

NOTES ON ORCHIDS CULTIVATED IN CEYLON

DENDROBIUM DALHOUSIEANUM WALL.

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A semi-deciduous epiphyte of North India which appears to have been introduced into Ceylon about 1881.

It has fairly stout stems often attaining a height of six feet or more. The leaf sheath that embraces the stem is elegantly marked with reddish crimson lines in the early stages of growth, and with age the pseudo-bulbs become rather woody and the markings disappear.

The leaves are dark-green, lance-shaped, broad and about six inches long. The flower spikes are produced near the apex of the mature pseudo-bulbs, each raceme often bearing as many as twelve or fifteen flowers, which are large, fully five inches across, and strikingly effective. The petals and sepals are of a pale-lemon colour with rosy veins which are rather conspicuous at the margins. The broad oblong lip is constricted in the middle and incurved in front where it is downy, the base is yellowish, streaked with crimson veins and marked on each side with a large oblong purple-crimson blotch. The flowers do not remain fresh for more than eight to ten days at the most.

Culture.—The plant is propagated by divisions of the root-stock or by plants produced on the old mature pseudo-bulbs. It is best not to disturb the old clump by division if regular flowering is desired, as any divisions removed from the clump mean a check on the parent plant and prevent flowering for one season or more. Suckers or plants produced on the stem may be allowed to develop roots on a ball of fibre or moss before being separated from the parent.

Owing to free and vigorous root action of this plant a fairly large size pot, larger than those ordinarily used for orchids should be provided, if the best results are to be obtained.

The ordinary compost used for Dendrobiums will suit this plant very well. A fully established plant will thrive even under the full force of the tropical sun.