



ALL ABOUT FLOWERS

This Department is under the editorship of EBEN E. REXFORD, who will take pleasure in answering any question regarding flowers and floriculture which may be sent to him by the JOURNAL readers. MR. REXFORD asks that, as far as possible, correspondents will allow him to answer their questions through his JOURNAL Department. Where specially desired, however, he will answer them by mail if stamp is inclosed. Address all letters direct to

EBEN E. REXFORD, Shiocton, Wisconsin.

SOME SEASONABLE SUGGESTIONS



THIS season few plants are making active growth. All such as are not growing well should not be watered very liberally. They require but little moisture at the roots until growth begins. Therefore watch them, and only give enough water to keep the soil from becoming dry. But to those which have begun to grow, give more freely, as the young roots which are pushing in the soil can make use of a more liberal quantity, and will do so in proportion as the top-growth demands. Twice a week is quite often enough to water plants in mid-winter, when the sun is low and the weather often dull.

NOW is a good time to re-pot many varieties from which flowers are expected through the spring season. Wait until you notice a tendency to make new growth. Then shift. If old plants, they may not require larger pots—simply fresh soil, or a top-dressing of fresh earth. If you do not care to re-pot wholly, dig out as much of the old soil as you can conveniently without disturbing the roots, and put rich compost in its place. This is easier than to wholly re-pot the plant, and generally answers as well, if care is taken to have the soil rich. Do not disturb a plant while it is dormant. If the plants are young, or comparatively so, and a larger development of top is desired, it is well to give a size or two larger pot.

IF you notice insects about your plants, do not wait a day before beginning war on them. Act promptly, on the stitch-in-time principle. It is much easier to keep plants clean than it is to get them clean after they have been neglected.

GIVE your plants the best light possible. If you have so many in the window that all of them cannot get the sunshine at the same time, give each its turn, unless it happens to be one that doesn't care for sunshine. Most plants require all the sunshine they can get in winter to encourage early and healthy growth.

CLEANLINESS is very important in floriculture, if you would grow satisfactory plants. Never let the top of the soil in a pot become covered with moss or mold, or old leaves. Stir the soil. Pick off decaying leaves and fading flowers before they fall. Wash the pots frequently. Attention of this kind helps to make and keep the plants healthy and vigorous, and it adds very materially to their appearance. Nothing is more unpleasant to the lover of flowers than the sight of a window full of neglected plants. Healthy plants, if clean, even if without flowers or buds, are always attractive.

WHEN it is once understood that plants breathe through pores in their leaves, the same as we do through our lungs, the necessity of giving them plenty of fresh air will be apparent. On every pleasant day open the door and let the out-door air in. Do not let it blow directly on the plants as it comes in, but let it mix with the warm air of the room before it reaches the plants.

IF a plant becomes sick, and droops, examine the soil. If, instead of being open and light as good soil ought to be, it has a heavy, sticky, soggy look, you will be warranted in thinking that the plant is suffering from over-watering. Remedy: Withhold all water until the soil becomes dry. Then give only enough to keep it slightly moist, and wait to see if the plant does not show sign of taking a fresh start. When such sign is seen, it will be well to re-pot. The old, soggy soil will generally be found to have lost its health-giving qualities.

IF growers of plants fully understood the benefit derived from a moister atmosphere than that which usually prevails in the ordinary living-room, they would try to secure it. Showering helps greatly, but after a little the air becomes as dry as before. If water can be kept evaporating steadily, much better results are secured. Keep a pan standing on the stove, or near the register, and see that it never gets empty. As fast as the water in it evaporates, put in more. Another plan, and a good one, is to have strips nailed about the edges of your plant-table or shelves, about two inches in width. Fill to the top of them with sand. Keep this wet, and steady evaporation will take place. It also answers another purpose—it takes up all the surplus water which runs through the pots at watering time.

ABOUT TUBEROUS BEGONIAS



ANOTHER year's trial of this new section of the Begonia family has greatly strengthened the good opinion that I had of it from my experience of last season. All through last summer my plants were covered with flowers; and such flowers! Some of them were two and three inches across, some single, others as double as Camellias, which they somewhat resemble. And the colors! Brilliant scarlet, purest pink, rich, dull reds, bright yellows, white, salmon—the variety seems endless. The flowers are borne well above the foliage, on stout, erect stalks, of branching habit, and remain in perfection for many days, generally dropping before they begin to fade or wither. For variety, beauty and brilliancy of color they are quite the equal of the Geranium, to which they must prove a most formidable rival. It will be seen that they have all desirable qualities asked for in a plant for the decoration of greenhouse or window.

I find them, I am glad to say, of the very easiest cultivation. This merit commends them to the amateur, who often finds desirable new plants so difficult to grow well that he gives up their cultivation in despair. The tubers should be procured in March. Start them in small pots, in a light, fibrous soil. As soon as they have made an inch or two of growth, put them into four-inch pots, in a compost made up of turfy matter and leaf-mold, with the addition of a little sand. They will not do well in a heavy soil. See that the pots are drained well. Tie the stalks to small sticks as they reach up, as they are brittle and easily broken. Water daily, aiming to keep the soil moist all through, but not wet. Keep the plants in a half-shady place.

When they are still quite small—often before they have made more than three inches of upward growth—they begin to bloom, and from that time on to the end of the season they will not be without flowers, if properly cared for. It may be advisable to shift to a six-inch pot along in August, as I think this has a tendency to continue them in growth and flowering longer.

In late fall, when the plants show signs of wanting to take a rest by the yellowing of the leaves, withhold water by degrees until the branches have fallen. By this time the soil should be quite dry, if your supply of water has been in proportion to the decreasing requirements of the plant as regards moisture, and then the pots can be set away in some warm, dry place without disturbing the roots, and left there till the following March, when they can be shaken out of the old soil and replanted for another season's flowering.

Those who have greenhouses which they do not like to keep bare of beauty through the summer months when most winter-blooming plants are in a state of preparation for the coming season, consequently not in condition to do much toward the decoration of the house if they are allowed to occupy it, which they generally are not, will hail with delight this grand acquisition to our very limited list of really fine summer blooming plants adapted to culture under glass. We have had many fine varieties of flowering Begonias in cultivation for many years, and they have been justly admired, and very popular, but they are so inferior as regards bloom that they can hardly be compared with this new class.

THE ALLAMANDA PLANT

AT this season of the year well-grown specimens of the beautiful but not very well-known Allamanda plants will be showing buds, and getting ready for a brave display at little later on. The two varieties in general cultivation are *Hendersonii* and *nerifolia*. The latter has the largest flowers, but is no better bloomer than *Hendersonii*. The flowers of both varieties are tubular; they are shaped much like a *Petunia*, though not ruffled on the edges, and not more than half as large as the average of that flower. In color they are a very rich, delicate yellow. The foliage is a bright, shining green, and the contrast between leaves and flowers is very pleasing. The plant is of semi-climbing habit, as ordinarily grown. If planted out in the conservatory, it often clambers to the roof and can be trained along the rafters with magnificent effect.

The plant likes a soil composed of loam and turfy matter, with some sand. Drain the pot well. In planting, be careful to make the earth very firm about the roots. Loose planting is very harmful. Unless the soil is firmed well, the leaves often drop, and in a short time the plant dies, and amateurs often wonder what the trouble is. In nine cases out of ten it is simply because the plant is potted loosely. Shower daily, especially on the underside of the leaves, to keep the red spider down. Also keep a look-out for scale. If found, apply kerosene emulsion with a soft brush.

