

OUR BOOK SHELF.

Le Chrysantheme a la Grande Fleur.

By A. Cordonnier (pp. 140, illustrated.)

To those of our readers who command the French language, the volume of which the title is given above, will be most welcome. The author, Mr. Anatole Cordonnier, of Bailleul, France, is one of the most distinguished members in, and the pioneer of the cult of the Chrysanthemum of to-day in France, and in the volume before us he recounts in a most delightful manner the actual work of growing the plants in all the various sections and styles; his standpoint is a purely practical one and presents the case of the Chrysanthemum, past and present, in France, as it has never before been done.

Up to ten years ago the French did not accord any favor to this "coarse, vulgar" flower, but to-day all is changed! Our author quotes the opinion of a Parisian florist in 1886 to the effect that the flower is only good for cemeteries and has seen its best day!

A comparison between the methods of awarding certificates to novelties is very much in favor of that adopted by our American Society, in that it demands six blooms, with stems of 18 inches, to be shown. The author comments thus:

"This regulation of the Floral Committee of the American Chrysanthemum Society exercises indirectly a considerable influence on the quality of the cuttings of the novelties introduced by the American growers. It is necessary in order to produce these six big flowers to have at least one year of propagation and supplementary testing. Thus not only is all temptation to introduce valueless sorts nipped in the bud, but the quantity of stock plants being more considerable, there is no necessity to an exaggerated propagation, and forcing and allowing the delivery in the first year of cuttings quite vigorous enough to grow the novelty in its perfection; that is to say, with big flowers."

While this argument is very true, it should also be remembered that the fee of \$2.00 demanded by our Society before it will examine a new seedling is another and perhaps stronger deterrent to the submission of worthless novelties. Again the propagation of the Chrysanthemum is a far easier matter in this country.

The whole tenor of the volume is to raise the standard of merit in introductions. In diction and in style the book is most charming, and is the most fascinating contribution to the literature of the golden flower that we have yet read, despite its continual puff of a certain special fertilizer for sale by the author.

As in all European works on the subject much attention is given to taking the bud, and the peculiarities of varieties in that respect. In conclusion we give the summary of the art of Chrysanthemum culture:

1st. Good cuttings, the foundation of the building.

2d. Food which can be well assimilated.

3d. Good general treatment.

Familiar Trees and Their Leaves.

By F. Schuyler Mathews, pp. 320 illustrated; price \$1.75. (New York, D. Appleton & Co.)

This volume is a companion to, and is constructed upon the same lines as the author's Familiar Flowers of Field and Garden, and inasmuch as it is a popular handbook to the trees around us will serve its purpose to those who desire, just for curiosity's sake, to know the name of a nearby tree, and also a few general facts connected with it. The excellent illustrations of leaves are from pen and ink sketches by the author. As in the companion book the

various illustrations have no relation to each other in size, and dimensions are frequently omitted from the text which is a most unfortunate fact. In an easy flowing style we are told many simple facts concerning the various trees or shrubs, and from a perusal of such works many a one has doubtless been led into the study more seriously; we must not disparage the stepping stones. Prof. L. H. Bailey has penned an introduction in which he makes an apology for the method of treatment. This is quite unnecessary as no pretence is made to any but a popular guide along popular and obvious lines—the leaf form—by one who loves nature and her effects, and who regards the trees, the plants around as components of a beautiful picture. The appreciation of nature is often based upon such a statement but without initiation the reason is lost. The book helps all such to a reasoning appreciation of tree and leaf types, in short the objects are treated in their relation to each other as they are seen by the most casual observer.