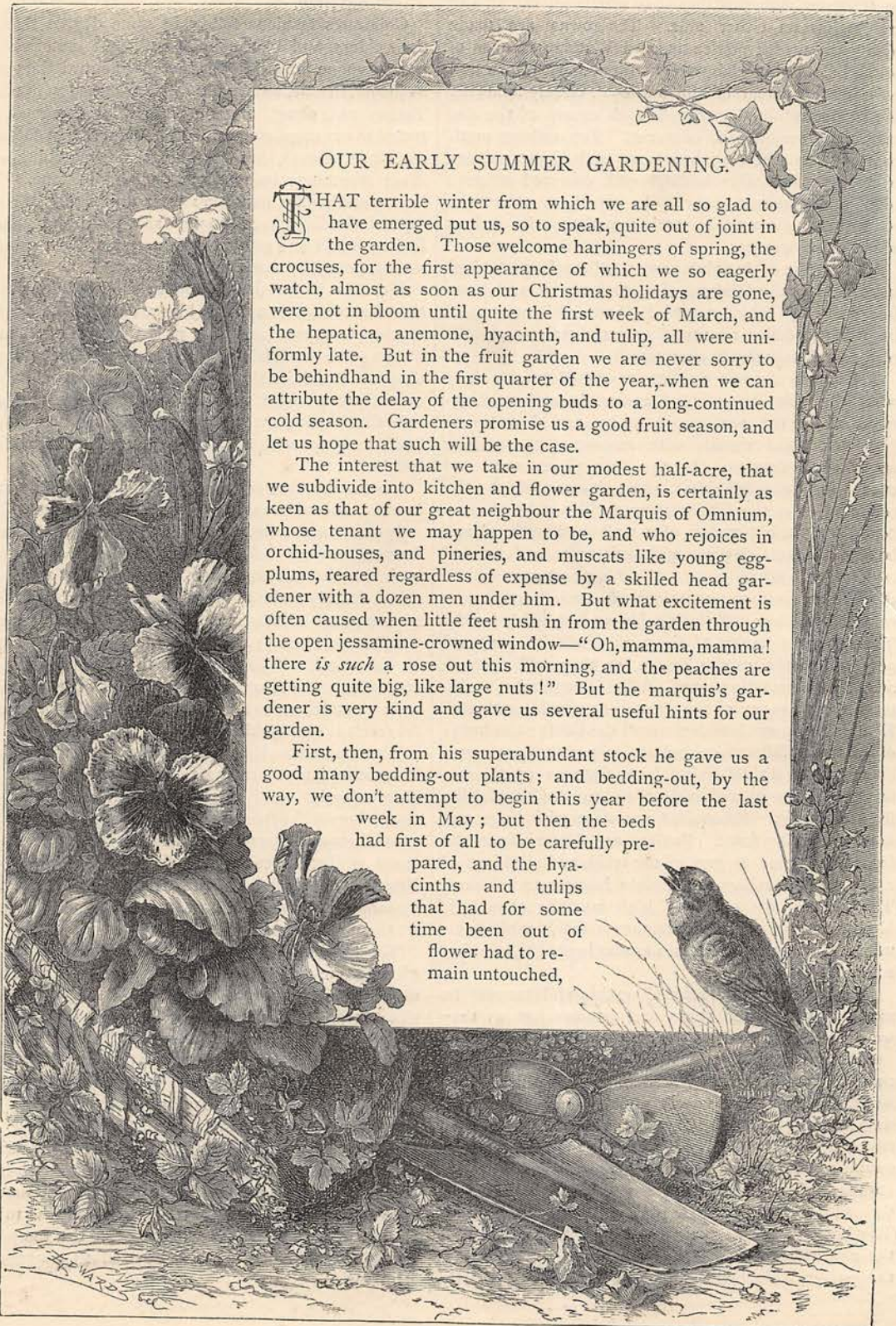


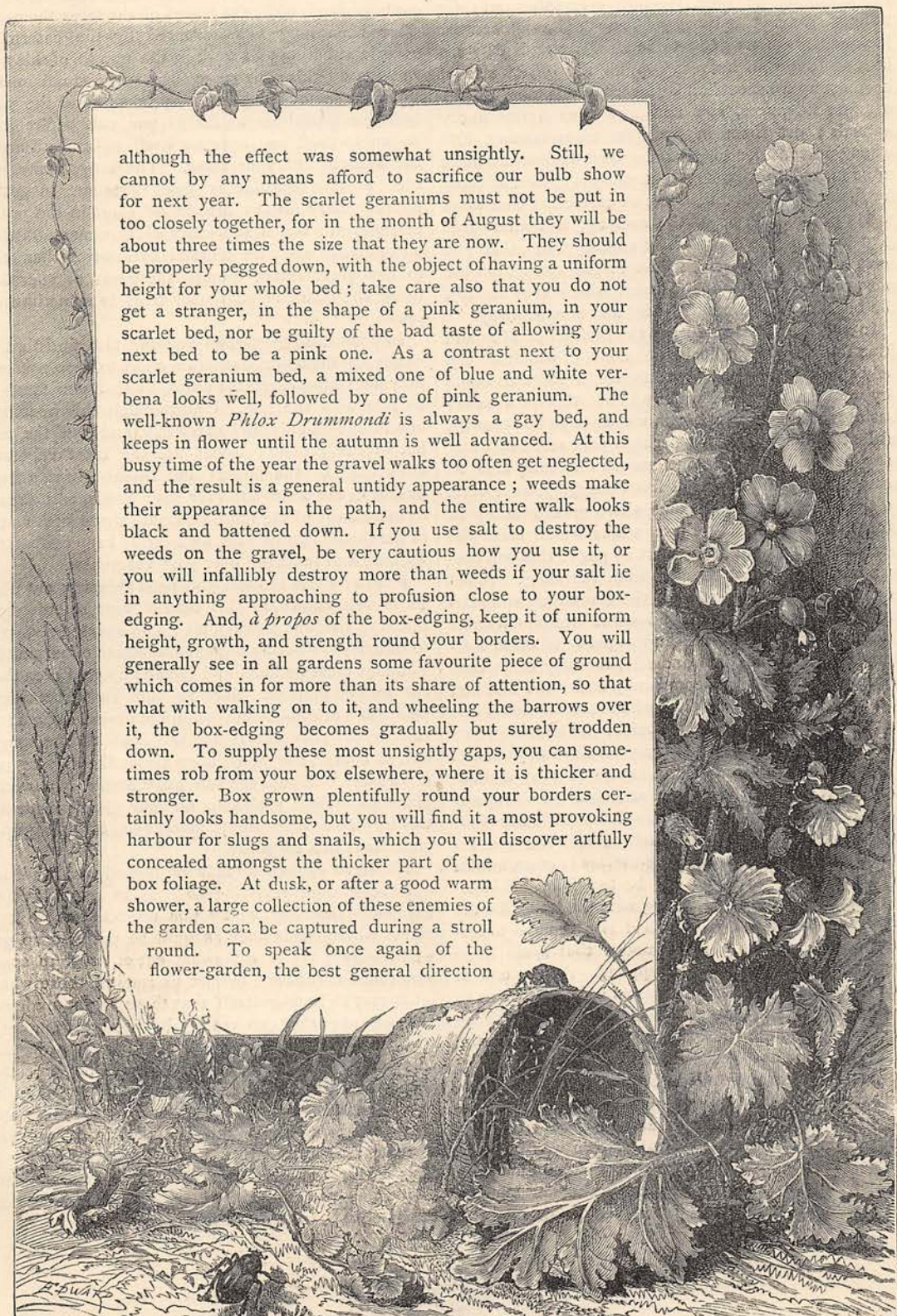
OUR EARLY SUMMER GARDENING.