THE IDEAL GERANIUM



THE ideal Geranium should be first, compact; second, well-branched; and, third, broad rather than tall. The ordinary Geranium is tall, scraggly, or "leggy," to use a professional term, loose in habit, and has but few branches. Such a plant may bear fine flowers, but it will never give satisfaction to the lover of symmetrical plants. It will seldom have more than half a dozen clusters of flowers at a time—oftener but two or three—and would not be tolerated if grown alone in the window, but, because it stands among others in a collection, it "passes." A well-grown specimen ought to be more attractive when standing by itself than when seen among others, because, away from other plants, all its fine points are displayed effectively.

It is quite easy to grow a Geranium well if you begin right. You must take the plant at its start. When it has reached a height of three inches, nip the top off. In most cases, several branches will start along the stalk. Let at least half a dozen grow. If but one or two start, nip the ends of them off, and keep up this nipping or "pinching in" process until you have at least a half-dozen branches growing from the base of the main stalk.

When these branches have grown to be six or eight inches long, pinch the ends off, and force branches to start out along them. In this way you will secure a great number of branches, which will spread out rather than grow up, and your plant will be compact, bushy and broad. This can be brought about only by giving proper attention in the early stages of the plant's growth, and by persevering until it takes on the form you desire it to have. Some plants seem determined to grow up in one tall stalk, rather than take the shape you want them to. They will do this every time unless you give them to understand when you begin training them that you "mean business," and they must come to your terms. If they see that you have no idea of letting them have their own way, they will yield gracefully, though reluctantly, to your wishes and gradually assume such a shape as a well-grown specimen ought to have. Bear in mind that this training must go on steadily from its beginning. There must be no "let up" in it, or the plant will soon get the start of you, and if it once does that you will find it a difficult matter to get it under subjection.

While a plant is in this formative period it should not be allowed to bloom. Pinch off every bud as soon as you see it. Do not give too rich food. Too strong a soil will encourage such rank growth that the joints of the stalk will be long.

Shift to larger pots as the old ones become filled with roots. A plant that grows well ought to be shifted about once in two months, if pots of but a size or two larger than the old ones are used. Drain well. The Geranium does not flourish in a soil that retains water about its roots. If the side branches show a tendency to grow up rather than out, tie them down to the rim of the pot until a spreading habit is fixed.

A well-grown specimen ought to have forty or fifty growing and blooming "points" by the time it is in an eight-inch pot, and should extend eight or ten inches beyond the pot on all sides, and if it is kept properly pruned or cut back, it will seldom get to be over two feet high. Such a plant ought to have twenty or more clusters open at a time during its blooming season, with buds in all stages of development. Those who have never seen a plant trained in this way have but little idea of the beauty a Geranium is able to display under proper management.

A RARE BUT BEAUTIFUL PLANT

IMANTOPHYLLUM *miniatum* is a plant that seems to be very little known. I have never seen it in any private collection except my own. It resembles the *Agapanthus* very much in foliage, though its leaves are broader, and hardly as long, and are perhaps darker in color. It sends up its leaves and flowers from a large bulb, and increases rapidly. In order to secure strong blooming plants it is well to remove most of the young bulbs, as, if allowed to remain about the old plant, the pot soon becomes full of bulbs, and as a result you will get but few flowers. The *Agapanthus* bears its flowers, which are small, on the extremity of a tall stalk, while the *Imantophyllum* has a stalk more like that of the *Vallotta*, and its flowers resemble those of that plant almost exactly in shape, but they are unlike in color, those of the *Vallotta* being a rich crimson, while those of the *Imantophyllum* are an orange-red. From three to five flowers are borne in each cluster, and each flower lasts for several days. The plant is evergreen in character, and is one of those which can be kept growing the year round, like the *Calla*, without injury. My plant has never hinted at resting, and from my experience with it I should hardly know how to go to work to make it rest if I wanted it to. As it blooms regularly each year, and has fine, large flowers, and seems in most perfect health, I do not insist on its taking a rest, but keep it growing steadily all the time. I cannot understand why it is not more extensively grown. It is quite as attractive as many varieties of the *Amaryllis*, and much more easily grown. Indeed, my plant gets no more care than a Geranium, and does as well as I could wish it to. It likes a good deal of water at its roots, and a rather large pot. Mine grows in a soil composed of loam, leaf-mold and sand, and has good drainage provided. It generally blooms in March or April, and is to the spring decoration of the sitting-room or greenhouse what the *Vallotta* is to sitting-room or greenhouse in fall—one of our best plants. When I say that I know of but one firm of plant-dealers from whom it can be obtained, its rarity will be understood.



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DESIRABLE PLANTS FOR PARLOR USE



SO many inquiries come to me about plants adapted to cultivation in the parlor that I give a brief description of a few of the best not already mentioned in the JOURNAL. There is no accessory to a house which I would so strongly recommend as potted flowers. They bring brightness and gladness, and often create sunshine when all other things fail.

A BEAUTIFUL PALM

ONE of the most striking and peculiar of the palm family is the *Cycas rebotata*. Its trunk looks more like a large and elongated pineapple than anything else. From the top it sends out its thick and leathery foliage in a great tuft. On a well-grown specimen the foliage will be two or three feet in length, spreading out in all directions, and from this some idea can be formed of its decorative qualities. It is dark green in color. Its leaves are stiff, but they have a graceful curve, and a good plant will be found extremely valuable in ornamenting a room. Its price prevents it from becoming as popular as it would surely be if it could be bought more cheaply, but because of its being rather slow and difficult to propagate it brings a high price.

THE GRACEFUL SWORD FERN

THIS good old plant is coming into popularity again among those who value plants for their beauty rather than their novelty. It lacks the delicate grace of the *Adiantums*, but it has a grace all its own, and a well-grown specimen will always attract attention. If given a soil of leaf-mold and sand, a shady place to grow in and plenty of water and considerable room for its roots, it will in a short time become a plant of noble proportions. It is not uncommon to see plants having thirty, forty, or fifty fronds from two to four feet long. These have a curve of striking gracefulness, and many mistake the plant for some variety of palm because of the division of the leaves, which greatly resembles that of some of the latter family. It is admirably adapted to culture in baskets or hanging pots, if care is taken to give plenty of root-room. It suffers from lack of water, and it is very important, therefore, to see that its wants in this respect are fully supplied. Shower its foliage freely as often as possible, and examine it frequently to see that scale has not attacked it.

VARIETIES OF THE JASMINE

THESE plants are great favorites everywhere. At the south many varieties are quite hardy, but with us at the north, they must be grown in the house. *Grandiflora* is a beautiful winter-blooming variety, of half climbing habit. Its flowers are white, star-shaped, and of most delightful fragrance. Its foliage is finely cut, and somewhat resembles that of some varieties of fern. *Revolutum* closely resembles *Grandiflora* in all respects except that of color. It is a bright golden yellow; Grand Duke is of shrubby habit, and produces small white flowers freely, double, as a rose, and of the most delicious fragrance. The culture of these plants is simple. Give a soil of sandy loam; water freely. Shower often to keep the red spider from injuring them and keep them in a sunny window. Cut back at first, to make them branch freely. After each period of flowering it is well to cut back all the branches on which flowers were borne, as this induces the sending out of other branches, and new growth must be secured in order to have plenty of flowers, none being borne from old wood.

