

LIFE IN THE GARDEN

Official Organ of the New Zealand Sweet Pea Society and Auckland Horticultural Society.
By Veronica.

All communications for "Veronica" should be addressed to "Graphic" Office, Auckland. Secretaries of Horticultural Societies are invited to send short reports of their proceedings, and also any items of interest to Horticulturists. Photographs of Flowers, Fruits or New Vegetables, or Garden Scenes, will be welcomed.

HORTICULTURAL NOTES.

AN esteemed correspondent sends us a leaf of "Sir Francis Drake" daffodil which he tells us he imported last October. The leaf measures exactly twenty-four inches in length. Evidently this variety is a very vigorous grower and we shall be pleased to learn what the blooms are like.

Sir Francis Drake is one of Kendall's raising. It is a yellow trumpet, and this raiser has the proud distinction of giving us King Alfred.

The late heavy rains should give daffodils a good chance of making root growth, so essential to first-class blooms, and we look forward hopefully to a fine display in early spring.

Immediate attention must be given to the preparation of rose beds where this important matter has been neglected or overlooked. Deep digging or trenching, leaving the soil turned up to the elements until ready for the plants, is of first importance in securing a good crop of blooms.

Fruit trees and roses which we have seen in nursery rows in the Dominion are a fine healthy lot and should give satisfaction to our intending planters. There appears no sufficient reason why we should import such from Australia when our own nurserymen want the trade and can do it well.

People who require a good supply of spring flowers should not overlook the early-flowering Gladioli. Such varieties as The Bride are splendid for cutting and last well in water. They are also cheap and easily grown.

The new purple leaved Single Dahlia appears to be a good novelty. It is quite distinct in foliage and flower from other singles, has long, stiff, fairly erect stems, and the dark crimson flowers have much more substance than any other. These are not so large as some singles, but are much more lasting, and in addition it comes true from seed.

The large flowered or Mammoth Single Dahlia certainly has enormous blooms, but they are "floppy" and altogether so lacking in substance and make one doubt whether they are worth the attention or trouble to grow, unless for mere size.

ZONAL PELARGONIUMS OR GERANIUMS.

GROWN AS SPECIMENS.

The art of growing specimen plants of Geraniums was once a very popular mode of growing or training these plants for the exhibition bench. We can remember amateurs in the Old Land finding immense satisfaction in this art, but we cannot call to mind having observed anything approaching it in this Dominion. We give an illustration of one method for which we are indebted to the "Gardener's Magazine." Besides this method, what we may term the flat system is often adopted. Either plan is easily carried out by building a framework according to the desired shape. This is composed of small stakes and wire. Then the shoots as they grow are tied out or up and pinched till the desired effect is secured. During this period the plants should have all flowers pinched out, and then when the gaps are all filled with shoots you will have a grand display of blooming Bronze and Tricolor Geraniums also make a fine show on the flat system. These are not allowed to bloom, but the fine foliage has a much deeper and more decided colouring.

DAFFODIL NOTES.

To anyone visiting Vincent Square last month it was obvious that another Daffodil season had begun in reality. A white-bearded gentleman who must well remember pre-daffodil days was standing beside me looking at the new lovely soft yellow-coloured St. David on Mr. C. Bourne's stand when, after a moment's pause, he unexpectedly exclaimed "When are they going to end?" We both agreed we did not think it

imagine that we saw Castile through a magnifying glass which not only enlarged perianth and cup but also had the power of brightening the dull red of the latter, we would get as a result something like Robespierre, which stood out as the most conspicuous flower in Mr. A. M. Wilson's group. Its brilliant red orange cup is a very attractive bit of colour, and it richly deserved the award of merit which was bestowed upon it. It has a 4-inch perianth and the cup is at least 1½ inches across. I ought to mention that there is only one bulb

of its solid red eye, is a good strong grower and "the earliest of all the reds and whites. Perianth, 2½ inches, and eye three-quarters of an inch in diameter. All the foregoing were exhibited by Mr. Wilson.

Messrs. Barr and Sons' display, which was awarded a silver-gilt Flora medal, had many single specimens of new trumpets of varying degrees of excellence. As there were two flowers of the famous Michael there, one was able to make comparisons. Cyrus appealed to me very much. It certainly has a look of Michael



NARCISSUS 'RUBALITE'.

A beautiful new poeaz variety, with large, rounded, white flowers, each with a rich orange-erimson crown. A.M., R.I.S., March 19. Mr. A. M. Wilson, Shovel, Bridgwater.

would be in the lifetime of either of us. Year by year the tide of seedlings flows stronger and stronger, and as each season passes, along the high-water mark we find new and uncommon forms and colours.

A Striking Novelty.—Perhaps the most striking one was the Ajax on Mr. Engleheart's stand with a pale warm pink trumpet and ivory perianth. Diameter of perianth, 3½ inches; trumpet, 1½ inches long by 1½ inches at the mouth. One of its ancestors was albicans, and by working on this with appropriate pollen, "Engleheart's Pink, as I should like the flower to be called, was evolved. It may be remembered that Mr. Adams, of Wolverhampton exhibited a somewhat similar break last year which had been "made in Holland."

Daffodils to Remember.—If one could

for sale, and that is priced at £20. Rubalite, from the same collection, also obtained a similar award. It is a glorious Poeaz of large size. As a rule, there seem to be two flowers only in a truss, which, I think, rather detracts from its appearance. It has a white perianth and an all-red eye. Gyrifalcon is a peculiarly taking giant Leedsii, "quite a show flower." Size: Perianth, 3½ inches; cup, 1½ inches long and 1½ inches wide. Its perianth is slightly campanulate, and each of its segments is formed on the spade or pattern; but its chief charm is the delicate suggestion of green, which is apparent throughout the whole flower. Genone is one of the old-fashioned Leedsis, almost a self. Its shade is difficult to describe. To me, green (à la blue) skim milk suggests what I mean. Sealing Wax, so named because

about it, and it is much the same in size, but with a much less campanulate perianth. It failed in that it lacked that rich smoothness of texture which is the older flower's special characteristic. King Arthur was another good yellow, and Atlas was a large bi-colour, 4½ inches across the perianth and with a two-inch long trumpet conspicuously recurved at the mouth. Those who dislike violent contrasts, such as we get in Empress, will like this bloom.

As I am confining these notes to the newest of the new, I will only mention Volcano before I pass on to Mr. Bourne's flowers. Volcano is the best of the Cape-hill doubles, in that it is quite symmetrical in form and the colour contrast is good and well proportioned, the red bits peeping up among the deep yellow being "just about right."