

OUR GARDEN IN JANUARY.



IT is not merely because it is the opening of another year, but because it is this very month of January, when nearly everything in our garden is in a dormant state, that we ought to devote ourselves to heavy trenching; and we wish to impress upon all amateurs the importance just now of an efficient and thorough preparation of the soil for crops of all kinds. This, perhaps some will say, is very elementary advice; but for all that, it is astonishing how necessary it is to enforce it. Ill-prepared soil most certainly entails either a poor and meagre crop or an almost complete failure. One enthusiastic old gardener, however, the writer can well recall, at a time when a sudden and severe frost had put a stop to many gardening operations, used of necessity under these circumstances to discard his spade, for the ground was too hard to go on with it, but the pick was resorted to in its place, and large lumps of earth were turned over, and thus exposed to all the benefit accruing from the action of the frost.

Not only outside are we thus engaged in tough and healthy work, but in our greenhouse we are carefully watching the progress of our little stock that it is a pleasure to see thriving so well, when everything else, though only a foot away from the house, is perhaps ice-bound.

The early spring flowers are having a good deal of our attention, those naturally having the most that we expect to bloom the earliest. And as by February those gay and popular varieties of the cineraria ought to begin to show their floescence, it may be as well to say a few words this month about the culture of the cineraria, before giving a few hints as to the general gardening operations for January.

And first, then, as to the soil in which it thrives best. Loam, peat, and well-decomposed manure is the preparation perhaps most recommended. The seed may be sown in wide or shallow pots or pans, and about the month of May. Keep them pretty moist, and in shade under a frame. When your plants are well up, and have developed some half-dozen leaves, or even less, prick them out singly, and in rather richer soil, in small pots of the size known as sixties. During the summer months your young seedlings, if well attended to, standing in a dry place and well watered, will do very well in the open. A little later they will bear shifting into pots a size larger, and about Michaelmas they must be taken into your greenhouse, and placed on shelves near the glass.

As we remarked at the outset, in the early spring they will begin to flower, and then, of course, is the time in which to see what sorts are the most worth preserving. Perhaps we should, therefore, have said at first that it is of the greatest importance, when you go through the long process of raising from seed, to take care that the seed is taken

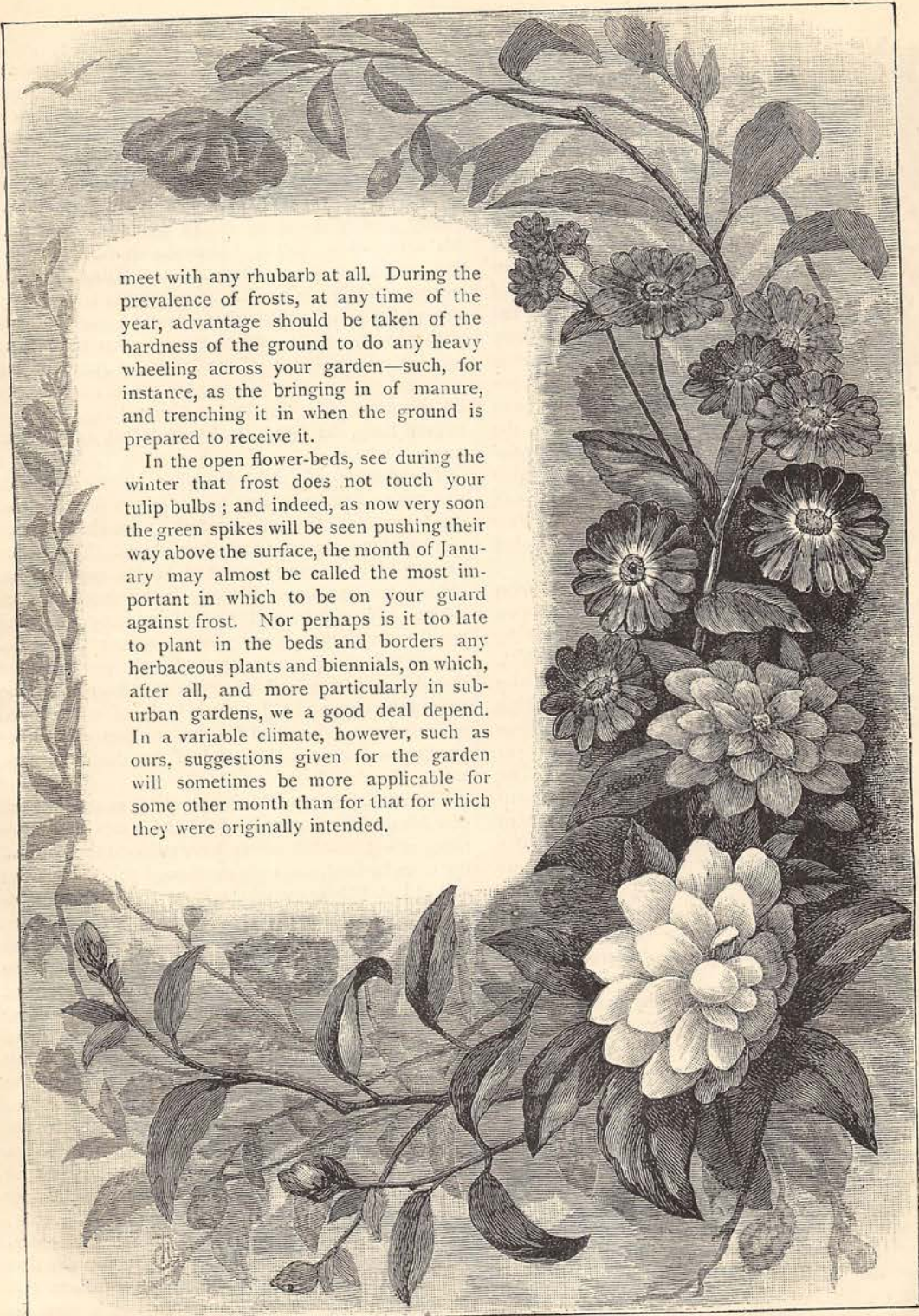
from the very finest and best specimens. Those that have the broadest petals are generally the most admired and sought after, but sometimes the colouring is very rich even in those that have smaller petals.