A BRILLIANT PLANT

ONE of the most showy and satisfactory of house plants that will bloom all the time if given a little care is the *Achania Malvaviscus*. It has foliage shaped something like that of the *Abutilon*, of a very bright and pleasing green. The flowers are a rich, bright scarlet, and the contrast between flower and foliage is exceedingly fine. It is not as free a bloomer as many plants, but it will seldom be without a few flowers, and this cannot be said of most plants. It grows well in loam, made light with a little sharp sand. Give the pot good drainage, and water well. It likes light and sun but does not insist on a great deal of warmth. It is not disposed to branch very freely if allowed to have its own way, therefore, in order to secure a bushy, compact plant, it is necessary to cut it back sharply from time to time while young, so that as many branches can be secured as are necessary to give plenty of blossoming surface. It stands cutting back well, and all that is required to produce a plant of satisfactory form is patience and persistent attention. One thing that recommends it to the amateur is its almost entire freedom from the attack of any insect. It can be trained as a small tree, or a shrub.

A DECORATIVE HOME PINE

THE *Pandanus utilis*, better known as the Screw Pine, from the fact that its foliage is arranged in a spiral form, is one of the most decorative of house plants, if placed in the center of a group where it can be sufficiently elevated to display its drooping qualities. It requires only ordinary care, and improves with age. The leaves of this pine are generally three feet or more in length, about two inches in width, and of a bright green color, with a red line running down the center of each. The edges of the leaves are thickly set with sharp, needle-like teeth which effectually prevent anyone from meddling with it. It is a peculiarity of the plant that it lifts itself from the pot by its roots, and the amateur often gets the impression that the plant requires re-potting because of the exposure of these roots. If re-potted and set lower, so that the base of the plant comes in contact with the soil, the roots immediately set to work to throw the plant above the pot again.

TWO NEW HYDRANGEAS

THE Hydrangeas are great favorites, and their popularity is well deserved. They bloom freely, remain in perfection for months, and are of the easiest cultivation. The old *Hortensia* is the best known variety. It forms a plant three or four feet high by two or three feet in width, and bears dozens of clusters of flowers in early summer, of a pleasing pink color, each cluster being of enormous size. Some of our enterprising florists have lately introduced two new varieties quite distinct from the old *Hortensia*, but quite as meritorious. *Stella fimbriata* produces its flowers in great clusters or trusses with wonderful profusion; so much so that a plant appears almost covered with great balls of snow. The petals, instead of being smooth on the edges, are beautifully fringed. *Rosea* is a vigorous grower, and a great bloomer, and has flowers of a brighter pink than any other variety. It makes a fine companion plant for *Stella fimbriata*. To grow the Hydrangea well, give it a rich soil, plenty of root-room, and—most important item of all—a liberal quantity of water while it is making its annual growth. In winter, put in the cellar.

HOW TO RAISE HELIOTROPE

THIS flower needs a soil rather light and sandy in character, but the sand should not be of the kind we mix with loam and other soil for the purpose of making it light and porous. Rather, that kind of sand which closely resembles loam, and has considerable richness in it. A stiff, heavy loam will not give good results. For increasing the richness of the soil I would use "Food for Flowers" rather than barn-yard manure, as the latter is almost sure to breed worms, and these greatly injure the fine, delicate roots of the plant. See that the pots have good drainage. Over-watering is fatal; too much moisture at the roots causes them to decay, and your plant will soon drop its leaves and take on a sickly look from which there is no recovery until the causes which produced the unhealthiness are removed. From this, however, you must not get the idea that the plant does not require considerable water. It does. It sends out innumerable tiny roots which form a thick mass in the soil, and make it difficult for water to penetrate it. Unless water is given in sufficient quantity to thoroughly saturate all the soil in the pot, and reach the roots daily, the health of the plant is affected at once, and the leaves will soon turn brown and fall off, precisely as they do when there is overwatering. Give proper drainage, and there will be no danger of using too much water. Make sure that the ball of roots is soaked through. Very often the soil will look wet, but examination will show that the mass of tiny roots is dry in the center while that about it is very moist. Therefore, be sure to give enough to reach them, if you want your plants to do well. In order to make the plants bushy, pinch back well when young, and keep up this pinching until you have at least a dozen branches. You can tie them up to a rack if you want to, or allow them to take care of themselves. I prefer the latter plan. They may "sprawl" somewhat, but they can never be ungraceful, and to me, at least, a tied-up Heliotrope always looks so formal that I can never get rid of the impression that it is uncomfortable, and mutely asks for that freedom which can give it grace. Give it a warm place, and all the sunshine possible.

THE FRAGRANT CARNATION

DO not neglect to get some seed of hardy Pinks this spring. If you do, you will lose a great deal of pleasure. No finer plants for the garden exist, all things considered. They are beautiful in form and color, and have a rich, spicy sweetness that no other flower possesses. For cutting they are unequalled. Try one plant and you will be sure to have more the following year. They can be grown from seed, but in this way you are not sure of what you are going to get. If you want special colors, it is necessary to order plants. The following are some of the most desirable sorts: *Alba fimbriata*; pure white, beautifully fringed, and very double. *Anna Boleyn*; flowers of extra size, very double, a dark velvety maroon in color, shading to light crimson. A splendid kind. *Juliet*; flowers white, with a center of pale rose. Very charming. *Kohinoor*; pure white. *Snow*; a profuse-flowering kind, of purest white, very large and double, and finely fringed. *Abbotsford*; carmine marbled with pure white. Rich clove fragrance, flowering most profusely in June, but freely in fall.

PLANTS FOR A SHADY CORNER

A NEW variety of the *Aspidistra* has foliage of a very rich dark green banded with light green, yellow or pure ivory white, the variegation being irregular, some leaves being almost entirely light, others having only narrow lines of the light colors. These leaves are all sent up from the crown of the plant, and vary in length from a foot to two feet, and often number fifteen or twenty on each plant. It will be readily understood from this that a pot of it presents a most attractive mass of foliage. Indeed, few plants are more striking, and I know of nothing better adapted to front rows in groups in parlor or hall where plants are arranged to present a solid and massive effect. The leaves are of a thick, tough texture, therefore not easily injured by handling, and, like all foliage of that kind, they stand the effect of dry air and dust exceedingly well. This plant does not require exposure to the sun, though undoubtedly it is benefited by being given some sunshine. It likes a good deal of water, but care should be taken to have the drainage perfect if you would prevent the tips of the leaves from turning brown. A singular plant which is eminently adapted for parlor use because its leaves remain in a perfect state for years; they are from three to four feet in length, and are beautifully variegated with light green shading to yellow, on a dark ground. The variegation has the peculiarity of running across the leaves in bands of irregular widths, rather than lengthwise.

A BEAUTIFUL HOME PLANT

AMONG easily-grown pot plants the *Mimulus* must be regarded with especial favor. The flowers are of a peculiar and striking shape, resembling somewhat those of the *Gloxinia*, but the *Mimulus* is a much more satisfactory plant, because of its greater ease of cultivation and greater freedom of bloom. For spring and summer flowering, seed can be sown any time during the winter months, and the plants be brought along to commence to bloom in May. The soil in which the seed is to be sown should be fine and sandy. Use shallow pans, and drain them well. Scatter the seed thinly over the surface of the soil, and then sift soil lightly over the seed and press it down with the hand. Then sprinkle with a fine spray, and cover with a pane of glass. Put the box or pan in a warm place, and in a few days the young plants will appear. As soon as they have made a few leaves, prick off into small pots. When fairly started to growing give a cooler place. The plants are of rapid growth. While growing and flowering they require plenty of water. A soil of turfy loam, leaf mold and sand is suitable. Pinch out the main stem to make them branch. Tie out over the pots to sticks set about the edge. In color they are a rich yellow, blotched and spotted with velvety maroon. *M. moschatus* is the well-known variety, commonly known as the musk plant, because of its fragrance. The *Mimulus* is very desirable for greenhouse or window-garden.

