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THE BUDDING OF ROSES
By C. C. HILLARY.

I DO not know of any phase of rose culture that holds more interest for the amateur than the raising of rose plants by the method known as budding. To grow one's own stocks, bud them, and then watch the young roses grow to maturity provides an interest so absorbing that few can resist it.

Fortunately, budding is quite a simple operation and there is no reason why anyone who cares to observe a few simple rules should not be successful.

Perhaps the most important of these rules relates to the flow of sap, both in the stocks to be budded and the bushes from which the buds are to be taken. This must be free and plentiful and, unless it is, the operation is not likely to be successful. To ensure that the sap-flow is plentiful, both stocks and rose bushes should be very heavily watered on two or three successive days immediately before the budding is carried out.

Another point worth remembering is that budding is always more successful when done on hot days than cold ones. The reason for this is that the sap-flow is greater on hot days, because on hot days transpiration through the foliage is greater, and in order to make good the loss of moisture, the flow of sap through the plant is considerably increased.
In this State, the best stock for roses is Fortuneana. It grows quickly, vigorously and almost continuously, is very suitable for all types of soil, especially those of a sandy nature, and is a compatible stock for all kinds of hybrid tea and floribunda roses. No other stock is so well suited to Western Australian conditions and nobody should waste money buying roses budded on other stocks.

Fortuneana stocks required for budding should be planted at the beginning of June. The "strike" is invariably higher with cuttings planted then than it is with those planted later in the year. June-planted cuttings should be well enough grown for budding in November and December. If they do not appear to be making satisfactory growth by the middle of October, they should be helped along with an application of fertiliser, such as potato manure (E).

Having established the stocks, the most important thing then is the selection of suitable buds (scions) for budding. These should be taken only from plants which are typical of the variety and have given a good performance in the garden. Buds should never be taken from a rose bush which has not grown well, nor from one that seems prone to disease. In my own garden, it is customary to mark those bushes which consistently produce good flowers and these only are used for providing bud-wood.

The most suitable shoots from which the buds should be taken are those of average size that flowered a day or so prior to being required for budding. The best buds are those situated in the middle of the shoots. Those near the top of the shoot are nearly always too far advanced, while those at the base are usually so dormant that they take an exceptionally long time to break into growth—sometimes never do. A test for the right condition at which to take the buds is when the thorns snap off easily, leaving a damp green patch underneath.

It is important that the buds should be kept fresh and plump from the time the shoot is cut from the rose bush until the buds are removed and inserted in the stocks. The leaves should be cut off immediately, leaving only the stem of each leaf, attached to the bud wood. These stems serve as handles when the buds are being inserted in the stocks. If the buds are not to be used immediately, then the shoot or bud-wood as it is usually called, should have its lower end placed in a tin of water.

Budding can be done with any sharp pocket knife, though a proper budding knife is better for the purpose. Budding knives have handles made with tapered ends so that they can be used for lifting the bark of the T shaped cut made on the stock.

The budding of the stocks should be done as close to the ground as possible. It will make the work easier if a little of the soil is scraped away from around the stock. To ensure a clean stock, it should be wiped with a piece of damp flannel before being budded.

The first step in the actual budding of roses is to make a T shaped cut in the bark of the stock. Do not cut deeply but merely through the bark. Make the cross cut first and then downward cut (see Figure 1). Then with the handle of the budding knife prise open the flaps of bark formed on each side of the T. If the bark does not lift easily, the stock is not ready for budding. (See Figure 2.)

The next step is to remove the bud from the bud-wood and this is done by making a slanting cut, starting about half an inch below the bud and coming out about half an inch above it (see Figure 3). The thin sliver of wood at the back of the bud should then be removed. This is best done by holding the bud by the leaf stalk in one hand and prising off the wood with the blade of the budding knife and the assistance of a finger of the other hand.

The bud is now ready for placing in the stock. With the handle of the budding knife, prise open the bark of the T cut and, grasping the bud by the small piece of leaf stalk, slip it in from the top, pushing it down as far as it will go (see Figure 4). Cut off any portion of the shield remaining above the T incision and then tie the bud in with raffia. (See Figure 5.) The raffia should be soaked in water and then wrung out before being used. Commence winding the raffia from the bottom; do not cover the actual bud, and finish with an ordinary half-hitch at the top.
You can tell within a fortnight if the buds have taken. If they remain greenish in colour, and the small piece of leaf stalk falls away easily when touched, the budding is successful. Some three weeks later, it is advisable to loosen the raffia ties by undoing them and tying them on loosely again.

Some buds will grow away within two, three or four weeks; others will remain dormant until the following spring when the tops of the stocks should be cut off about one inch above the bud. If the growth made from the bud is vigorous and heavy, it is advisable to secure it to a light stake to prevent it being blown out of the stock by the wind. It must be remembered that the union of the bud with the stock is not very strong during the early days of growth, but it strengthens rapidly.

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