To propagate from cuttings, when your plant has done blooming cut down the stem, stir the earth well on the surface, throwing away the upper and loose part of it; then fill up your pot with fresh compost—of course of a kind similar to that already in your pot—and let the pot be well filled too. Give a little water, and place your pots in a frame, or failing that, in a dry and sheltered part of your garden. In a few weeks' time you will notice some side-shoots, some with roots to them, and some with hardly any. Those side-shoots that seem well rooted may be at once potted off into your small sixty-sized pots, and treated afterwards just as you would those that have been raised from seed. Those which seem rootless should then be stripped of two or three of their bottom leaves, and set out in a pot or large pan—of course in similar soil, but with the addition of a little sand at the top—and finally covered with a bell-glass. Keep them always moist, and not exposed to the air until they have struck. Or should you have a hotbed, of course a little bottom heat will materially assist them to strike if they are placed under your frame. Raising from cuttings, then, would almost seem preferable to raising from seed.

We must, however, give some attention to more general gardening matters. There are, for instance, just now under our glass the camellias, which we should be tending very carefully. As their buds rapidly begin to expand, let the plants be properly watered, or the buds will fall off. Any sudden or great variation of the temperature is liable to produce a similar disaster.

And in open and favourable weather—during, that is, the absence of frost—trees may, all through a mild winter, be planted in your fruit-garden and orchard. Gooseberry and currant bushes should be planted in a row across your garden: it is a mistake to have them put in only here and there, without order or method. Or if your raspberry canes have been hitherto neglected—which is too often the case—they may even yet be seen to, the number of canes reduced to not more than three or four, and all the weak ones cut away, as allowing these or too many to remain on only tends to impoverish your canes, and therefore your fruit. Have some good digging done between your rows of canes, and get some manure in as well.

By the end of the month the rhubarb may be covered over with boxes, and surrounded with hot stable manure to force it on. As a rule, however, it is perhaps the most economical plan to let it take its own course, even in a mild winter, for the cold spring which almost invariably follows is liable to terribly injure even so hardy a thing as our rhubarb; and this was the case in March of last year, when the frosts were so severe that for a time it was difficult to



meet with any rhubarb at all. During the prevalence of frosts, at any time of the year, advantage should be taken of the hardness of the ground to do any heavy wheeling across your garden—such, for instance, as the bringing in of manure, and trenching it in when the ground is prepared to receive it.