ABOUT OUR FLORAL ADVERTISERS

THE JOURNAL believes in flowers in or about a home. They are educative to children, refining to men, and woman's handmaids. No one is a more ardent lover of flowers than is the editor of the JOURNAL, as the box of blooming plants in Mr. Bok's editorial window and the vase of fresh flowers on his desk, freshly culled each day, testify. And while he instills into the hearts of all his readers, by his own words and those of his editorial associates, a love for flowers, the publishers seek, especially at this time of the year, to place before the JOURNAL readers those of our most reliable houses and firms which offer what is best and most beautiful in the floral world. We can confidently say that we believe our floral advertisers to comprise the leading and most honorable dealers in business to-day, and as such we recommend them to our readers. It will be to your advantage in many cases, however, to mention the fact that you saw their advertisement in the JOURNAL, should you write to them.

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HINTS FOR THE MONTH



CAREFULLY plan out your spring campaign before beginning work in the garden. Unless you know just what you want to do before work is begun, you will be likely to give yourself a great deal of unnecessary labor, because, like all things done without plan or system, your garden will be lacking in perfection of detail. It will be on the haphazard order, and although it may turn out half-way satisfactory, the chances are against it. Decide, first of all, on what plants you are going to use. Then decide where you will have them. Locate them according to their habits of growth and their seasons of bloom. If you sow seed without taking into consideration the character of the plants it will produce, very likely you will have a tall-growing kind by the path and a low-growing kind back of it, where its beauty will be hidden. Or, you may get a late full bloomer in some spot where you want brightness through the summer, and the summer bloomer in some corner where it will fail to attract attention. Study up the catalogues carefully, and learn the flowering season of plants, and the heights to which they grow, and then you will be able to group them intelligently.

PLANT low-growing kinds under the windows, where you can look down upon them. The verbena is most effective when planted in this way. So is the portulacca; and have them in beds by themselves. They do not combine well with other plants. This is true of most flowers, you will find. In order to secure the best results from them they must be grown by themselves. The most artistic bouquets are those in which but one kind of flower is used, though very beautiful ones are often made containing more than one kind. In this case the kinds are chosen with reference to harmony and contrast. The same rule holds good when applied to garden work. It is safer to keep each kind by itself. If you combine, be very sure that there is perfect harmony of habit, as well as color, and aim at securing such a contrast as will bring out and heighten the peculiarities of each. In order to do this you must understand your plants perfectly. A bed of pink, or white phlox, or a bed of pink and white, is sure to attract admiring attention; but mix in a few crimson, purple, or lilac petunias, and some scarlet poppies, and you destroy its charm, which consists in perfect harmony of color and simplicity. Remember that there is always strength and dignity in simplicity. Perhaps women who have had but little experience in the flower garden will understand this better if they apply it to the rules which govern them in selecting their gowns. Here inharmonious colors are not put together, and no woman of taste allows many colors to appear in the same costume. The rule which applies to and governs the one, should be applied to and allowed to govern the other.

FOR tropical gardening the musa ensete, or banana, is coming into use rapidly. It is something like the canna in general effect, but has larger, more luxuriant foliage, and is of much larger and statelier growth. It is most effective when planted in groups. To succeed with it you must give it a very rich, mellow soil, and keep it quite wet at the roots. Fine beds are made by planting three or four roots of this plant in the center and surrounding them with some of the dark-colored cannas. The contrast between the coppery foliage of the latter plant and the bright green of the banana, and especially between the flowers of the canna, which will appear during the latter part of summer, and the leaves of the banana, will be very pleasing and brilliant. Cannas are excellent for massing in beds where a height of not more than three or four feet is desired. Until quite recently these plants were not considered worth much as bloomers; but the new French sorts produce flowers as large as those of the gladiolus, and quite as rich in color. In shape they bear considerable resemblance to that flower; and, at the same time, they suggest some of the richly-colored orchids. Give a deep, rich soil, with plenty of water. My readers are so familiar with the effects which can be secured by the use of the coleus, achyranthus, alternanthera, and the variegated geraniums, that it is not necessary for me to do more than mention them in this connection. They supply color, which can be made very effective, when used to supplement the effects given by the plants having larger and more luxuriant growth of foliage.

FOR producing rich effects on the lawn few plants are more striking than the ricinus, or castor oil plant. It is easily grown from seed. It is of rapid development, and a plant in rich soil will become feet high by midsummer, with leaves from one to two and a half feet across. In most varieties the foliage is palmate, and generally of a dark color, with bronzy, coppery or other metallic effects. By the end of August plants are often eight or ten feet high, much branched, and covering a large space. Indeed, I know of no single plant able to produce so striking and tropical an effect as the ricinus can and will, when well grown. It is often used with other plants, in large groups or beds, but I think it gives the best satisfaction when grown by itself.

DO not put your house-plants out before really warm weather comes. A cold night may happen along and chill some of the tender growth of the more delicate kinds. If you have a veranda where you can keep them, they can be given the protection of a blanket if the night bids fair to be frosty, but if put out in the yard, no such protection can be provided easily, and the chances are that none will be given.

DO not let plants that have blossomed through the winter, and which you intend to use another season in the house, go on blossoming. See that they get at their summer's work as soon as possible. That work is to rest. Encourage them to do nothing but recuperate. Do not give rich soil, or large amounts of water, for these encourage vigorous growth. You want the plants to remain as nearly dormant as is consistent with health. Cut back well. Prune into something like symmetrical form, and keep watch of them as growth is made. Pinch back whenever it seems necessary to do so to secure good form. Act on the principle that you are training the twig from which the tree is to develop. Training and development go on together. If you wait until a plant is developed it will be too late to train it.

AS soon as your sweet peas begin to run, provide some kind of a support for them. I find nothing suits them as well as brush.

HAVE you an old root of salvia splendens that has been wintered in the house? Don't throw it away thinking it is worthless. Put it out in your "odds and ends" corner. It will soon send up a healthy growth. From such a plant you can cut many a handful of brilliant flowers for use in large vases in the parlor.

BE sure to keep in mind the fact that a plant exposed to strong winds and warm air requires much more water than it would if in a sheltered place, like the greenhouse. Many persons complain that their oleanders, hydrangeas and crape myrtles, growing in tubs on the veranda during the summer, fail to do well. The flowers drop almost as soon as out, and often before. Nine times out of ten it will be found on examination that the soil in the bottom of the tub is dry as dust. Give enough water to wet the soil all through. A plant whose roots fill a tub holding a bushel or two of soil will require as much as a pailful of water daily.

DON'T let the weeds get the start of you. But they will do so unless you are prompt with your warfare against them. If you are not aggressive, they will be, and it takes but a little time for them to get so fully established that you will find it hard work to get rid of them without doing injury to the plants among whose roots they seem to weave their roots as if it gave them a greater sense of safety, or, at any rate, a feeling that if they must be disturbed they will make others suffer with them. Begin to fight them early in the season, and fight to win. In the question of weeds, perseverance is an all-important element, and a winning one. A few moments, if given over each day to the extraction of weeds, are ample; then you will keep abreast of them, but let them get ahead of you and discouragement is inevitable.

KEEP your plants in a cool and airy room if you want fine, large flowers. In a hot room your plants will spindle up, and very likely the buds will blast. Red spiders will be pretty sure to attack them if the air is dry. A temperature of sixty-six or seventy degrees by day, and fifty-five degrees by night, is much better for them than a higher one. To guard against the spider use plenty of water on the plants; syringe them daily. When flower-like buds appear, give fertilizers about once in ten days. Keep the branches tied to stakes. Give plenty of sunshine, and all the air you can let into the room without chilling the plants.

