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# FOR THE GARDENER

## ASPIDISTRA (*Liliaceae*)

Sometimes called the Parlour Palm which indicates that it is a House or Cold Greenhouse plant. Introduced to this country from China in 1832 becoming very popular in Victorian days and now, after a period in the doldrums is regaining

its popularity. It is an evergreen, its leaves being quite large and long and with a shiny surface. These leaves can be either dark green or variegated. The plant is quite easy to look after and is quite happy in a winter temperature of 45 degrees F (7C).

The leaves and plant as a whole respond to sponging of the leaves and a monthly feed is beneficial during the summer months. The compost should be kept moist during summer but watering should be reduced during the winter months.

Potting should be in around an 8" pot with plenty of crocks at the bottom for good drainage, rough soil should then be added to fill about one-third of the pot and it should then be topped up with a good compost.

Repotting is done in spring, but this is not required to be done very often. Propagation is by the division of the plant when repotting. This plant can be very elegant if looked after and will go on quite happily for many years.

### SPECIES

*A. elatior*: Green

*A. elatior variegata*: Green and White

*A. lurida*: Green

*A. lurida variegata*: Green striped yellow and white.

The writer well remembers the Family Aspidistra which occupied a position of pride in the front window. So far as he recalls the plant was only repotted after a lapse of some 10 years. What seemed to do it the world of good was that in wet weather, except very cold days in winter, it was placed out of doors to get a really good soaking with rain water.



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