

"Woolwich and Birmingham? Yet in no two of these districts do the same varieties attain an equal degree of excellence, although each may be receiving the attention of the most skilful cultivators." The same writer then recommends every cultivator to keep five different kinds of soil and manure, "and to endeavour to suit the respective appetites of the plants you are dealing with, for without such attention all hope of general success will be vain." So it is with the Dahlia³: the Lady Cooper rarely succeeds near London, but does admirably in other districts; the reverse holds good with other varieties; and again, there are others which succeed equally well in various situations. A skilful gardener⁴ states that he procured cuttings of an old and well-known variety (pulchella) of Verbena, which from having been propagated in a different situation presented a slightly different shade of colour; the two varieties were afterwards multiplied by cuttings, being carefully kept distinct; but in the second year they could hardly be distinguished, and in the third year no one could distinguish them.

The nature of the season has an especial influence on certain varieties of the Dahlia: in 1841 two varieties were pre-eminently good, and the next year these same two were pre-eminently bad. A famous amateur⁵ asserts that in 1861 many varieties of the Rose came so untrue in character, "that it was hardly possible to recognise them, and the thought was not seldom entertained that the grower had lost his tally." The same amateur⁶ states that in 1862 two-thirds of his Auriculas produced central trusses of flowers, and such trusses are liable not to keep true; and he adds that in some seasons certain varieties of this plant all prove good, and the next season all prove bad; whilst exactly the reverse happens with other varieties. In 1845 the editor of the 'Gardener's Chronicle'⁷ remarked how singular it was that this year many Calceolarias tended to assume a tubular form. With Heartsease⁸ the blotched sorts do not acquire their proper character until hot weather sets in; whilst other varieties lose their beautiful marks as soon as this occurs.

Analogous facts have been observed with leaves: Mr. Beaton asserts⁹ that he raised at Shrubland, during six years, twenty thousand seedlings from the Punch Pelargonium, and not one had variegated leaves; but at Surbiton, in Surrey, one-third, or even a greater proportion, of the seedlings from this same variety were more or less variegated. The soil of another district in Surrey has a strong tendency to cause variegation, as appears from information given me by Sir F. Pollock. Verlot¹⁰ states that the variegated strawberry

* Mr. Wildman, 'Floricultural Soc.,' Feb. 7, 1843, reported in 'Gard. Chron.,' 1843, p. 86.

⁴ Mr. Robson, in 'Journal of Horticulture,' Feb. 13th, 1866, p. 122.

⁵ 'Journal of Horticulture,' 1861, p. 24.

⁶ Ibid., 1862, p. 83.

⁷ 'Gard. Chron.,' 1845, p. 660.

⁸ Ibid., 1863, p. 628.

⁹ 'Journal of Hort.,' 1861, pp. 64, 309.

¹⁰ 'Des Variétés,' &c., p. 76.