NEW VARIETIES OF THE ASTER



IF you want the best of all the fall-blooming annuals be sure to include a package or two of aster seed in your spring order. This flower is quite as beautiful as the popular chrysanthemum, which it so closely

resembles in form that white asters are often sold in fall to those who are not as familiar with flowers as they ought to be for choice varieties of chrysanthemums. It is so late in coming into bloom that it can be planted among earlier blooming plants, thus continuing the beauty of the beds up to severe frosts. There are several very desirable varieties. I give a list of the very best: The cocardean, or new crown, is two-colored. The center is white, generally "quilled," surrounded by several rows of large flat petals—blue, crimson, rose or purple. A new variety, bearing a close resemblance to the Japanese chrysanthemum, is called the comet, and is in color rose, pale blue, lilac and white, and pink and white. A variety of very strong habit is the Goliath, bearing flowers of great size, and very perfect in form. The peony-flowered perfection is a flower of pale and dark blue, lilac, crimson, rose and white, large and perfect in shape, and very freely produced. Each plant is a bouquet in itself. Asters are excellent for cutting, as the flowers last a long time.

The best plan is to sow the seeds in the open ground, after the weather and soil are in a condition favorable to the germination of plants. Later on transplant to the beds where you intend them to bloom. The young plants can be transplanted as safely as a cabbage. Plants "run to leaf" more than to flower. They are favorites for cutting for use in vases.

CARNATIONS ALL THE YEAR ROUND

IAM asked by several subscribers to tell "how to have carnations the year round," and to give some general hints as to culture, etc. I find it very easy to have these flowers through the summer. Old plants that have bloomed in the house during the winter, will, if cut back sharply in May, and planted in the garden beds, in a good soil, soon make a vigorous new growth, and from this plenty of flowers can be expected after June.

Young plants can be grown for winter use by layering; that is, taking a branch whose wood is past the very brittle stage, half breaking it, and putting the broken part under the soil, leaving the branch still connected with the old plant. You get the idea, don't you? Will it be any clearer if I tell you to bend a branch in V shape, almost breaking at the angle, and inserting this bend in the soil? A callus will form at the partially broken part. Circulation will be diverted from its normal action to a certain extent, and roots will form. While this is being done the branch receives nourishment from the old plant. It is rather difficult for the amateur to root cuttings of the carnation in the way geranium cuttings are rooted, and I would always advise layering.

However, if I wanted strong plants for blooming in the house next winter, I would order young plants in spring, and plant them out in the beds to grow during summer. If a flowering stalk appears pinch it back at once. Keep the plant from blooming. By attention of this kind you can secure a bushy, compact plant. Pot in September, using about six-inch pots. Use good garden loam, and some old manure, if you can find it. If not, depend on such fertilizers as Food for Flowers or bone meal; but do not use these until the plants show signs of blooming.

TWO OLD-FASHIONED FLOWERS

REALLY, it seems as if all the "good old flowers" are becoming popular again, for the poppy was grown very extensively last season, and this spring's catalogues are enthusiastic over the beauty and brilliancy of these long-neglected flowers. The chief fault to

find with them is that the texture of the petals of most varieties is so delicate that they are easily injured; therefore they are not as useful for cut flowers as many others. But for making brilliant a bed or corner in the garden they are unexcelled by any other flower. Daneborg is a variety of intense shining scarlet, with a white mark on the lower portion of each petal, this mark on the four petals of which each flower is composed giving a cross, which resembles the Danish flag, which is a white cross on a scarlet ground. Peacock is a vivid scarlet, with a black zone; fire dragon has flowers four inches across, of a deep glowing scarlet, with a black spot, having a white margin at the base of each petal. The Shirley poppies are very fine, varying from pure white to dark scarlet. Many of them are veined, striped, or flaked with contrasting colors. Have a bed of poppies.

THE TIME-TESTED NASTURTIUMS

THIS good, old-fashioned annual has, of late, become extremely popular, because artists who are quick to see the pictorial possibilities of a plant have worked it into their pictures, and persons with a keen artistic sense of the beautiful have made use of it for cut work and personal adornment. It deserves all the popularity it enjoys, for it is a really magnificent flower. Its foliage is a pale pea-green, and above this are thrown its many flowers, varying in color from a pale creamy yellow to a most brilliant crimson, scarlet and maroon. Some of the darker sorts are so intense in tone that they seem to have petals cut from velvet. The contrast between foliage and flower is very pleasing. These plants are excellent for poor soils, and hot, sunny positions.

SOME DESIRABLE PLANTS



late the amaryllises have been attracting attention, probably because some of our most enterprising dealers have illustrated them very attractively in their catalogues, and considerable has been written about them.

I am glad it is so, for we have few finer plants for greenhouse and sitting-room culture. An amaryllis in full bloom is always sure to get the attention of the most careless, as its great trumpet-shaped flowers have the faculty of commanding admiration. Below I give a brief description of a few varieties especially adapted to culture by the amateur florist, as well as some few instructions as to the proper care to bestow to attain desirable results:

Aulica—A strong-growing kind. Flower stalk often three feet high. Usually two flowers are borne at a time. They are very large, and shaped like some of the wide-spreading lilies. Color white, shaded to pink, with a green stripe through each petal.

Equestre—A small variety. Very floriferous. Color orange scarlet, with white throat.

Refulgens—Foliage short, but broad and strong. Flowers a dark, rich crimson. Very fine.

Vittata—One of the best of the light-colored varieties. White with a bright cherry-red stripe running through each petal.

Empress of India—Flower of enormous size. Color deep scarlet, banded with orange shading into white. A grand sort.

Aulica Platypetala—Very large flowers. Of spreading form. Glowing crimson.

Johnsonii—One of the best-known varieties. A good bloomer. Color, crimson, striped with white.

The above are all winter or spring flowering varieties, with proper culture, and their treatment should be uniform. Rest should be given during the summer. In fall put them in a shady, moderately cool corner. Give but little water. Watch them closely, for often they put up a flower stalk without waiting for favorable conditions. When signs of growth are seen increase supply of water, and give more light and warmth.

A CHARMING DECORATIVE PLANT

ONE of the most beautiful plants I have ever grown is *asparagus plumosus* nana. The only resemblance it bears to the ordinary asparagus is in the fineness of its foliage. It sends up shoots to the height of a foot and a half. These divide in branches, something after the style of some of the *adiantum*s. These branches are arranged flatly, and arch over the pot in a most graceful, airy fashion. No fern can compare with them in delicacy. Indeed, the plant is so light and airily delicate in effect that it suggests a green mist rather than a mass of foliage. It is excellent for cutting, as it lasts for days. A well-grown specimen is one of the most charming of plants for the decoration of the table. It is of the easiest cultivation. Give it a good, rich, sandy soil, good drainage, plenty of water at the roots, and a frequent showering.

THE NEGLECTED VERONICUS

THESE plants are comparatively unknown, though by no means new. I do not know why so few grow them. Perhaps because they are not aware of their merits as winter bloomers. They bloom freely and persistently from January to May, and are of the easiest culture. Give them exactly such soil as you give your geraniums, a moderately warm room, and a not very sunny window, and you will be delighted with them if you are fond of blue and purple-blue flowers. The individual flowers are small, but as they are borne in spikes containing scores of them, the effect is very pleasing. Few plants succeed better in the window. They are excellent for use in small bouquets, where one cares more for the quality than quantity of the flowers used. Pinch out the tops when the plant is young, to induce branching.

