

HORTICULTURAL NOTES.

Euphorbia pulcherrima or, as it is commonly called, Poinsettia pulcherrima is a plant frequently met with in the East. Its beauty does not so much reside in the flowers as in the bracts with which they are surrounded. It may be successfully grown in tubs or large pots, and small plants are admirably adapted for table decoration.

Owing to the amount of latex which exudes when a shoot is cut, the propagation of this plant is attended with considerable difficulty. It is practically useless to attempt to strike newly made cuttings, as the greater percentage will shrivel and die. Cuttings of Poinsettia, and this applies to many other laticiferous plants, require to be slightly dried before they are inserted. Remove the shoots which can be spared from a plant and allow them to lie for about a fortnight in a shady, dry situation. The soft, sappy, useless shoots will immediately shrivel but the firmer wood at the base of the shoots remains sound. At the end of about a fortnight cuttings can be made and inserted in pots.

The size of the cuttings should be about four inches and it is essential that the base of the cutting be cut slightly below a node or bud, *i.e.*, where the stem is solid. The internodes or other parts of the stem are hollow and the shoot has generally to rot away until a solid piece of stem is reached. As may readily be imagined it is a matter of considerable difficulty to arrest the growth of this rot.

Insert the cuttings in six inch pots using a sandy compost. Cuttings root much more readily when placed round the side of a pot so that only four or five should be inserted round the side of the above mentioned size of pot. Until the cuttings are rooted, the soil requires to be kept slightly drier than is usually the case with other plants. Pot off singly into small pots and provide the same treatment afforded other plants of a like nature.

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