THAT terrible winter from which we are all so glad to have emerged put us, so to speak, quite out of joint in the garden. Those welcome harbingers of spring, the crocuses, for the first appearance of which we so eagerly watch, almost as soon as our Christmas holidays are gone, were not in bloom until quite the first week of March, and the hepatica, anemone, hyacinth, and tulip, all were uniformly late. But in the fruit garden we are never sorry to be behindhand in the first quarter of the year, when we can attribute the delay of the opening buds to a long-continued cold season. Gardeners promise us a good fruit season, and let us hope that such will be the case.

The interest that we take in our modest half-acre, that we subdivide into kitchen and flower garden, is certainly as keen as that of our great neighbour the Marquis of Omnium, whose tenant we may happen to be, and who rejoices in orchid-houses, and pineries, and muscats like young egg-plums, reared regardless of expense by a skilled head gardener with a dozen men under him. But what excitement is often caused when little feet rush in from the garden through the open jessamine-crowned window—"Oh, mamma, mamma! there *is* such a rose out this morning, and the peaches are getting quite big, like large nuts!" But the marquis's gardener is very kind and gave us several useful hints for our garden.

First, then, from his superabundant stock he gave us a good many bedding-out plants; and bedding-out, by the way, we don't attempt to begin this year before the last week in May; but then the beds had first of all to be carefully prepared, and the hyacinths and tulips that had for some time been out of flower had to remain untouched,





although the effect was somewhat unsightly. Still, we cannot by any means afford to sacrifice our bulb show for next year. The scarlet geraniums must not be put in too closely together, for in the month of August they will be about three times the size that they are now. They should be properly pegged down, with the object of having a uniform height for your whole bed; take care also that you do not get a stranger, in the shape of a pink geranium, in your scarlet bed, nor be guilty of the bad taste of allowing your next bed to be a pink one. As a contrast next to your scarlet geranium bed, a mixed one of blue and white verbenas looks well, followed by one of pink geranium. The well-known *Phlox Drummondii* is always a gay bed, and keeps in flower until the autumn is well advanced. At this busy time of the year the gravel walks too often get neglected, and the result is a general untidy appearance; weeds make their appearance in the path, and the entire walk looks black and battened down. If you use salt to destroy the weeds on the gravel, be very cautious how you use it, or you will infallibly destroy more than weeds if your salt lie in anything approaching to profusion close to your box-edging. And, *à propos* of the box-edging, keep it of uniform height, growth, and strength round your borders. You will generally see in all gardens some favourite piece of ground which comes in for more than its share of attention, so that what with walking on to it, and wheeling the barrows over it, the box-edging becomes gradually but surely trodden down. To supply these most unsightly gaps, you can sometimes rob from your box elsewhere, where it is thicker and stronger. Box grown plentifully round your borders certainly looks handsome, but you will find it a most provoking harbour for slugs and snails, which you will discover artfully concealed amongst the thicker part of the box foliage. At dusk, or after a good warm shower, a large collection of these enemies of the garden can be captured during a stroll round. To speak once again of the flower-garden, the best general direction

that we can give, either for the end of May or the beginning of June, is—turn everything out; for although we even at times get some deplorable weather in June, it is of no good to be always terrified by the idea of “snow in harvest.” With the object also of keeping up a succession and variety of bloom as the summer advances, sow now and then a few hardy annuals; put them in beds for transplanting, and when you consider they have grown sufficiently large to be moved to whatever spot you may have selected for their exhibition, take them up carefully either upon a damp, dull day, or in the evening, and afterwards give them plenty of water. Supposing, too, that you have had a gay hyacinth show in the spring, but are now really in want of the room which they occupy, the bulbs may be carefully lifted and stowed away.

In the fruit-garden during the months of May and June there is a great deal to be done, of which we can only speak generally. Strawberries, if there be much dry weather, will need watering, but this is a heavy business, which if once begun will have to be renewed, and at a time too when perhaps your stock of water may be limited; the long runners should also be removed and the fruit kept from dragging, as it were, in the soil, by strewing some short grass round your plants, and supporting those stalks which seem the heaviest laden, with little sticks or pegs: this will also in a measure protect the fruit from the slugs. A net is the best precaution against the blackbirds and starlings, who as the summer advances become terrible thieves; but the cunning and sagacity of these last-named depredators is wonderful, for they often contrive to make their way completely under the net, and can sometimes be taken alive when feasting—on a fine currant-tree, *e.g.*, which nevertheless had all the appearance of being carefully and wholly enveloped by the net.