In the open flower-beds, see during the winter that frost does not touch your tulip bulbs; and indeed, as now very soon the green spikes will be seen pushing their way above the surface, the month of January may almost be called the most important in which to be on your guard against frost. Nor perhaps is it too late to plant in the beds and borders any herbaceous plants and biennials, on which, after all, and more particularly in suburban gardens, we a good deal depend. In a variable climate, however, such as ours, suggestions given for the garden will sometimes be more applicable for some other month than for that for which they were originally intended.

wife, and I should like to have a peep at that trust-deed before I positively commit myself by a proposal, even were I sure of its acceptance."

"Now, Sir R., do you take me for a green hand or a gone gony? I'd be thankful to know," retorted Crouch, with a sort of savage jocularity. "Do you really think I keep a sort of Doctors' Commons registry, where wills can be inspected by the public at large for the small fee of one shilling? I know what I have got to sell, and what you have got to buy, and the value of it. Heiresses, especially when they are pretty and young, with seventy thousand pounds, don't often go a-begging, I somehow think. Set your mind at rest, Sir R., as to there being a real trust, a real sum, and heavy back dividends which represent a pretty penny. Ah! you may look about you. The document you are thinking of is not in yonder locker, nor on that shelf, nor yet in the chest in the corner. I didn't keep company with American hunters without learning what a *cache* means, or how to stow away what is best kept from prying eyes. But the question is, Sir R., whether you please the girl's fancy, or believe you do, enough to count on a 'Yes' if you asked for it. You're an old hand, and should have wheedling ways at command. And you are a man of title. Would little Miss Violet take you, if you pressed your suit? Because if she wouldn't, it's labour lost. I couldn't marry her, a rough, ill-favoured chap like me," added the digger resentfully; "but you are one of the smooth sort."

"I cannot tell," replied Sir Richard, with apparent frankness. "These young, inexperienced girls know so little about their own hearts, that an outsider may well be at fault. As a friendly acquaintance, if not as a friend, I believe Miss Mowbray does regard me. I have been able to interest her often with conversation or anecdotes about other lands and people unlike those with whom she has been brought in contact. And as my sister, Lady Thorsdale, is going to assemble a lot of fine company—or what does duty for such—at the Park, my plan was to introduce the Langtons and their beautiful ward, and in the stir and excitement of a life new to Violet to—"

"Pop the question, eh, Sir R.?" interrupted Rufus. "Ay, and see, too, that no girlish whim prevents its

being answered in the affirmative. Mind also that you don't try the dangerous game of playing fast and loose with *me*. I'm almost sick, I tell you, of this worn-out old country. As for jet-hunting, the Chinese curs that shift the refuse of our gold-heaps make a better living than we do. I dream every night of the cabbage-palms, and the blue gum-trees, and the cradle-rocking, and the claims marked out along the quartz reef. Nothing keeps me here except the seventy thousand pounds, and the heavy sum of dividends unclaimed. You must go in and win, Sir R. Better marry than go to gaol, and that's just the choice you've got before you. They wouldn't hurt me, bless you! I'm Queen's Evidence. But you, Sir R., would be made an example of, and if you didn't die in prison—I've known gentlemen forgers and such-like pine and die so—a nice time you'd have of it when your term of penal servitude was over, and you were up in town again, not daring to go up the steps of your club, and—Why, Sir R., you look as white as a turnip—you'll faint, I think. Try this."

As Crouch spoke, he rose, snatched a wine-glass from the cumbered shelf near him, filled it to the brim with fiery liquor from the stoneware bottle, and handed it to the baronet, who accepted it with some hesitation, but swallowed its contents. "I think I'll go now," said Sir Richard, rising from his seat. Nor did Rufus, who was probably satisfied with the terror his threats had inspired, care to detain his guest. He also rose from the turf-creel on which he had hitherto been seated, unbolted the clumsily constructed door, and silenced by a volley of curses and a well-aimed stone or two the frenzied barking with which the dogs saluted the stranger. "Make your hay while the sun shines, if you're wise, Sir R.," said the fellow, as he watched the baronet unhitch the bridle of his horse from the willow stump, and mount, and even then there was a ring of menace in his tone.

"I shan't forget your counsel, Rufus," replied the baronet mildly. "Now, good-bye." And he rode off. Rufus Crouch, shading his restless eyes with his broad hand, watched the figure of the retreating horseman till it was lost to sight, and then, with a chuckling laugh, as if of triumph, retired to his den.

END OF CHAPTER THE TWELFTH.

OUR GARDEN IN FEBRUARY.



