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## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY: Wednesday, 9th April, 7 p.m. at 34 Fitzroy Square, W.1. Monthly meeting followed by talk on "Behind the Scenes with British Airways" (illustrated) by Mr. T. M. Scott-Chard.

NOUVELLE SOCIETE HELVETIQUE: Thursday, 17th April, 7 p.m., Swiss Hostel for Girls, 9 Belsize Grove N.W.3. Open Meeting. Talk on "Experiences of a Swiss in India" by Mr. Paul A. Ramseyer, First Secretary of Embassy in charge of Press, Legal and Tax Affairs. All Swiss and their friends welcome.

SWISS PHILATELIC SOCIETY: Wednesday, 30th April: Monthly Meeting followed by Auction. Wednesday, 28th May: Annual General Meeting.

FEDERATION OF SWISS SOCIETIES IN THE UK: Annual General Meeting on 2nd May at the Swiss Embassy.

SWISS BENEVOLENT SOCIETY: Annual General Meeting on Monday, 7th April at 6.30 p.m. at 34 Fitzroy Square.

SWISS CLUB LIVERPOOL: Jazz Evening on 1st Thursday of the month at 8 p.m. at the Dresden Hotel, Bromborough.

SWISS RIFLE ASSOCIATION: Annual General Meeting on Thursday, 10th April at 7.30 for 8 p.m. at the St. Moritz Club, 55 Wardour Street.

CITY SWISS CLUB: Annual General Meeting on Tuesday, 15th April.

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# FOR THE GARDENER

GLADIOLUS



Gladiolus (*Liliaceae*)

Grown in the garden, the soil should be deeply dug and manure or compost worked into the bottom 12 inches. A good open soil is preferred and this can be obtained by mixing a quantity of sand with the soil. Planting can be done in succession from the second week in March and can be carried on into the second week of May, at fortnightly intervals. By doing this you will get a continuity of flowers over a long period.

The gladiolus is normally grown from a corm (much like a bulb) in the garden, planting should be at a depth of 6 inches, this, unless show varieties are required, will be sufficient to obviate staking. These flowers are best grown in groups, rather than being dotted singly along a border. It is suggested that 6 inches between corms when planted will give good results. If your soil is inclined to be on the heavy side, a small quantity of sand under each corm will prove beneficial.

These plants can also be grown from seed without undue trouble. The seeds should be sown in drills 6 inches apart and covered with about  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch of mixed sifted soil and sand. The plantlets appear very much like wisps of grass. Leave in position until the autumn when the corms which have formed should be lifted and stored in a cool, dry frost-proof place. When planted in the following season they will possibly flower.

When plants have flowered they should be left in position to die down naturally, then lift and store after cleaning in similar conditions as mentioned in previous paragraph. When lifting, several small bubbles will be found around the main corm, these can be rubbed off and stored until the following season when they can be planted and grown on for two years until they have formed full flowering corms.

# TECHNICAL ITEMS

## SWISS FIRM BUILDS LARGEST IMPULSE VOLTAGE GENERATOR IN THE WORLD

A company in Basle (Switzerland) has just built the largest impulse voltage generator in the world. Capable of producing 5.6 million volts, it will be used for research work in the field of future transmission networks of 1200 and 1500 kV by the Bonneville Power Administration in Portland (Oregon) on the west coast of the United States. A multiplying circuit supplies the output voltage of 5.6 million volts. The capacitor stacks superimposed on the stages are charged in parallel at 200 kV by a DC voltage source. These capacitors are then discharged in parallel by the controlled firing of the coupling spark-gaps, thus generating output voltages of a few million volts depending on the number of stages used. Research work in the field of ultra-high voltages requires very great flexibility of the impulse voltage test plant regarding the wave form of the impulses. The impulse generator designed by the Swiss firm produces impulses with front durations from 1.2 to 1000 millionths of a second and times to half-value from 50 to 10,000 millionths. All the coupling elements required for the various wave shapes are placed in the generator stages and are easily accessible by means of ladders and service platforms.

## SUCCESS OF SITEX

SITEX, the Swiss Industrial Technology Exhibition, which was held in Peking last August, was a tremendous success. Over 150,000 Chinese specialists, including some 10,000 engineers, technicians and scientists, visited this exhibition, which was not open to the general public. The leading products displayed by the 200 Swiss export firms taking part in the event represented a total value of 40 million francs. They consisted mainly of machine tools, watches, chemical products and foodstuffs, electrical machinery, textile machinery and machinery for the graphic arts, as well as instruments and appliances, etc. The number of commercial transactions and negotiations, which are expected to continue for several weeks after the exhibition, had already reached the figure of 480 by the closing date. The events organised within the framework of the exhibition also met with great success: large numbers of visitors, for example, took part in the many technical symposiums as well as attending the showing of industrial and documentary films on Switzerland.



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