

NEW CHRYSANTHEMUM VIRUS IN ENGLAND

We are indebted to Stuart Pollard, our correspondent in England, for the following account of a new virus trouble which has caused widespread losses on chrysanthemums in England in 1949 and 1950. The symptoms are condensed from an article in "The Grower" written by E. E. Skillman, an English greenhouse specialist.

The virus is claimed to be a strain of the common mosaic of cucumbers. Clearest symptoms of infection occur at flowering time. Many varieties grow normally until flowering though a few may show some mottling and distortion of the leaves. The general vigor of the plant seems to be unaffected.

Slight infection may show up in the flower as a white or yellowish streaking of the ray florets, which become rolled and twisted, and the flower often does not open fully.

In severe cases the flowers are so twisted and rolled that they are absolutely worthless. Skillman lists only varieties popular in England among the most susceptible, but no doubt there are many varieties grown in this country that are susceptible if given a chance for infection.

Once a plant is infected cuttings from that plant will be diseased. It is thought by English workers that the virus is carried by aphids and possibly by thrips also.

Every chrysanthemum grower should keep this disease in mind for early detection could avert much cost and trouble. Positive insect control measures and careful roguing of propagation stock probably will help to prevent its spread, if it does put in an appearance in this country.

Your editor,

W D Holley