

THE AUTUMNAL FLORAL SHOW

BY EBEN E. REXFORD



IN September the garden ought to be gay with color. It will, if you have made a good selection of plants, and given them proper treatment.

The dahlia is one of our best fall bloomers if given plenty of water and rich food. The single sorts and the cactus dahlia are more popular than the older double sorts. They are quite as showy, quite as rich in color and really much more graceful.

FLOWERS FOR AUTUMNAL BLOOMING

AMONG bedding plants few produce a more striking display than *salvia splendens*, with its plumes of fiery scarlet. It is a grand decorative plant. To produce the best results with it, plant it where it will have a background of evergreens to show its flowers against. If you want a strong color contrast, use *helianthus multiflorus plena* with it. The scarlet of one and the rich yellow of the other will heighten and intensify each other, and make the garden glow with tropical magnificence of color.

The cosmos is a charming fall flower, the only trouble with it is that it is so very late in coming into bloom. Unless started very early in the season, it will not begin to bloom much before the coming of frost, and it is so tender that the least touch of frosty weather ruins it. It is charming in full flower; its airy blossoms dance and nod in every wind and show like stars against the pretty, feathery foliage.

Asters are among the best of all flowers for fall display; they stand the frosts well, and are almost always in full bloom when really cold fall weather sets in. I like the plan of planting them among the border where there will be no other flower in bloom at this time, unless it is the Japan anemone, and that they contrast well with in habit and color.

Pansies will be growing larger and finer as the weather becomes cooler. I almost always have finer ones in the cool October days than at any other time of the year.

Many of the hybrid perpetual roses will give a fair show of bloom in fall if properly attended to. In order to secure flowers from them, one must be careful to cut the branches back well from time to time, also to keep the soil very rich. These attentions induce new growth, and only from new growth will flowers be obtained.

Do not neglect the garden now that the greatest show of flowers is past. Keep it clean and neat. Much of the charm of a garden depends on its keeping. A house with rich furniture in it will not be attractive unless well kept. A tastefully cared-for house with very ordinary furniture will give more delight. It is the same with a garden. No matter how many fine flowers you may have in it, it will not please the fastidious unless it is well taken care of. Neatness is all-important, and especially so at a time when a lack of it will be so apparent, because of the falling off in quantity of flowers and consequently in brilliance of showy effects, which during the earlier part of the season may cause lack of proper attention to be less noticeable.

TWO POPULAR GERANIUMS

ALITTLE gem among variegated leaved plants is the Madame Sallerio geranium. It forms a perfect mass of foliage, of pale green edged with pure white. It never requires any training. Let it alone and it will send up from a dozen to twenty stalks to a height of four or five inches, seldom more, and these give a compact little bush whose leaves are so thick that you see nothing behind them. Each plant is literally a cushion of foliage. For use among other plants I know of nothing more effective. I grow dozens of plants of it for greenhouse decoration. Its leaves are very useful for small bouquets. It never blooms, I think. I have never seen a flower on my plants, at any rate. Something over a year ago I spoke of the great beauty of the *Souvenir de Mirande* geranium. Since then I have had an opportunity of seeing what it can do in the greenhouse and sitting-room, and I can unhesitatingly say that it is one of the best winter bloomers I have ever grown. It blooms constantly. It is a very robust and healthy grower. And it is one of the most beautiful representatives of this popular family. The peculiar blending of rose, salmon and white in its petals gives it a much more delicate effect than any other geranium. There is not a suggestion of coarseness about it. It is very floriferous, and two or three plants made the greenhouse bright at times when there were but few other flowers out.

AN ANNUAL THAT FLOWERS IN WINTER

SOME of the annuals will flower very well in the house in winter. The petunia is a specimen of this class. If you take up a thrifty seedling in September and pot it, it will come into full bloom in November, and if you are careful to cut off the flowers as soon as they begin to fade you will have flowers all the time. This plant may be common, and on this account many would object to it, but its flowers are so bright and cheerful, and produced so freely and constantly, that it will win your friendship in spite of all prejudices, and you will find that one such plant is worth a score of "choicer" kinds which have to be coaxed and coddled, and then fail to give much return in the way of flowers. One lady told me this summer that the most satisfactory plant she had in her conservatory in the winter was a petunia that came up in a pot of soil brought in from the garden. "It just took care of itself," she said. "It was never without flowers, and it had such a brave, sturdy way about it that I couldn't help making a friend of it. I had plants that I admired more, in a certain way, because they had a more brilliant color, or were more striking and noticeable in various ways, but not one that I liked as well as I did my little petunia."