

BUILD YOUR OWN GREENHOUSE.

BY A PRACTICAL MAN.

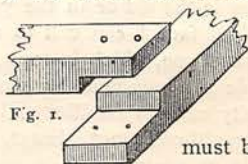
THERE are many among the readers of this Magazine who must have noticed the rapid extension of London into all our suburban districts, obliterating the once green fields and shady lanes, where might have been heard the notes of the cuckoo and the nightingale.

There are also thousands of persons travelling daily on our railways who have observed the endless rows of houses and villas bordering them, each with its narrow strip of garden-ground behind; and it must strike forcibly on those who love a garden, and have a taste for flowers, to witness the neglected condition of many, as though a blight had gone over them.

To what may this be attributed? Is it to the want of knowing *how* to render these little plots of ground a source of endless charm and amusement? Believing this to be generally the case, it will be my object in the present and in future papers to show what vast improvements may be effected by a little care and attention, and at a very trifling expense.

My first step will be to give some simple directions by which any one may build his own greenhouse; and to this end I will give my readers the same directions by which I erected my own, that, although only about seven feet by eight, has secured from the frost of winter some three to four hundred plants.

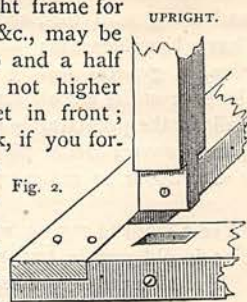
The first thing to be considered is the most convenient and at the same time most suitable spot; that is, the greenhouse



FOUNDATION.

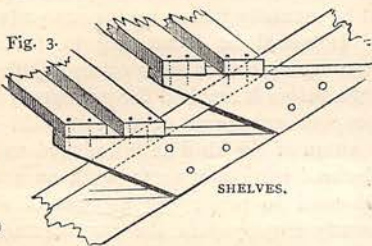
must be so situated as to command the proper aspect, and to secure as much of the warmth of the sun upon it as possible. Having determined where to build, level and flatten well the space your foundation is to occupy, preparatory to putting your framework upon it. There are in most of the outskirts of London yards for the sale of old building materials, where may be procured timber of various sizes. That for the foundation frame should not be less than four inches by three, well morticed together, and thoroughly pitched or painted before being laid down.

The upright frame for the sashes, &c., may be three by two and a half inches, and not higher than six feet in front; and the back, if you fortunately have a wall, will be regulated by the height of the wall; otherwise the wood-work may be raised to eight feet, allowing a good slant to carry off the wet.



At the same yard where the wood is obtained, window-sashes are sometimes sold, after having been taken out of old houses. A certain number should be selected, and the upright and roof-frame measured, so as to suit the sizes and number you buy. The panes are very likely to be broken; but any glazier will cut the required size to replace these at so much per square foot—I think twopence-halfpenny—and very little difficulty will be found in reglazing, a putty-knife and putty being all that is required. Before putting the sashes on the roof, a light frame-work must be fixed, and its size will be regulated by that of the sashes you intend to place over it. The top sashes should be on hinges, so as to open for air.

As regards the shelves for your plants, they will be in number accord-



ing to the size of the interior. Each shelf, rising gradually above another, should be from seven to eight inches wide, rising four inches (see Fig. 3). Shelves may also be put up round the inside where space allows, two or three above each other. The main object in these little houses is to secure the plants from frost, not to induce them to grow; and on the above plan a large number of pots can be stored.

When the structure is up, it must be protected from the weather. Buy a sufficient

quantity of white lead of the best kind, also some linseed oil and turpentine—three parts of the former to one of the latter. A certain quantity of “driers” must be mixed with the paint. For new wood, live coals should be laid on, and each year the outside should be attended to, for the heat of the sun impoverishes the lead, and also opens the wood-work.

We will suppose the greenhouse built and ready to receive the plants. Geraniums that have been taken care of in the dwelling-house we may now transfer to their new home, first removing all dead leaves, cutting away dead and mouldy-looking branches, and loosening the earth. They will require but very little water, as they need not be made to grow, but only kept alive during the frost. A little silver sand put at the top of the earth will help to keep them warm and drain the water off. As soon as spring comes little buds will show, then more moisture may be given them. If a few bulbs be put into pots, such as the crocus, tulip, and narcissus, a pretty show of flowers may be obtained. The latter may have more water than the geraniums.

How to warm the greenhouse is the next consideration. A paraffin-lamp with a flame about an inch wide will give out a heat of twelve or fourteen degrees, and should the frost be severe in the day as well as night, the lamp must be kept burning. Several lamp shops in London sell those particularly adapted to the purpose at a small cost, and these will burn for sixteen or eighteen hours with once trimming.