Among the wall-fruit in the month of May disbud-ding must be now thoroughly attended to. Properly speaking, to disbud is to remove the superfluous *buds* before they have produced their shoots, but the removal of the young shoots themselves is often known as disbudding. Yet do not be too fond of indiscriminate hacking and slashing with the knife, for the preservation of some young wood is of course necessary, and very often you will notice that some large gap on the wall has to be supplied. At the end of this process a good syringing is as well, as it helps to remove the small insects. Young wood may also be moderately thinned out from the currant-trees in the month of May, as it assists them; but here again precaution is necessary. Gooseberries too may be similarly treated. A sharp look-out must be kept against the bearbine and the caterpillars, but too often you will see both allowed to have their own way with the currants and gooseberries, so that by the month of July or August the trees present a singular appearance, with the foliage and pretty white flower of the

bearbine enveloping your fruit, which has never properly ripened, while the leaves of the trees themselves have been long ago devoured by the caterpillars. A little attention and work in the month of May will prevent all this; the caterpillars while small must be killed—a tedious and a nasty process—and the young bearbine pulled up as far as you can before it has begun to twist and entwine itself up and all around the branches of your trees. The long, white, wiry root of the bearbine is most tiresome to get up, and is nearly always broken off short in the process of removal; but if the roots of this most obstinate and noxious weed are allowed to entwine themselves to any great extent around the roots of your fruit-trees, the death of your poor trees is sometimes the result.

In your kitchen garden you will also find that the weeds are making a desperate effort to keep pace with all your young vegetable crops, so that you must not be idle with the hoe. Unfortunately this weeding is often done quickly and carelessly, and half the roots left in the ground; weeds are the most effectually eradicated by the fingers and thumb; have a truck-basket in the other hand for your weeds, and a trowel to loosen any of the more obstinate roots, such as that of the thistle; and do not awkwardly keep deliberately walking and tumbling over your vegetables.

Most of these too will now need thinning out; but, as is well known, at this time of year thinning out, planting out, and sowing, all go on at intervals, so as to insure your having a good succession of vegetables. Potatoes must be hoed and earthed up, and even these can still be planted. Shut up your cucumber-frames before the afternoon sun has quite deserted them; by this means they will retain the heat all the longer, but, of course, they must have air for the greater part of the day. Should the sun grow suddenly powerful, place some light sheltering on your glass; neglect of this in July weather would involve the scorching up of your plant to a certainty.

We have spoken already of box-edging, and our only reason for reverting to it is to remind young gardeners that box, where you want to renew it in places where it has failed, should be put in deep and well watered. It is somewhat out of order to speak again here of flowers, but let us remind those whose lot is cast in London itself that there are many hardy and gay ones that can readily be obtained, and at a small cost, for immediate supply, such as the variegated daisy, or the heartsease with its light blue or richer purple colours. But it is the time of year when all Nature is in her loveliest dress, and it is flowers that are pre-eminently beautiful—beautiful in the marvels of their artistic structure, beautiful in the variety of their colour and scent, beautiful in the lessons which to a thoughtful mind they suggest, and, unlike all things else, beautiful even in death.





THE GARDEN IN JUNE.

ONCE again we are out in the garden ; and first, then, we will betake ourselves as a matter of course to the flower-garden. How green and gay it is beginning to look, although our bedding out this year, when everything was so long before it could make up its mind to venture on a start after such an obstinate five months' winter, is by no means as yet completed. Do not, however, be alarmed or disheartened if, owing to unseasonable weather or some slight frost, the foliage or general appearance of your geraniums that you bedded out—it may be a little too early—is unhealthy, blackened, or discoloured. They will speedily recover themselves when they have grown a little more accustomed to the uncertain exposure of an English summer, although possibly a few leaves may fall off, and a few of the opening buds may look a little pinched.

Flowers are very much like ourselves ; they will not easily bear sudden changes ; and yet, despite that bit of proverbial common sense,

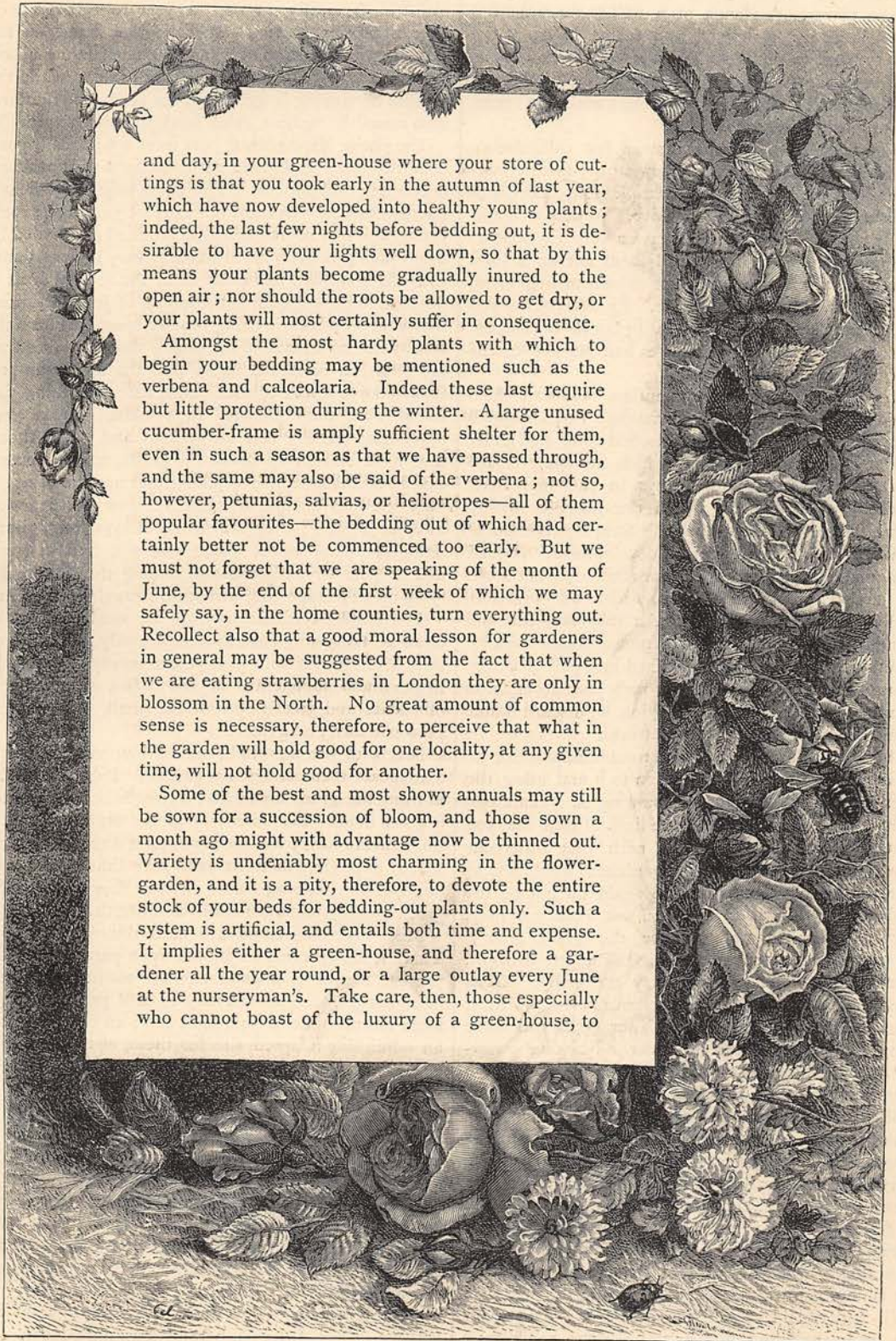
" Before May is out
Never change a clout,"

