

Mrs. David Syme, included by Messrs. Wells. This variety secured an award of merit. Mr. P. Ladds also won an award with the "single" Isabel Grey, a large flower in which the bronze ground is lightly covered towards the centre with a sheen of purple.

WINTER CARNATIONS.

The winter show of the Perpetual Flowering Carnation Society was held in the Royal Botanic Gardens, London, on the 6th December.

In the open section the prizes, with only one or two exceptions, were all won by trade growers. The best British novelties introduced since January 1, 1909, were Coronation, Judith, and Constance shown by Mr. Bertie Bell (Guernsey). Mr. W. E. Wallace (Eaton Bray) won the challenge cup for American novelties with Gloriosa, May Day, and Scarlet Glow. Mrs. D. M. Collins (Swanley) had the best white in White Perfection. Mr. B. Bell showed Mrs. C. W. Waud, the best of the Lawson colour, and Mr. Dutton (Ivert) staged Mikado, the best in the class for other selfs.

The open class for registered varieties not yet in commerce was won by Mr. Wallace's Una and Mr. Bell's Coronation. Awards of merit were also made to these varieties, as well as to the Geisha, from Mr. Fairbanks (Carlisle), a slaty purple flower similar to Mikado. Of the American novelties shown White Wonder secured a first-class certificate and Gloriosa an award of merit. For trade displays the Society's large gold medal was awarded to Mr. Engelmann (Saffron Walden), and the gold medal to Messrs. Stuart Low (Bash Hill Park).

HOW TO SAFELY RAISE VERY FINE SEEDS.

Here is a "wrinkle" for your readers who grow petunias from seed. The trouble with raising petunia seed, especially in hot weather, is the constant

centage result. I, therefore, cast about for some more (I was nearly saying "fool proof") perfect system, and eventually proved the following to be a safe and reliable plan:—

In making up the seed pan of sifted soil, put a layer ½ in thick of sphagnum moss near the surface, and cover with about ½ in or 1 in of soil; sow the seed, begonia, petunia, etc., on the surface, leaving a hole about 1 in over and 2 in across, into which rain water can be poured, and the moss well soaked as often as required; this keeps the top layer of soil constantly moist without any other watering until the majority of the seeds have made the first pair of leaves and struck a root down; after that it is an advantage to spray overhead and still lightly water the moss.

Since adopting this plan I've had very satisfactory results, and a very much greater percentage of seedlings.

—F. Caley Smith.

PENTSTEMONS.

Rapid strides have been made during the past few years in the development of this charming perennial, and it is a subject well worthy of the attention which the hybridiser has bestowed upon it. One fails to recognise the Pentstemon of twenty years ago in the present-day race.

Most of the garden varieties have evolved from Pentstemon Hartwegi and P. Cobaea, and they provide a range of colours and shades to suit all tastes, varying from the purest of whites and most delicate of rose shades to the deepest of crimson, purple, and carmine.

Their propagation is simple, and may be effected either from seeds, cuttings, or division of the roots. The latter method of increasing the stock is not to be recommended, the best results being obtained from cuttings. Early in March is the best time to take them, and they should be inserted under hand-glasses in a good, sandy bed. Dibble them in firmly, and let them be well watered with a heavy rose, to avoid leaving a space between the base of the cutting and the soil beneath, the latter state of things inevitably resulting in failure.

SWEET PEAS.

Mr. John A. Grigor, a great sweet pea prize-winner, is not a supporter of the deep-trenching theory. His soil is light sandy loam, with pure sand as a subsoil. He takes out a trench 18 in deep and wide. He puts a layer of farmyard manure in the bottom and treads and packs it very firm. He then takes turf that has been stacked for a time, chops

endula) pluvialis, the old Cape Marigold. The first cross was made in 1906, and produced three hybrids, namely, a pure satiny white with yellow on reverse of petals, an ivory white, and a lemon-coloured variety.

Seeds sown since then have given further beautiful range of colours. These Dimorphothea hybrids must be classed as half-hardy annuals. The habit of growth, foliage, and height of the plant (12 inches to 15 inches), also the size



A FAMOUS GROWER AMONG THE TULIPS IN HOLLAND.

