

TRANSPLANTING WILD FLOWERS

By Emily H. Palmer



It is very easy, if one lives anywhere near the woods, to have plenty of flowers. There need be no expense attached to the wild bed, and very little trouble. Perhaps that is why the effort to have one is so rarely made. But when one reads that the sweet little Bird-foot Violet, *V. pedata*, that grows so plentifully in America, is quoted in foreign catalogues as something exceedingly choice, and sells at one dollar and eighty cents each, it seems to me that we should better appreciate the blessings that lie at our feet, and plant them where we can enjoy them readily. The time to transplant "wild things" is when you find them. The fact that the plant may be in blossom should not cause one to hesitate. Many varieties can be removed successfully in full bloom. If one waits until fall or early spring the variety is not likely to be found at all, and unless the blossoms are seen one rarely finds the plant among the green density of its surroundings. Wild flowers are used to making a "struggle for existence." With them it is always a "survival of the fittest," and many sorts will stand very rough treatment; heroically surviving being taken up and replanted at any time from early spring until late fall, even when at the very height of their blooming.

The yellow Honeysuckle, of the variety *Lonicera flava*, which grows in the Northwest and along the Alleghenies, substantiates this claim of hardihood. I pulled one up from a sand bank, where it was blossoming away as freely as if growing in the richest of soil. I planted the root, and placed the blossoms in a glass, where they kept their beautiful freshness for over a week. The plant made itself at home against the lattice at the side of a wide porch, and is to-day prospering in more than its native vigor. This plant is called a low climber, but I have known it, under favorable conditions, to attain a great height, and even to hang its yellow blossoms from the eaves of the house.

THE Wild Clematis is especially beautiful for transplanting. It is not only desirable for its clusters of blossoms, but for the feathery-tailed akenes, which afterward cover its surface with downy fluffiness. One year two dozen bulbs of the *Trillium grandiflora* were obtained, after hard digging—for they grow deep—beneath a network of other roots that seemed to be in an endless tangle, and were taken many miles in a pocket handkerchief and planted in a shady place under some Lilac bushes. They were in full blossom, and never even hung their dainty heads at the rough treatment that they had been subjected to, but lived to gladden the sight with each recurrent spring, and blossom, along with the Crocuses at a time when the scarcity of flowers makes them seem doubly desirable.

Jack in the Pulpit shows himself quite as regularly and just as jauntily in the door yard, when once planted there, as anywhere else. The Dogtooth Violet or Adder's-tongue, *Erythronium americanum*, makes a beautiful border with its mottled leaves and lovely yellow blossoms. The Moccasin Flower, *Cypripedium*, also thrives well in cultivated soil. Many varieties of Fern will grow where really nothing else does well, on the north side of the house, where sometimes the grass refuses to show itself. Place a bunch of Fern roots in the bare space and you can rest assured that they will clothe it in a feathery mantle of rich green. The delicate beauty of these denizens of the wood and field, and their stately grace, more than repay one for the small trouble of transplanting them.

One might go on indefinitely mentioning sorts of wild flowers that transplant well and at any time through the summer. But "experience is the best teacher" in this as in everything else.