some of us are to be found sufficiently fool-hardy to discard flannel waistcoats and great-coats on the appearance of the first warm day, grave though the penalty too often is. Similarly with the flowers : it is, to say the least, risky to advocate their immediate and indiscriminate removal from the green-house to your open beds because of a few warm May days, and, as is too often the case, without any previous preparation for their change by hardening off. By this we mean, as the time for bedding out draws near, give plenty of and increased ventilation, both by night

and day, in your green-house where your store of cuttings is that you took early in the autumn of last year, which have now developed into healthy young plants; indeed, the last few nights before bedding out, it is desirable to have your lights well down, so that by this means your plants become gradually inured to the open air; nor should the roots be allowed to get dry, or your plants will most certainly suffer in consequence.

Amongst the most hardy plants with which to begin your bedding may be mentioned such as the verbena and calceolaria. Indeed these last require but little protection during the winter. A large unused cucumber-frame is amply sufficient shelter for them, even in such a season as that we have passed through, and the same may also be said of the verbena; not so, however, petunias, salvias, or heliotropes—all of them popular favourites—the bedding out of which had certainly better not be commenced too early. But we must not forget that we are speaking of the month of June, by the end of the first week of which we may safely say, in the home counties, turn everything out. Recollect also that a good moral lesson for gardeners in general may be suggested from the fact that when we are eating strawberries in London they are only in blossom in the North. No great amount of common sense is necessary, therefore, to perceive that what in the garden will hold good for one locality, at any given time, will not hold good for another.

Some of the best and most showy annuals may still be sown for a succession of bloom, and those sown a month ago might with advantage now be thinned out. Variety is undeniably most charming in the flower-garden, and it is a pity, therefore, to devote the entire stock of your beds for bedding-out plants only. Such a system is artificial, and entails both time and expense. It implies either a green-house, and therefore a gardener all the year round, or a large outlay every June at the nurseryman's. Take care, then, those especially who cannot boast of the luxury of a green-house, to



have the garden well stocked at the proper time of the year with some of the good old-fashioned hardy herbaceous plants. A glance at a well-to-do cottager's garden is always a delight, and seems to carry the memory back to a time when we were more simple, more solid, and more genuine in our tastes than in these go-ahead days, when every one's ambition seems only to outdo his neighbour.

A few annuals, a few geraniums, a few calceolarias, &c., interspersed among your now sturdy-looking herbaceous plants, has then the most pleasing effect, and is certainly the most inexpensive. When well and closely pegged down, petunias have a very gay appearance on a bank; or, if you bed them out on a level surface, stake them in the centre of your arrangement, and peg down those on the edge. By this means you will secure by-and-by quite a pyramid of elegant blossom, especially if you have had an eye to the right combination of colours.

The roses will want some attention. Go over them carefully, and pick out those wretched little maggots that you will unhappily, doubtless, find concealed under their small web on the leaves, which are quite closed up in consequence, and always in the immediate proximity of a bud, on which the maggot sweetly feeds; the result being either the total destruction of the rose, or else its only partial development. A good syringing will much improve your standards, but avoid this if they are in full bloom, which will probably hardly be the case just yet. An easy and effectual syringing preparation is made from a small quantity of soft-soap thoroughly well mixed in a pail of water, flavoured, as a cook would say, with just a suspicion of turpentine. A second syringing with plain water should follow this medicinal treatment.

The lawn will, of course, give trouble now. But do not idly postpone paying attention to it and allow the grass to grow too long before mowing it. Ten days, in these luxuriant months, is the limit of time that you must suffer to elapse between each visit with your mowing machine, which some gardeners would use as often as once a week. But here again do not be too rigid in your rule, as in a warm, wet week you may, vulgarly speaking, "almost see the grass grow;" whereas, in a dry bout of east wind or a long drought, your grass will be comparatively stationary. Give, then, the preference of your attention to the most urgent needs of your garden. Your grass will serve many purposes: scatter it under advancing strawberries; pile it in heaps round your cucumber or melon frames, to add to their heat and assist in its retention; or, if you rejoice in a solitary pig, she will delight in it, and soon tread it into fine manure for your garden.

Among the fruit-trees and vegetables we shall, of course, find endless occupation. As we have this year a good prospect of abundant fruit, thinning out should be done with judgment. If you become greedy or unwise enough to attempt the perfection of more fruit on a single arm of your tree than it is capable of nourishing, you will probably fail in the full maturity of all, and considerably deteriorate and exhaust your tree, for in the following year two or three peaches or

nectarines on each tree will very likely be the limit of your harvest. But, indeed, it is well known that a fruit-tree generally requires a year to recover itself after a prolific season. On the other hand, do not thin out your trees unduly, as you must make allowance for some fruit that will be sure to drop while the process of stoning is going on, not to speak of unforeseen casualties against which it is impossible to provide.

The young shoots, when your trees are in really good condition, may be thinned out alike from your peaches, nectarines, and apricots. This again requires judicious management, as you must not exhaust your tree; some young wood, of course, must be retained and nailed in. The whole process must necessarily vary in accordance with the condition and position of the several arms of the tree. You will find, as the month of June advances, that your wall-fruit is being rapidly concealed from the sun by the luxuriance of the young shoots, unless they are removed or nailed in, so that the most non-professional eye would at once detect that something was amiss were they allowed to remain. From your apple-trees remove also all suckers and young shoots that have started up below the grafts, and if you are careful to husband up everything that may be of use in your garden, do not afterwards throw these shoots away as useless; they are nearly always long, pliant, straight, young wood, which you will find of great use in your green-house and among the flowers for tying up and supporting weak and straggling branches.