FEBRUARY always brings with it a world of work to do in the garden, for in this, the first of the early spring months, not only do we begin to notice the green spears and spikes of our hardy perennials shooting up, thus once more pointing out to us more clearly what spaces we have left between them for sowing our annuals, or by-and-by for planting our bedding-out flowers, but the month for re-potting a large portion of our stock under glass has also come

round—not to speak of the attention that we have now to pay to our flower-beds.

We can, however, attend to but one thing at a time, and the mention of these green spikes reminds us that among them are those of that popular spring flower, the tulip. Perhaps, then, before giving a few general hints for the garden this month, something may be said as to the best method of successfully cultivating the tulip.

And first as to the kind of soil best adapted for this

flower. It is always advisable to have at the end of the garden large heaps of soil in various stages, so as to have some ready for use when wanted for, say, the formation of a new bed. One heap—and the one for the making of our tulip bed which we now require—should certainly be that of decaying turf. The surface of a good loamy pasture will give us material for this; and a good load of this should be laid up in a heap to rot, and after it has been so rotting for a twelvemonth, is in condition for our purpose just now. One thing, however, it is very important to notice, and it is this: our loam-heap should be free from all vermin, wire-worm, and living creatures of every kind; so that after it has been some six months laid up, chop it all through, and throw your thus examined soil into another heap. No harm is ever done by repeating this



operation at intervals, so that for an assiduous amateur gardener here is an admirable occupation for what we from custom erroneously call "the flat season" of the year. In the garden there is never a day all the year round in which there cannot always be found plenty to do. And unfortunately grubs and wireworms are particularly partial to turf; and yet this rotting of the turf in the loam is recommended as the best sort of manure for tulips. Failing this, then, we must mix with our loam some good leaf-mould, one-fourth part being of this and the remaining three made up of the loam soil merely. And for our tulip bed the ordinary

plan is to dig out a space some two feet deep and fill up with your fresh soil of which we have been speaking, and then in the month of November we plant our bulbs, having their tops quite three inches under the surface; and, unless the frost be intensely severe, we need think little about protection for our bulbs, until about the time when their green spears are pushing their way above the ground.

In this month of February then—and of course after a mild winter it may be necessary to do it even earlier still—we begin to stir the surface of the soil all round, bruising and pulverising every lump, and bringing the soil well round the small green stems. And next as to the protection against frost which it may be necessary to give: put over the beds a few bent hoops or irons, and over these throw matting or cloth; this protection, too, keeps off hail or very violent rain, which might damage the brittle foliage. As soon as the plants begin to show a little colour they will want also this protection from the sun; the early morning sun, or the hour before sunset, being all that they care to have. And yet they want plenty of air, so that they seem to be rather troublesome flowers altogether, though they look very effective when all the rows are in fine blooming order. A little pains, however, in watching them, and in so arranging your protection that it may be speedily shifted according to the direction of the sun's rays, and in fact a little common sense, is really all that is necessary.

A good mild shower of rain will positively do them good, a bright sun and a hard frost being the only things injurious to them; but the protection afforded by your hoops and matting should never be given unnecessarily, as air would otherwise be too much excluded from them. The best of the bloom being over, the covering can of course be removed, as the sun can do no manner of harm then. Keep, however, your bed free from weeds, as if they are allowed to flourish in your bed, they will certainly do their best to damage the bulbs. Next, do not take up your bulbs until the stem has died down quite half-way; but if you are in a hurry to promote this, and want your bed for some other purpose, no harm is done by picking off the little seed-vessels when the bloom has faded. Any small off-sets from your bulbs should be planted considerably earlier the following season, as when very small they are apt to dry up entirely. The seed of the tulip—if you wish to

try to raise from seed—can be sown as it ripens, or you can keep it till the following spring. If you have the advantage of a garden frame, sow your seed in pots about the time that you ordinarily put in bulbs, and have them under your glass; but with no glass, sow in April, and let your young plants go on growing until, in the wane of the year, their foliage has the melancholy tint of brown, when the little bulbs can be taken up and after awhile planted; but of course you cannot expect your bulbs to flower until a growth of some five or six years has been established.