A FREE-BLOOMING ORNAMENT

THE *Streplosolen* has given the best of satisfaction in the house. It is of shrubby habit, but of slender growth, consequently the branches droop considerably when in bloom. It bears its flowers in loose, terminal heads or clusters. They are tubular, about an inch in length, and of a dark orange often shaded with red. Because of its peculiar color—a rare one among winter-blooming plants—it is particularly valuable for the house and green-house. Young plants send out a large number of branches, and soon form a bushy mass. Unless some support is given them they "straggle" a good deal. The effect is much more satisfactory, however, if the main stalks are tied to stakes and the side branches left free to arrange themselves than it is fastened to a trellis. It is a very free bloomer. I have never seen any kind of insect on it. It often attains a height of four or five feet.

THE FRAGRANT PITTOSPORUM

THIS plant is comparatively rare at the north, where it must be grown indoors. At the south it is hardy, and forms a good-sized shrub. It has thick, shining, dark-green foliage. When grown as a pot plant it assumes the form of a tree, with a habit of growth quite similar to that of the oleander. Its flowers are small, produced in small clusters. In color they are a yellowish white. They are not at all beautiful, but they are so delightfully fragrant that a cluster of them will fill a room with perfume. Their odor is something like that of the cape jasmine, something like that of the arbutus. If the leaves are washed frequently to keep off the scales, a plant is very ornamental in or out of bloom. Give it a light, rich soil, plenty of water while growing, and a sunny location. With proper care a plant is good for years. A fine plant for room decoration.



ALL ABOUT FLOWERS

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EBEN E. REXFORD, Shiocton, Wisconsin.

ABOUT WATERING PLANTS

AM often asked by persons who have house plants to examine some of their large specimens that seem "under the weather," and prescribe for them. They have given fresh soil in the majority of cases, thinking the trouble due to insufficient nourishment, but this does not seem to bring about a healthy condition. In nearly every case an examination of the soil reveals the fact that the plant is suffering from lack of water. Turn them out of their pots or tubs, and the bottom of the mass of earth will be found to be as dry as dust. The owner of the plant will be greatly surprised at this state of things. "Why, I gave them almost a pailful of water yesterday," a lady said to me not long ago. "It does not seem possible that it could have dried out so rapidly." It had not "dried out." The top of the soil was wet enough. The trouble was the moisture had not penetrated to the bottom. Sufficient water had not been given. Large tubs contain a considerable quantity of soil, and it takes a correspondingly large amount of water to wet it all through. What seems a large amount is applied daily, or every other day, to the surface, and because that appears moist, the owner takes it for granted that the soil is in the same condition all through. This is where the mistake is made. The roots of the plant become diseased and die in the dry soil at the bottom, and the plant soon takes on a sickly look.

All this can be prevented if one "goes to work right." In the first place, see that perfect drainage is provided. Bore at least a dozen holes in the bottom of each tub, and then fill in with drainage material to the depth of three or four inches. Then put in your soil, but do not fill the tub to within at least two inches of its rim. If you fill it, as many do, there will be no chance for the retention of water until the soil drinks it up. But if you have the soil two inches below the rim, you can put on water enough to thoroughly saturate the soil, without the danger of any running off. It is a good plan to apply so much that some will escape at the bottom. If the drainage is as it ought to be, there is no danger of over watering. Every summer we see oleanders and other large plants which take start after start, but each start is followed by a failure. The owner judges by the surface appearance of the soil that water enough is given, so attributes the trouble to the wrong cause. Lack of water is at the bottom of the difficulty in nine cases out of ten. It is almost impossible to injure a large plant by over watering in summer, even if the drainage is not good. This is especially true if the plant stands out of doors, or on the veranda.

These suggestions, it will be understood, apply to plants in active growth. Plants at rest will require less water, but they should not be allowed to get dry at the roots.

FUCHSIAS AS BRACKET PLANTS

THE tendency of many varieties of fuchsias to grow in a drooping form has often been commented on. Because of it, it is often difficult to train the plants in satisfactory shape. They do not take kindly, nor gracefully, to tying up to stakes or trellises. I have grown several kinds in pots on brackets, and trained the plants out over the pots, where their branches can soon be made to take a downward growth that is very graceful, especially when they are laden with flowers. One does not get the full beauty of a fuchsia unless it is seen at a level with the eye, or a little above it. Grown as described, the conditions are favorable to a satisfactory display of the plant. Many persons who have seen my plants trained in this way think I must have new varieties. All that is necessary to be done is to secure plenty of branches near the pot. This can be done by pinching off the tops of young plants of such varieties as are naturally of slender growth. If the branches do not seem inclined to take a downward tendency, tie little weights to them. These will draw them down over the sides of the pot. By keeping up this treatment you will soon coax the plant to take on the desired form. Old plants can be made to do this by cutting the stalks off close to the ground. Soon new shoots will be sent up from the roots at the base of the stalk.

But in order to make a success of it, you must be sure to give pretty good-sized pots, proper soil, and plenty of water. Pots on brackets will dry out rapidly, therefore water will have to be applied liberally and frequently. It will be necessary to use ordinary pots, as no hanging baskets or pots are large enough to grow a fuchsia well.

SOME SEASONABLE HINTS



USE the sprinkler freely in the garden, unless there are frequent showers. It may not be necessary to do this to keep the soil moist, but it doubtless will be necessary if you want your plants to look their best, and they will not do that unless you keep them clean.

Cleanliness is as great a necessity for health with flowers as it is with human beings. Flowers should never be allowed to get covered with dust.

CUT off all fading flowers, and pick up all ripe and fallen leaves. Such litter will spoil the effect of the finest lawn. Neatness must reign in the garden if you want to make it attractive. Look at that bed of double geraniums. Note the untidy effect produced by leaving clusters of fading blossoms on the plants. Take your scissors and cut them off, throwing not one down near the beds. Now stand off and look at it. What a change! All fresh green leaves and bright blossoms. It is like the effect gained by sweeping out and tidying up a dusty, disorderly room, isn't it? It didn't require much labor, but it shows what can be accomplished by applying a system of neatness to the garden. Fine, rare plants in a slovenly-kept garden are never as pleasing as the commonest plants are in a neat garden. Remember that.

MOW the lawn often enough to keep the sward looking smooth and velvety. If you let the grass grow for a week or two, it gives one the impression of a man who ought to go to the barber.

ATTEND to things promptly. If your dahlias are in a condition to require tying to stakes, tie them up at once. If you keep putting it off, the first thing you know some of them will be broken down and the plant spoiled. Give your sweet peas brush as soon as they begin to make tendrils if you want them to do well. If neglected at the time when care of this kind is needed, it is often difficult to do much with them. They seem to resent your treatment.

KEEP the ground mellow. Perhaps you have the idea that many others have—that a light, open condition of the soil leads to its drying out sooner. Not so. An open, mellow soil acts like a sponge. It absorbs whatever moisture there is in the atmosphere, while a hard, crusted soil-surface prevents the absorption of moisture. The farmer understands this and keeps the cultivator going in his corn-field in hot, midsummer weather.

A CORRESPONDENT gives the following description of her method of caring for this very popular plant in summer: I have always allowed my plants to dry off in their pots, but this sounds reasonable and practical, and I would advise giving it a trial. Plant your callas out in the garden and cultivate the same as potatoes, being sure to put them in a sunny place and keep them free from weeds. In the fall, about September 15th, take them up and put them in a good, rich soil containing one-fifth sand. Care should be taken to not have too large a pot. Let it be large enough to conveniently hold the roots, but no larger. Many persons put their calla in a large pail or jar and wonder why it will not bloom. It must get pot-bound and remain so if you expect many flowers from it. Plenty of sand in the soil assists drainage. The plant requires a great deal of water, but it must pass through the earth instead of being retained in it. If it were to remain in the pot the soil would become sour, the plant would stop growing, and probably die; anyway, it would become so diseased as to be worthless. After potting, put in shade and water sparingly for eight or ten days.