The raspberry-canes, too, will be weakened if you allow all the young ones to remain; only retain, therefore, sufficient for your next year's supply. If this be neglected, the result will be not only a scanty supply of raspberries, but they will be small, meagre, and poor in quality as well.

Much, of course, might be said upon the general management of the kitchen garden. Potatoes should not be earthed up too much; if they have been planted a good depth—say some six inches underground, or thereabouts—they will hardly require any earthing up, but, at any rate, you must take care that your young potatoes are not exposed to view, or they will become green by the action of the air, and are then useless.

Most vegetable crops will need thinning out now. There is always, too, a demand upon parsley, and the present month is a good one for sowing; spinach, peas, lettuce, turnips—all may be still put in. Vegetable marrows like a rich, light soil; an old hot-bed is an admirably adapted site for them, or they, as time goes on, can be afterwards trained to run over and conceal any ugly corner. Celery should also now be pricked out and planted in a good rich and shaded situation. If you are at a loss for shade, take care to have a row of scarlet-runners near your celery trench; this will greatly assist the young plants.

Unlike the celery, we are, however, only too glad to bask in the sunshine of a June day. Once more: the early morning is the time for gardening; at all events, the birds think so, as you will see to your cost if you pay a stealthy visit between 4 and 5 a.m. to your now rapidly colouring cherry-tree, where you will find whole families of the feathered tribe at breakfast.

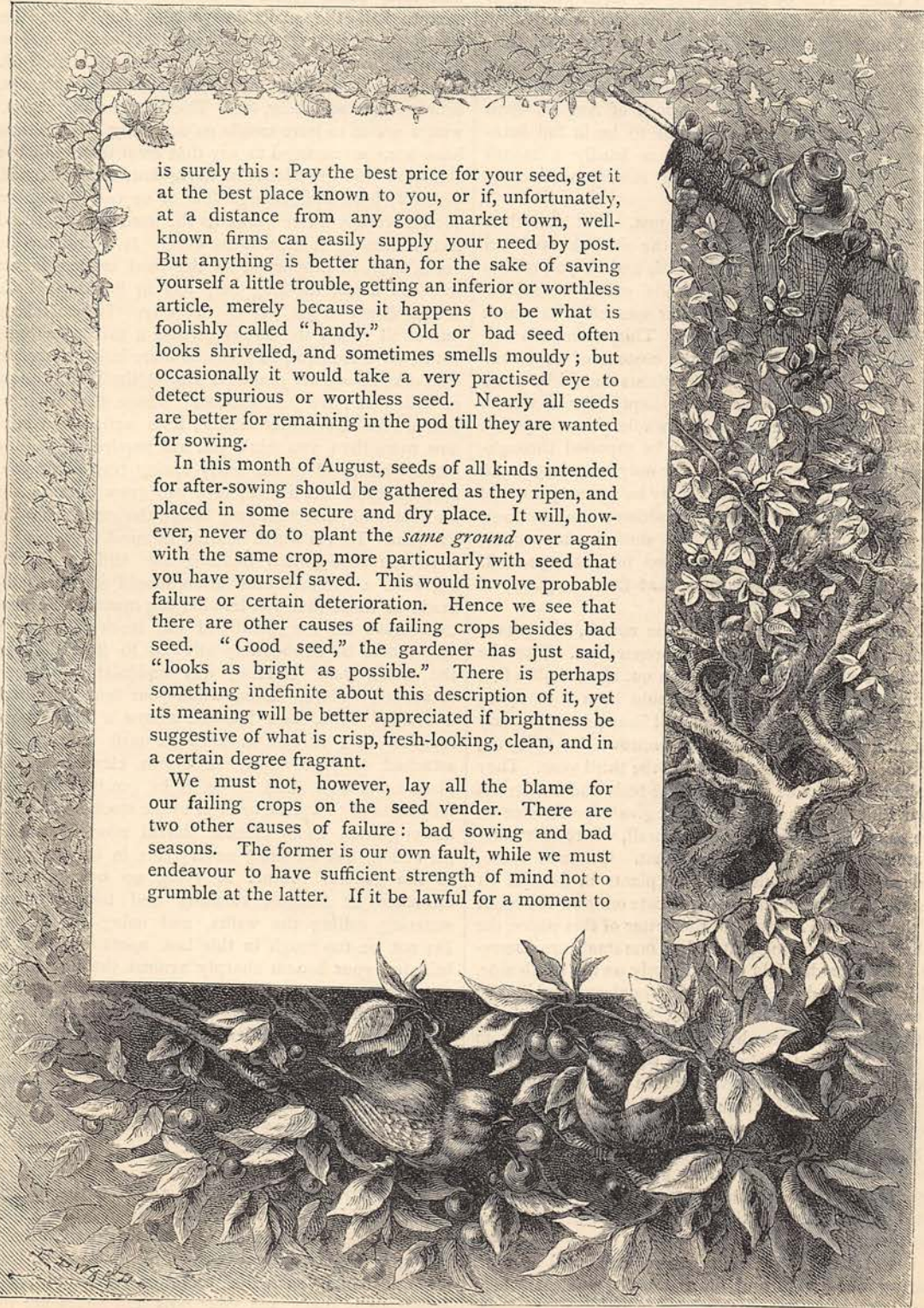


GARDENING IN AUGUST.

THE privilege of farmers to grumble is notorious; probably we may extend a like privilege to gardeners; therefore we will begin our observations on August gardening with a grumble, by a record of what Mr. Brown, as he was sticking the peas, said to his master, who was a few weeks ago taking his usual morning stroll round the kitchen garden.

"I question very much, sir, if any out-door grapes of the cottagers ripen this season, unless we very soon have a regular set-in hot season to bring them on. I never see'd anything so backward, no, not as long as I can remember at all, as things have been this year. Why, here's the middle of June, and there ain't no roses out yet nowhere, not even guelder roses; and I am sorry to say, sir, please, my beet-root and carrot seed has all failed, and I shall want some more, and we must try again."