The well-known figure of Mr Robert Sydenham, who has done so much for daffodils and other bulbs, will be recognised in the foreground.

it up roughly, and to every five barrow-fuls adds one of farmyard manure and a 7 in potful of basic slag and thoroughly mixes the whole together. He fills the trench to within 3 in of the top, treading very firmly. For the top layer he chops the turf finer, and to every five barrow-loads he adds one of well-rotted manure and a 7 in potful of soot. He firms it with the back of a digging fork in the trench, and that completes the trenches. (These are some practical hints by a remarkable grower.—"The Gardener.")

of the flowers (2½ inches to 2½ inches across), resemble the parent D. aurantiaca. seeds sown in spring produce plants which commence blooming in summer, and go on flowering for a very long period. As pot plants, these Dimorphotheas will be greatly appreciated in the cool greenhouse for their elegant growth and the great abundance of attractive flowers that they produce. Under glass the flowers develop to a larger size than in the open.

During the past summer, when most of the other annuals were scorched up, D. aurantiaca was giving us a rare display of its brilliant flowers, and if these new hybrids prove as useful as this parent, we predict a great future for them. Indeed, they promise fair to occupy the same position among annuals as the beautiful Gerbera hybrids do among herbaceous plants, with the additional merit that they are easy to cultivate successfully.

RHUS POISONING THROUGH BEE STINGS.

Quite an epidemic of a peculiar form of "rhus" poisoning is at present going the round in Wanganui. In cases that have received medical treatment this poisoning has always followed a sting from a bee, in several instances the part stung swelling very quickly, and causing a good deal of pain. The inference drawn as to the cause is that, at this time of the year, the rhus lotmus (smoke plant) is in flower, and, the tree being very poisonous, the bees, in collecting their pollen, gather a certain amount of the poison, which makes them very vicious, and accounts for their unnatural energy in attacking people. The shrub that is the cause of all the trouble is a well-known and very popular ornamental tree.

CHRYSANTHEMUMS.

The following varieties were put before the Floral Committee of the National Chrysanthemum Society at the Crystal Palace, London:—

Mrs Percy E. Wiseman (incurved), primrose sport from the variety Mrs J. B. Bryce, exhibited by Mr P. E. Wiseman.—First-class certificate.

Mrs Andrew Walker, coppery crimson sport from the well-known decorative, Freda Bedford.—First-class certificate.

Miss Margaret Walker, single, a huge orange and gold flower.—First-class certificate.

The two above varieties from Messrs Wells and Co., Merstham.

Heston Bronze, decorative, a rich bronze terra cotta.—First-class certificate.

Billie, single, large yellow.—First-class certificate.

The above from Messrs Cragg, Harrison and Cragg, Heston, Middlesex.

Caterham Bronze, single medium size flower, rich bronze with a green eye.—First-class certificate, Mr F. Brazier, Caterham.

Charles Dickens, single, a large rich yellow flower, best described as a yellow Mona.—Mr N. Davis, Framfield, First-class certificate.

R. G. Buzze, single, pure white, a large flower, broad florets, from Mr Philip Ladds, Swanley.—First-class certificate.

Mrs John Freed, single, a large bright



A FIELD OF TULIPS IN HOLLAND, WHERE THEY RAISE THEM BY THE ACRE.

attention in watering to prevent the tiny plants from shrivelling up. If the plan of covering the seeds with sifted soil is pursued, the trouble is overdoing it, and smothering them. I prefer to sow on the surface and not cover, except with a sheet of glass and a sheet of paper over that, taking the paper off when germination has well started, and the glass two or three days later. I used a fine spray, an "Aldi" brass hand spray, which I found particularly good. Notwithstanding all my precautions, however, a batch of seed could be neglected by one of my employees, and sprang up, or the spray would be carelessly used, and the seed driven all to the side of the pan, and either washed over or covered over, and a poor per-

When raised from seed the latter should be sown in September in the greenhouse or under hand-glasses, and when the seedlings are big enough to handle they should be potted off into 3-in pots, and placed in a cold frame until planted out.

A few of the strongest seedlings will bloom the first year, but one must not expect much until the second season, when a good show of flowers may be looked for. Where no greenhouse is available, the seed may be sown in the open ground during October and November. Pentstemons like a sandy loam, with which has been incorporated plenty of well-decomposed manure, and they are subjects which repay the trouble of liberal manuring. Above all, as before intimated, the soil must be well drained.

NEW HYBRIDS OF DIMORPHO-

THECA AURANTIACA.

Those who are familiar with the beautiful orange-coloured flowers of Dimorphothea aurantiaca, a half-hardy annual introduced into England a few years ago by Messrs Barr and Sons from South Africa, and which is known to many under the popular name of the Namaqualand Daisy, will welcome the new hybrids.

These hybrids have been put into commerce by Messrs Hiazze and Schmidt of Erfurt, and seeds of the same are being distributed by Messrs Barr and Sons, of Covent Garden and Taplow. These hybrids are the result of a cross between Dimorphothea aurantiaca and D. (Cal-