 Partington's Sir Solomon
 Massey's Princess Royal
 Greig's Lord Wellington
 Miller's William Pitt
 Clegg's Lady of Honour
 Royle's Jolly Tar
 Thompson's Silver Edge
 Thompson's Lady Chatham
 Kenyon's Plantagenet
 Dean's Regulator
 Dean's Smoker

Severn's Fame
 Pott's Honest Quaker
 Gorton's Lord Hood
 Riding's Junius
 Lee's Bright Venus
 Barlow's Britannia
 Green's Enchanter
 Grimes's Hyder Ally
 Whitaker's Rule-all
 Taylor's Incomparable
 Clegg's Black and Green
 Holden's Loyalist
 Pearson's Duke of York
 Pott's Delegate of Manchester
 Townsend's Lady Duncan
 Barr's Darling
 Barr's Venus
 Rider's Recovery
 Pearson's Badajos

*Crimson, Purple, Yellow, and Yellow-shaded
 Self Colours.*

Grand Turk
 Archus Triumphalis
 Egyptienne
 Roi des Olives
 Bury's Lord Primate

Cardinal

Flora's Flag

Hebe, or Goddess of Youth

Redman's Metropolitan

Fraser's Seedling

The Bishop of Damascus

Merry's Pompadour, very fine

Benbridge's Lord Nelson, very fine

Benbridge's Bishop of Norwich, very fine

The three last named sorts are to be met with at Mr. Benbridge's, Florist, St. Catherine's, Norwich, and in the neighbourhood. His Lord Nelson and Bishop of Norwich are the finest Royal Purples in England.

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ff Bernard Quarles

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