This latter appeal at once arrested the attention of the master, who forthwith began to expatiate upon the importance of the *quality* of the seed bought, and the trustworthiness, capabilities, and status of the vender. Nothing, perhaps, is more ruinous or disheartening to a gardener than to discover, after a month's patient observation, that the carefully prepared beds have been sown with *old* or spurious seed; there is the blank ground enlivened only here and there by a solitary onion or bean, as the case may be, with a nice little weed-show to boot, the season advanced and the chance of a future crop almost hopeless. It is a bitter lesson to learn, but the moral



is surely this: Pay the best price for your seed, get it at the best place known to you, or if, unfortunately, at a distance from any good market town, well-known firms can easily supply your need by post. But anything is better than, for the sake of saving yourself a little trouble, getting an inferior or worthless article, merely because it happens to be what is foolishly called "handy." Old or bad seed often looks shrivelled, and sometimes smells mouldy; but occasionally it would take a very practised eye to detect spurious or worthless seed. Nearly all seeds are better for remaining in the pod till they are wanted for sowing.

In this month of August, seeds of all kinds intended for after-sowing should be gathered as they ripen, and placed in some secure and dry place. It will, however, never do to plant the *same ground* over again with the same crop, more particularly with seed that you have yourself saved. This would involve probable failure or certain deterioration. Hence we see that there are other causes of failing crops besides bad seed. "Good seed," the gardener has just said, "looks as bright as possible." There is perhaps something indefinite about this description of it, yet its meaning will be better appreciated if brightness be suggestive of what is crisp, fresh-looking, clean, and in a certain degree fragrant.

We must not, however, lay all the blame for our failing crops on the seed vender. There are two other causes of failure: bad sowing and bad seasons. The former is our own fault, while we must endeavour to have sufficient strength of mind not to grumble at the latter. If it be lawful for a moment to

step out of our province, we may remind our readers of what a great preacher once said when he warned his hearers against the "profanity of being out of temper with God." But by bad sowing we mean putting in seed at too great depth, or at an insufficient depth, or in soil imperfectly or indifferently prepared. Of this, however, we spoke in our March issue of the present year. It may perhaps be asked what need is there to speak of seed-sowing in the month of August, when everything is popularly supposed to be in full luxuriance? We reply that there is hardly a month throughout the year in which *some* sowing must not be done.

Take then this month of August. Not later than the first day of grouse-shooting, the old-fashioned and perfectly correct idea is that Welsh and Tripoli onions should be sown for drawing while young for salads. By the same date also the winter spinach—that most useful article—should be got in. This, when it is well up, should be thinned out; the custom of some has even been to plant it out. The plants should be some nine inches apart and carefully kept clear of weeds. In summer time very often the whole plant is pulled at once, but the dinner-table can be supplied throughout the winter, by picking off only the large and outside leaves. Lettuces too may be sown again, and by even the end of the month cauliflower may be sown for preserving under a frame during the winter. Choose also a good open situation for cabbage-seed. It is sufficiently evident, then, that there is plenty of sowing to be done in August.

Not later than the 12th of the month, also, have your new strawberry-beds in preparation. Use the strongest runners and plant them out about half a foot apart in a row: your rows should be a foot apart. They require a good rich soil, will bear perhaps poorly the first year, but will much improve the following season, and be in their perfection the third year. They make an admirable edging to the beds and borders of your fruit or kitchen garden, but give a preference to the south side or under a south wall, where naturally most fruit ripens best and earliest. Common sense, indeed, tells us to put the hardy plants in general on the north side, and the more delicate ones on the south of the garden. A friend of the writer of this paper, the other day, was saying that he had one small strawberry-bed in his garden laid out purposely on the north side, which he called the "children's strawberry-bed." The meaning of all this was that his children did not return home for their holidays until the first week in August, and he therefore had a strawberry-bed ready for them to pull, by cultivating it in a spot where the fruit would be fully three weeks behind the rest—an ingenious idea which, it may be hardly necessary to state, met with the full concurrence of the younger members of the family. Very probably, however, this year much of our ordinary July fruit will not come in until quite the end of that month, or the beginning of the next.

Insects and vermin in general are hard at work among our trees, and on the walls, against which we can only suggest partial, but not effectual re-

medies. After all, it is *persistent industry* that tells most in a garden. When a sharp thunder-shower has come and gone, twenty minutes' walk under your fruit-wall after dark, with a lantern, will enable you to capture half the snails in your garden, while the wasps—those irrepressible and insolent thieves—can be decoyed by the old-fashioned bottles half filled with some luscious and gummy preparation: honey, treacle, brown sugar and beer, &c. The last terribly severe winter seems to have taught us one thing. Gardeners have been accustomed to say that great frosts kill the slugs, but the experience of most of us has, after all, probably been that, though few of us can remember such a terribly bitter winter as the past, the slugs and snails seem as numerous as ever. It would merely seem, then, in proportion as the frost strikes deeper into the earth, the slug only has to burrow a little further down to get out of the way. Before taking our stroll round the flower-garden, it might be worth while, for a moment, to give one more hint relative to that odoriferous but practical subject, the Tripoli onion of which we have just spoken. Those that we now sow are for our winter salads; it is well, however, to sow more than you think you will require for pulling when small, and in the early spring transplant your surplus stock into a bed; they will grow enormously, and come to perfection long before the general crop of the year. This is worth bearing in mind.

In the rose-garden budding can still be carried on, while a careful examination should constantly be made of those that you budded last month. Be sure to remove all the growth of the stock itself, as if any shoots be deliberately allowed to flourish upon the stock, your budding will undeniably prove a disastrous failure. Even when your bud has made a decided start, and become almost a long shoot, recollect that it can at present, until more firmly attached to your stock, be blown clean out of its place by a high wind, so let it be gently and carefully secured to a stick, or even to the stock itself. The flower-garden itself, indeed, should now be in full perfection, but we must never relax in our attention to the general routine of tying up over-luxuriant branches or boughs, cleaning and trimming and watering, rolling the walks, and using the broom. Do not be too rough in this last operation, and by bringing your broom sharply against the box-edging carry off with your dust and débris the foliage from the bottom part of the box, and thus practically have your garden bordered with a row of little dry dead-looking sticks merely topped with green.

