

Green 'n Growing

Keeping plants merry

By ELAINE GORDON

Flowering plants are always beautiful to give and so nice to receive. Grey, wintry days can't help but be brightened by the sight of their springtime colors.

Gloxinias have rich and velvety, bell-shaped flowers. Be sure to choose a plant that is loaded with buds showing color so enjoyment of the large, exotic blooms is prolonged.

Give curtain-filtered sunlight, humidity, monthly fertilizing while growing and evenly moist soil that's allowed to dry slightly (never completely) before re-watering. Do try to keep water off the foliage. It's happy in normal room temperatures.

When this beauty is through flowering, don't toss it away. Instead, try your hand at restarting it. Gradually reduce watering until the plant is dry and then store the pot in the basement for several months. Repot the "bulb" in fresh soil, resume care with light and water... and wait.

Christmas Peppers and Jerusalem Cherries need evenly moist soil and a draft-free, very bright location with raised humidity. You might stand the pots on saucers of moist pebbles. Watch out for the cherry-like fruits of the latter...they're toxic.

Cyclamens have heart-shaped, silver-marbled leaves and delicate looking flowers that will retain their splendor longer if kept in a cool, not chilly, room with bright light. Fertilize at half-strength every two weeks when in bloom.

They dislike exposure to drafts and heat sources, but do like humid air and uniformly moist soil. Allow the soil to dry slightly before rewatering and carefully avoid the foliage, flowers or corm (base of the plant's stem) getting wet. You might find it helpful to bottom water or to apply moisture just inside the pot rim.

To discourage rot, once a leaf or flower has yellowed, pull the stalk away from the corm with a gentle twist or tug.

Helpful Hints

Houseplant cuttings are always nice to receive. Place in a pretty container or use a plain green pot with a paper doily wrapped around it and tie with ribbon.

The recipient of a present is sure to welcome the added touch of seeds from a plant they've admired in your garden. Just place the seeds in a small packet, along with planting know-how and attach to a bright bow. They could staple or tape the seed packet to the approximate planting month on their calendar as a reminder.

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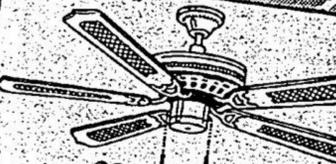
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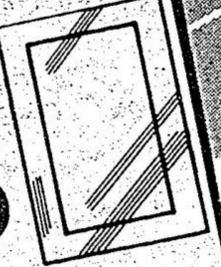
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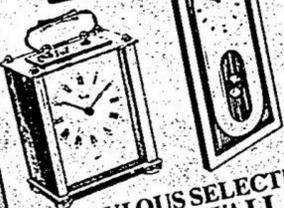
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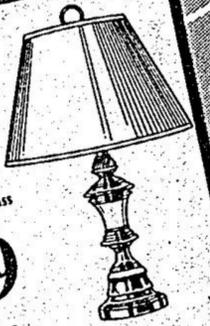
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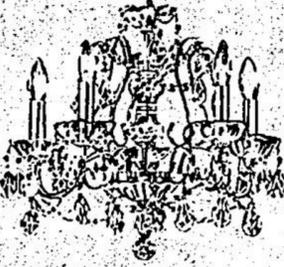
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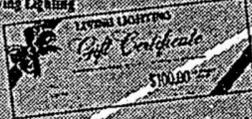
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SPECIAL BUYS! Wrap Robes
Page 35 — Item "B" Eaton Vanity Fair Woven cotton terry robe. The copy is incorrect and SHOULD READ: EATON LABEL WOVEN COTTON TERRY ROBE

Inadvertently, the error listed above has appeared in our advertising. We sincerely regret any inconvenience or confusion to our customers.

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