Along the first of November begin watering with warm water. Let it be lukewarm to begin with. Increase the warmth gradually, each day, until it is hot, but not scalding. Pour the hot water upon the soil, never on the stalks of the plant. Don't be sparing of water at any time, except for the few first days after potting. In this way you can bring most plants into bloom about the holidays. A southern exposure in the window is best, as the plant delights in warm sunshine, it being a native of Africa, and most frequently along the river Nile. Toward spring its leaves will begin to turn yellow. As soon as the weather is warm enough plant out in the open ground.

In potting, do not let the soil come to the top of the pot by at least an inch. Sprinkle or wash the leaves frequently all over, to keep off red spider. A calla treated as advised, last winter had seven blossoms at one time, and twenty during the season.



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DO not over-water your plants at this time of the year. There is generally but little sunshine, consequently evaporation will take place slowly. As a general thing, few plants are in active growth during this month, and such plants should never be watered freely. Watch closely for insects; the atmosphere of most living rooms is favorable to their rapid increase, and plants will soon be covered with them unless they are well watched. If you find green lice, apply an infusion of sulpho-tobacco soap. Do this as soon as the aphides are discovered. In fighting insects on plants it always pays to act promptly, and to be thorough. If you discover a red spider, and you probably will find hundreds of them on the lowerside of yellow leaves, if you look for them, you can be sure that the air of the room is too dry for the health of the plants. Syringe them every evening, and use water freely. Remember that nothing will rout this pest so effectually as water. Keep your plants as moist as they like to be kept, and you will seldom have any trouble with the spider.

DO not apply fertilizers to any plant not making growth. This is a very important thing to remember in the culture of plants. Many persons make the mistake of applying manure to plants at a stand-still, hoping to start growth. They are always injured by this practice. Wait until the plant has begun to grow, then apply your fertilizer. Keep the curtains away from the glass at the windows where your plants are; there is so little sunshine at this season of the year that the plants should be allowed the full benefit of all there happens to be. And besure to open the window at the top every warm and sunny day, and let the air come in. Plants breathe, and they want fresh air. They must have it in order to do well.

IT will be out of the question to give your plants as much fresh air as they have been accustomed to having, and the atmosphere will not have that moisture in it which plants find so necessary to their welfare, but by opening the windows every day and sprinkling the plants thoroughly at night, and keeping them away from fires, we can gradually accustom them to the change from out to indoors in such a manner as to weaken them but little. Generally, plants are left out as long as it is safe to do so. When a frosty night comes along they are brought into the sitting-room, and there they are subjected to such violent changes of conditions that the wonder is that they survive. The windows are seldom opened during the day, and they pine for fresh air. The room is kept so warm that all moisture is taken from the air and they are stimulated to make a rapid and unhealthy growth. It is not at all to be wondered at that so few collections of house plants afford satisfaction. The wonder is that they give any flowers. If possible, keep them in a room without a fire until really cold weather comes. There is not half so much danger of their freezing as there is of their being killed by too much heat. And be very sure to see that they do not suffer from lack of moisture in the air. This can be prevented by sprinkling them thoroughly at least once a day.

BE sure to provide a goodly quantity of bulbs for winter use. In selecting hyacinths, choose single sorts rather than double ones, as they generally bloom better. Get some of the Romans, as they are free bloomers and really more graceful than the better known varieties. Florists have made them so popular of late that they are in great demand. For cut flower work they are very fine.

The polyanthus narcissus is a most desirable winter-flowering plant. It is much prettier than the tulip. Do not fail to plant at least half a dozen of them. And be very sure to plant a good many Easter lilies. I get more satisfaction from this flower than from any other bulb that can be forced into bloom in winter. With proper care, if you have good strong bulbs to begin with, there is scarcely a possibility of failure. Nothing presents a finer appearance in the window than one of these plants in bloom. One of the magnificent trumpet-shaped flowers, literally running over with sweetness, is worth a hundred inferior flowers.

In planting bulbs for winter use, be sure to pot them in a rich, mellow soil, to water well at time of planting, but not after that until they begin to grow, and to put the pots away in some cool, dark place for roots to form before the plants are subjected to the influences of light and heat. Follow these rules and you will have success. Ignore them, and the result will probably be failure.

DECORATIONS FOR THANKSGIVING

CHRYSANTHEMUMS are the most suitable flowers we have for use at the Thanksgiving dinner, they are in keeping with the season. They and the "day we celebrate" are in touch with each other. Nothing can be more appropriate than a great bowl of these flowers, cut with long stems. Let white and yellow kinds predominate, using a few of the dark maroon ones to give tone to the lighter colors. If more than one table is used in the room, or the table is a large one, as it is likely to be in homes where the day is kept in its old-fashioned way, there might be a bowl filled with flowers of but one color for each table, or for the center and ends of the long table.

WHEAT AND OTHER GRASSES

AS Thanksgiving Day is really a sort of harvest festival, vases filled with wheat, oats and graceful grasses are quite appropriate, and can be made very effective if tastefully arranged. Never crowd them; allow each kind used to display its individuality. Scarlet rose-haws, or the crimson clusters of the berry, can be mixed with the yellow grain, and made to heighten the effect. Fruit can be made to take the place of flowers as a decoration for the table with charming color-effects. Great clusters of mountain ash berries can be made to serve as a foundation. Work in among them heads of bearded wheat, and yellow rye or oats. Upon these foundation-colors display your purple and white grapes and ruddy apples and pears. Oranges can be added for the sake of color, but they will hardly be considered worth eating on Thanksgiving Day.

MOUNTAIN ASH AND ALDER BERRIES

IF you wish to decorate the room, you can produce fine effects with mountain ash berries, or the red alder, which grows plentifully in most swampy places throughout the north. Work in with these, as a background, branches of evergreen; to relieve the color of evergreen and fruit, use wheat freely. If a sparkling effect is desired, dip wheat heads in a thin solution of gum arabic and sprinkle powdered mica over them. They will glisten in lamp-light as if covered with frost.

One Thanksgiving dinner table, last year, held as a center piece a great pumpkin nestling among autumn leaves. After the substantial dishes of the feast had had justice done them, the upper half of the pumpkin was removed, showing a "heart" of luscious fruits and dainty candies.

THE GRAND DUKE JASMINE

ANOTHER year's trial of this greatly praised plant has convinced me more strongly of its merits. It is much more sure to bloom than the cape jasmine. Its flowers are waxen in texture, ivory white in color, as double as a rose, and possess the rich, heavy fragrance characteristic of all jasmines. Two or three flowers will fill a room with the subtle odor. Small plants flower freely. I have found but one insect on my plants, that the scale. A prompt application of kerosene emulsion soon routed it.

This jasmine likes a rich, light, sandy soil. It should be given good drainage, and watered well when growing, and given a sunny place.

THE GRACEFUL EUPATORIUM

THIS is one of our best winter-blooming plants. Florists depend on it for white flowers to work up with colored ones in their choicest bouquets; the blossoms are of feathery form, very light and graceful in effect, and therefore very valuable because of their contrast and the facility with which they harmonize with all other flowers. They are easily grown, any good soil seeming to suit them. Do not give a very sunny location. Water well when making rapid growth and coming into bloom. There are several varieties, not differing so much in the peculiarities of flowers as in the time of blooming. By a careful selection of kinds with reference to their flowering period it is easy to have them all through the winter.