If it be a dry hot season—and we may fairly hope that it will be after the unprecedented rains—do not use the mowing machine too much, or the grass may die, and you will have a brown instead of a green lawn.

Those auriculas whose roots are matted will now require shifting into larger pots, but it will be time by the middle of the month that we paid attention to taking our stock of cuttings of all half-hardy bedding-out plants, such as verbenas, geraniums, &c. When all is done, and your pots and boxes are full

of your supply for the following season, put them all into your frames or greenhouse, and after they have well struck give plenty of ventilation, top them as they advance, so as to have them bushy and shrubby rather than lanky, and water regularly. It may be as well here to hint at the best time of year for painting your frames and greenhouse. The melon-frame of course cannot be touched just now, so that this or your cucumber-frames are better painted in the early spring, before you are getting up your heat previous to putting in your young plants; but as the greenhouse is probably empty now, it is better painted in August, just before your cuttings are ready to go in, when perhaps the worst of the blistering heat, or of the deluging thunderstorms, is beginning to be a thing of the past. It is false economy to delay too long the painting of your greenhouse, as otherwise the wood is liable to decay and the putty to come off wholesale, and some of your glass begins to get loose, slip, and break. Early autumn then is, we think, the best time to have the painters in the garden.

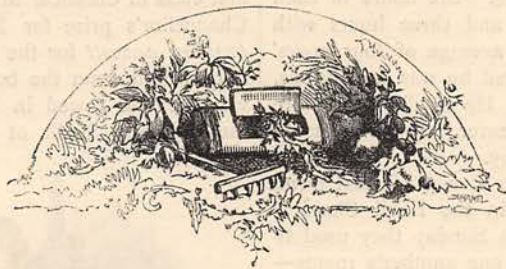
Attention also must be paid this month to the layering of carnations and picotees—a process that we have on a former occasion fully described. Dahlias are, of course, now in their perfection, which however the unfriendly earwig is too fond of marring, and it is very difficult to keep him away.

Early in the month perennial seed may be sown, and in something under three months' time the young

plants should be set out in nursery-beds to gain strength; but it is better, perhaps, to plant earlier in the year—June or July—so as to have your plants thoroughly strong before the winter sets in.

The anemone—always a favourite—may be sown now. The soil should be rich and light, and if the season be a very dry one, give the ground a good soaking first of all, and even sometimes after your seeds are put in. Cover your seeds thoroughly, but not too deeply.

Canterbury bells, seedling wall-flowers, and sweet-williams, which you may have in your seed-bed, should now be planted out in the place in which they are to bloom in the following year. These belong to the good old-fashioned sort: all the less therefore are they to be despised, in these days of artificial sham and unreality. One little piece of further general advice, it may not be out of place to give. In this generally dry month, we are often raking over and tidying our beds, and in so doing the labels are very liable to get pulled off your trees; do not therefore make yourself ridiculous by re-adjusting them wrongly, and in after-days degrading yourself in the eyes of some friendly itinerant connoisseur. Now that your plants are in full vigour and foliage, there can be no excuse for blunders of this kind. But it is sad to think that summer is already on the wane, and those of us who love it will soon be looking wistfully, if not tearfully, at “the last rose.”



OLD COMRADES.

BY THE REV. M. G. WATKINS, M.A.



PLEASANT when long-loved scenes thus meet
A stroller in the crowded street;
More pleasant, here withdrawn a space,
To recollect each well-known face—
Comrades who wait their last command
For service in the Distant Land.

And not these only I recall,
Neighbours in chapel, garden, hall,
But gallant friends—a long array—

Cut off on many a bloody day,
When England's flag o'er death waved free,
Pointing her sons to victory.

Needs must the painter touch his heart
Who in such struggles bore a part;
Old England may the world defy
While thus her children dare to die,
While veterans wrestling win by prayer
For old age solace, peace for care.



THE GARDEN AND ORCHARD IN OCTOBER.



TIME is hurrying us along, and we have hardly finished our grumble at losing the best of our summer months when we find ourselves gazing at the silent fall of "the sear and yellow leaf."

Not unmindful, nevertheless, of the grave lesson which this season of decay and decline

brings with it, we have made up our minds to make the best use of the few dry days left to us, and get in our apples and pears, for those long soldier-like rows of well-laden trees are suggestive of plenty of work.

Before, however, entering much into detail relative to the fruit harvest in general, it may be as well to say something in the first place of the early formation and routine management of the orchard itself.

And what we shall have to say on this head will be singularly *apropos* at this time, for it is in this very month of October, or at the latest in November, that an orchard should be planted. Now the importance of *some* deliberation before selecting our site for an orchard must be at once apparent to any one who reflects upon the after-impossibility of digging up apple and pear and cherry trees, and quietly attempting to "bed them out" like geraniums.

For the site of our orchard, then, avoid, first of all, a shallow soil, a swampy or low situation, and a northern aspect. Perhaps the most desirable situation is afforded by a gentle slope that looks south or south-east. A wall also on the north side is a great advantage not only for the shelter which it affords, but for the growth of trained fruit-trees, whether peach, nectarine, pear, or plum, &c. This, however, is a luxury not within the reach of us all.

Next, the soil should be well trenched and well drained. A good depth of loam is certainly desirable. The trenching should be quite two feet, nor need it much matter if a little of the hungry soil finds its way to the top in the process. Then, as to the choice of trees, it is obviously not more difficult to stock your land with a good than with a bad sort; it would be little to our purpose to enumerate the almost endless variety that can be so readily obtained. Choose, of course, the best cropping kinds, always bearing in mind and naming to the vendor any peculiarity or speciality of your soil, aspect, &c.

Your plants should be young and not too "lanky;" the roots should be taken up as carefully as possible, and every shoot in each root that has a tendency to grow downwards should be cut off before planting. It is advisable also to reduce the head of your young tree in the same proportion that you have found it necessary to prune the root. Any branch, too, in particular, which seems inclined to grow directly upwards—in the perpendicular, in fact—should especially be shortened, as it is evidently so difficult and inconvenient in after-years to gather fruit from a branch that has been thus allowed to develop itself. Plant

your trees, say, twenty feet from each other in rows, and your rows some forty feet apart. The rows should stand east and west so as to get all the sun possible. It may seem at first sight unnecessary to allow as much as forty feet between the rows, but the object of all this space is to allow the sun to shine even down to the very roots on the south side. Have then ten feet of grass on each side of your rows of trees; you will still have twenty feet of soil between your rows for any general kitchen garden purpose.

Those of us, however, who have our apple and pear trees in their perfection, are now happily busily engaged in gathering and storing the fruit. Take particular care not to bruise your apples in the process of gathering them, or they will never have any keeping properties. Much has been said as to the best method of preserving fruit from decay, but with as yet very little positive result: perhaps, after all, putting them upon shelves and covering them entirely with straw is as good a plan as any. Old apple-trees if they show signs of decay in poverty of fruit, or if the fruit looks rusty and cracks, should about the end of this month be well manured, and this, with a good sharp thinning out and pruning, will probably restore your tree to its original vigour. This, however, is only worth doing in the case of any tree that has been a thoroughly good fruit-bearing one. A sickly large tree that has for years given thorough dissatisfaction had better be sacrificed at once, and its place occupied by a new one.

This year probably all our fruit will be poor, small, and scarce. Peaches and nectarines were hardly in a more advanced state in the first week of August than they generally are by the middle of June. We often hear it remarked, however, by way of consolation in a bad season, that "somehow or other it always comes right in the end." This was certainly the case with our strawberries and currants and gooseberries towards the end of July, for we heard of large and plentiful crops in many places, and certainly our London shops and stalls teemed with gallons of fruit.

It is, however, apparent that fruit which under any circumstances does not ripen much before Michaelmas, has but a poor chance if a season is some six or eight weeks in arrear.

Dig now between your currant and gooseberry bushes; cuttings of wood of the present year's growth may be taken now from them some six inches in length, and then inserted four inches into the soil in some nice shady border. From the strawberry-beds, too, cut off all the runners and large yellow leaves. A capital dressing for your strawberries is the very waste of itself, so dig all in. It is a little late for making new beds: the middle of August is the proper time.

In the kitchen garden, choose a good dry day for taking up your beet-root, using every precaution to avoid breaking or bruising; leave the small roots untouched, and remove the leaves some three inches from the crown. Carrots likewise may be taken up,

but they are perhaps fresher when only got up as they are required. Persevere in earthing up the celery on a dry day, while any heads that are starting to seed should be removed. Run the hoe through the winter crop of onions, and the same also with the spinach, which will probably require thinning out. Towards the end of the month, make a good planting of cabbages to come in early in the spring. If your soil be poor, get in some manure; and if it be wet, form it into small banks or ridges; it is better, too, to plant out more than you think at first that you will require, as many will probably fail in the course of the winter. Old melon or cucumber frames that have done their work for the season can now be utilised with advantage for the raising of small salad or even for mushroom-rooms; indeed there can never be any excuse for allowing a square yard of land to lie idle at any time of the year. There is always plenty to be done, and a little experience is the best instructor. In any out-of-the-way corner of the garden plant out cabbage-stalks from all places where the crop is over; they will afterwards afford plenty of excellent dishes of sprouts, nor can your stalks be too thickly put in.

Something however must be said of the flower-garden, the greenhouse, and shubbery, &c. Evergreens, if they are to be removed, may yet be left for awhile without any damage to their after well-being, but any other alteration among deciduous shrubs should now be commenced. Our chief business however, this month, is the removal of our bedding-out plants—geraniums, verbenas, petunias, &c.—from the open into house-room for their winter protection. We generally find our small greenhouse nearly full before this operation is anything like completed. Some of the larger geraniums can be cut down and almost crammed together into an old box and put even under your green-house stand. Very likely *some* will damp off during the winter, but the greater portion of them will live. Even if you have no glass at all, the experiment is well worth trying in a shed or cellar, or wherever you can find thorough protection from the action of frost or excess of damp. In the month of March your geranium stalks will at least require some light, and as the leaves begin to develop themselves a little, pot them off. It is very satisfactory when the time for bedding-out, in the middle of May, next comes round, to find that a little forethought and painstaking has rendered a visit to the nurseryman almost unnecessary—for it is astonishing, where there is much bedding-out room, what an enormous number of plants is requisite even to make at all a respectable appearance, and the expense to meet this demand is heavy. To get over the difficulty in the most practical and economical way, we can only revert to

what we have so often hinted at before: have your garden quite half stocked with hardy herbaceous plants. The popular sweet-william, a biennial, looks well, more particularly when there is plenty of it. It often seeds itself and gives but little trouble. All perennials indeed should now be looked over; where too large or overgrown they should be parted, and the portions taken carefully off with the spade should be planted out where they are most wanted. All this process will thus reduce your space for bedding-out plants, which in many cases is the thing that we desire, especially when we have no glass. Plant out now in your beds and borders your early spring flowers—hepaticas, primroses, violets, anemones, and the wall-flowers. Get in the bulbs, too, this month and even in the next; have some regard to their colour and height, and let such as crocuses, snowdrops, narcissus, &c., be put in masses and not singly. The crocus and snowdrop, as the most dwarf, should be in the front; jonquils and hyacinths, &c., a foot further back, and behind them another flower that lifts its head a little higher still. Due regard to these little matters of taste and arrangement is, after all, the secret of much of the beauty of a flower-garden. By the end of the month the greenhouse will doubtless be crowded to excess; this is bad, but perhaps we cannot help it, though recollect that overcrowding is as much an evil in the garden as it is in the by-ways of our large cities. The inmates grow sickly and pine for fresh air; give them therefore all that you possibly can; it is always an error on the safe side, although perhaps the popular and vulgar notion of a greenhouse is a glass building erected for the purpose only of magnifying the power of the sun and of excluding air entirely. It is, we hope, unnecessary to expatiate on this delusion; we merely want to exclude frost, and even a degree of that would not be the death of probably the greater number of your plants under cover. Constant waterings on a small scale are also a mistake; the better plan is to give a good soaking when you handle the watering-pot at all, and then not to use it again for some little time. Indeed during the winter months very little watering is necessary. Do not, either, be too fond of making up a great fire; a fire during wet days is often a good plan, with the lights down a little way, to be rid of the damp.

October is, certainly one of our untidy months, for the leaves keep falling apace; this will keep the broom actively employed, but utilise carefully the dead leaves in some dry place; they are useful for a shelter or for your sea-kale, especially when you do not go in for the luxury of a row of pots. Pre-eminently indeed we may say of the garden that its motto should be—"Waste not, want not."