PLANTS FOR HANGING BASKETS

AMONG basket plants suitable to culture in ordinary windows nothing is better than the othonna, with its peculiar, fleshy foliage and its innumerable little yellow flowers, which give it such a bright and cheerful look. Another good hanging plant is oxalis rosea, with pretty clover-like foliage and clusters of bright pink flowers which are delightfully fragrant. It is almost always in bloom. There are other good plants for hanging baskets, but I have not mentioned them because flowering plants only were under consideration in this article.

FLORAL HELPS AND HINTS

HETTIE C.—Apply powdered hellebore while the bushes are wet with dew.

MRS. L. J. SANDS—I would cover the plants with leaves, lightly. Do not smother the plants.

E. A.—Invert a tub or hog'shead over your water lilies, and bank around them with leaves or litter.

K. C. J.—You will find petunias, myosotis, lobelias erinus and compacta, nemophila and godetia all adapted to culture in a shaded corner.

MRS. E. S. B.—The best white climbing rose is the Baltimore belle. The best red one queen of the prairie. The best time to set them is in spring.

L. H. W.—After a cala has rested all summer, it should be re-potted. A correspondent writes that she has used matches in the soil to drive away white worms with good success.

F. B. W.—This correspondent sends a sketch of a plant she would like to get. No one knows what it is in her town. It is characterized by hairy stems and is listed in the catalogues of all prominent dealers.

N. M. C.—I have repeatedly said in this department that I was not familiar with cactus culture, and advised inquirers to write to dealers in those plants. Will those interested please "make a note" of this, and not send any questions to me?

MRS. M. W.—Cut back the roses somewhat this fall. In spring it may be necessary to go over them again and remove weak or decaying branches. The two best white geraniums for bedding out are condissima and la cygne, or white swan.

MARY T. HILL.—Plant lily of the valley in a moist, semi-shaded place, and do not disturb the roots. After the plants have become well established you can look for good crops of flowers. As "companion" to euonymus would advise aucuba.

J. J. S.—Do not keep the room in which your plants are too warm; get a thermometer and hang it where you can see it easily. Aim to keep the temperature at about 70°; this will be quite warm enough for the human occupants of the room, and plants would do better with five degrees less.

N. A. P.—Your pansy leaves turn brown from rust. You say nothing about the location in which they grow but I imagine it is a dry, sunny one. Am I wrong? Pansies like a cool, airy, half-shaded place. They will grow well in any good soil that is not heavy with clay. Even clay soils will grow them well if lightened somewhat by mixing in loam, sand, or old manure.

MRS. F.—To grow violets successfully under glass, you must have a cool house for them. They require a low temperature and liberal supplies of air. In a warm, close room the buds will blacken and the red spider attack the plants. In attempting their cultivation, try plants rather than seeds. Sweet peas are not adapted to culture under glass. Only the most skillful growers can succeed with them.

R. H.—In planting pink, yellow and red roses, I would keep each color pretty well by itself. Let the yellow ones come between the red and pink ones. Sweet peas are benefited by liquid manure. The best dark red rose that is hardy at the north, so far as my experience goes, is George the Fourth. Among the hybrid perpetuals, Camille de Rohan is probably the best; it is very dark purple with a velvety texture.

MRS. C. A. SKEELVE.—Old abutilon plants are best, as they have more blooming surface. Plants intended for winter flowering ought not to be allowed to blossom in summer. These plants can be kept from year to year. Each spring give them a severe cutting back, and they will put forth any number of new branches. Re-pot in September, and show the season's growth in the winter. Summer-flowering abutilons are best wintered in the cellar.

M. O. M.—The kerosene emulsion so often spoken of in this department is sure to remove scale if applied thoroughly, and prepared as advised. I know of nothing so effective as it. It is true that it is not perfect without some trouble, but those who have choice plants affected by insects will be willing to put themselves to some trouble for the sake of ridding them of pests. If they are not willing to do this they ought to give up growing plants.

JESSIE J. PECK.—Tuberoses should be potted early in the season, March or April. They require a rich, light, sandy soil, and considerable heat. Being natives of the south, where the summers are long, we must start them early in order to get them out of the way of frost in fall. The plants can be transferred to the open ground after the weather becomes warm, but I prefer to grow them in pots. If the weather becomes cold and frosty before the tuberoses are developed, they can be taken to the house to blossom.

PALM.—You say that you keep your palm in shade, and water daily, and the tips of its leaves turn brown and slowly die. Doubtless because you give so much water that the roots are diseased. Plants in the forests do not require water every day. Give less, and see if your plant is not benefited. Small pots are better for flowering plants than large ones, because a large amount of soil encourages development of branches, while restriction of the roots has a tendency to produce flowers rather than branches.

MRS. F. S.—I would not advise anyone to attempt the manufacture of a fernery in these days when it is possible to buy them so cheaply. A home-made one will cost more in the end than one that can be bought in almost any city, and will never be as satisfactory. In stocking them, use lycopodiums in variety, small-growing ferns, peperomia, begonias and other shade-loving plants in moderate quantities. Do not try to crowd your plants if you want them to look well. The lycopodiums can be planted after the other plants are in place. Mosses and other native plants can be used. Keep in a shady window.

GROWLER.—I have said several times in this department that specimens would not be named, as the naming of a leaf or flower, which A, B, or C may send has no interest for D, E, or F. Notwithstanding this, several persons send specimens which they ask me to name "in the JOURNAL;" and one correspondent says I have "so kindly answered her other queries, that she knows I won't refuse to answer this one." I think she will be disappointed. If you have plants that you want to be put in the JOURNAL, but are unwilling to expend two cents in return postage on, don't take the trouble to send them, for you will be "out" the two cents on your letter of inquiry.

SEVERAL CORRESPONDENTS.—Several persons have written me about the reliability of seed men and florists whose advertisements appear in THE LADIES' HOME JOURNAL. They complain that money was sent the advertisers, but nothing was received in return. Do not write to me about these matters. Write to the parties to whom you sent your money. I have nothing whatever to do with the advertising department, and no one connected with the paper is responsible for failures to receive whatever is ordered from advertisers. Those advertising in this JOURNAL are considered perfectly reliable, otherwise their advertisements would not be admitted. Very likely the mails—possibly the complainant him or herself—are at fault rather than the dealer. I am constantly in receipt of letters containing stamps for reply, but without the writer's name, and sometimes without P. O. address. Those having sent money from which nothing has been heard may have been as careless as the writers of these letters.

E. E. MC.—This correspondent has one rose that grows vigorously but fails to bloom. It is a hybrid perpetual. I presume it was a grafted plant and the grafts died off, after which shoots were sent up from the roots, which were probably of mameau stock. Grafted roses often disappoint in this way. Always insist on having roses in their own roots. Lucile is pronounced Lu-sho-ole, Marie Pia, Maree Pe-ah, Madame Cochet, M. Co-shay, Madeline d'Aoust, Madeleen d'Oos, Gloire d'Lyonaise, Guar d'Lyonal. I have never heard of a pink tuberose. I presume "enterprising" dealers have anticipated the florists who would be delighted to secure such novelty as a variety of this plant bearing pink flowers. I know of but three varieties of tuberose—the pearl, having double flowers on a stalk about two feet high, the old double variety, growing considerably taller, and the single variety, which is not much grown. I believe, though, still another variety is catalogued, one having striped foliage. All these varieties have white flowers.