In the general flower garden, anemones may for late blooming be planted this month, and in some sheltered situations by the middle of the month; and if the weather be at all favourable, you might sow in the open borders a few annuals of the hardiest kind, protecting them, say, with an inverted flower-pot, should the weather afterwards prove suddenly severe again. It is really well to try this experiment, as if you succeed by a little painstaking in bringing your annuals on, you will have a correspondingly early bloom, and by successional sowing you will have some annuals in flower from May till Michaelmas. Anything, too, in the way of box-edging or of the formation of gravel walks, or indeed of any great or radical change in the garden, should be at once pushed on and completed, as after February you will find it difficult to afford time for this.

In the kitchen garden a few onion bulbs may be planted out for seed, and a few of the seeds may also be sown now, to draw when quite young for salads. Peas sown late in the autumn will certainly be cut off now unless very careful protection be given them; the experiment of sowing them, then, unless in very sheltered spots, seems hardly worth trying; but at all events, a sowing of peas may be made this month, though of course there are many who recommend the sowing of peas every three weeks from the middle of November until the end of July. And in the fruit garden, cuttings of gooseberries and currants may be planted out, though with some fruit-trees, such for example as gooseberries, it is often well to plant in the summer time cuttings of the newly ripened wood; these readily then take root, and by the following spring are often fairly well established young plants. All pruning and nailing should go on now as quickly as possible, though it is best to let the peaches remain until the last.

THE RETURN TO SOLITUDE.

UNALTERABLY beautiful and calm,
 Thy patient, earnest eyes make fair the night,
 Where walk thy lovers, in their tranquil light,
 Drinking in strength, against the time to arm!
 O solitude! I, who have known thy charm,
 But left thy love, now worsted in the fight,
 Come to be healed and strengthened in thy might,

To walk and talk with thee till grief grows calm
 Oh! speak to me, and teach me as of yore,
 Out of the seal'd mysteries of thy lore,
 Teach me to smile on ills that men call fate;
 And, with the resolution that must win,
 Give me that grace that marks thy lovers kin,
 The patient majesty of those who wait.

WILFRED B. WOOLLAM, B.A.

would allow of the collection of the ammonia and of the tar oils, or other forms of what have been waste products. These two systems are those of Jameson, which has mainly been tried on the Tyne and in North Durham, and of Simon-Carves, which has been tried in England, near Crook, only. At Pease's West, Crook, are some of the coke ovens of the firm of Pease and Partners, who produce nearly three-quarters of a million tons of coke yearly by the old bee-hive oven, by the bee-hive oven with flues, and by the Simon-Carves system.

In the autumn of 1882 the firm began to make coke by the new system, having had twenty-five ovens erected, each oven being capable of holding $4\frac{1}{2}$ tons of coal. The cost of the erection of the ovens was over £5,600, but this includes some machinery that would also serve additional ovens. During over 200 days the results of the working were proved. They made out of the coal put into them 77 per cent. of coke—which is a much larger per-centage than that of ordinary ovens—and six gallons of tar, and 27 gallons of ammoniacal liquor per ton of coal, but there was a greater cost of labour in working these ovens. The coke, too, that was made was less columnar in structure, more in large circular blocks, and though it was very "dense" coke, it lacked the silvery brightness that was supposed to be requisite in the best quality. But in the opinion of the experienced manager it was "all that could be desired" for blast furnace or foundry work, and the firm are extending the production of coke by this plan.

The second system—that of Jameson—is on trial at several places. It uses the old form of oven, and it is claimed that it increases the yield of coke, improves the quality, and yields large quantities of oils and ammoniacal liquors.

These two systems are now fairly proved successful, and continued success would lead to a revolution in the coke manufacture of the kingdom. When it is stated that in one branch of metallurgy alone—the crude iron manufacture—there is consumed 6,000,000 tons of coke annually, the value is apparent of any process that would save the bye-products that have long been wasted. Dr. Angus Smith has said that the present method of making coke in England "has all the appearance of roughness and savagery which extravagance always produces." The old bee-hive ovens are picturesque, but they send forth clouds of smoke and gases that destroy vegetation, and waste products of which science has of late shown the value. The attempts of which we have spoken would turn to profit these waste products, and one of them would substitute a newer and more enduring form of oven, and a more scientific and ready method of manufacture than the old, and would largely alter one of the conditions under which coke-making has been carried on—that of destroying vegetation. Coke has been often as detrimental to vegetable life as chemicals, and not the least of the benefits of the revolution that seems to have begun in the coke trade would be a stoppage of the killing of tree and plant life near the coke ovens.

OUR GARDEN IN MARCH.

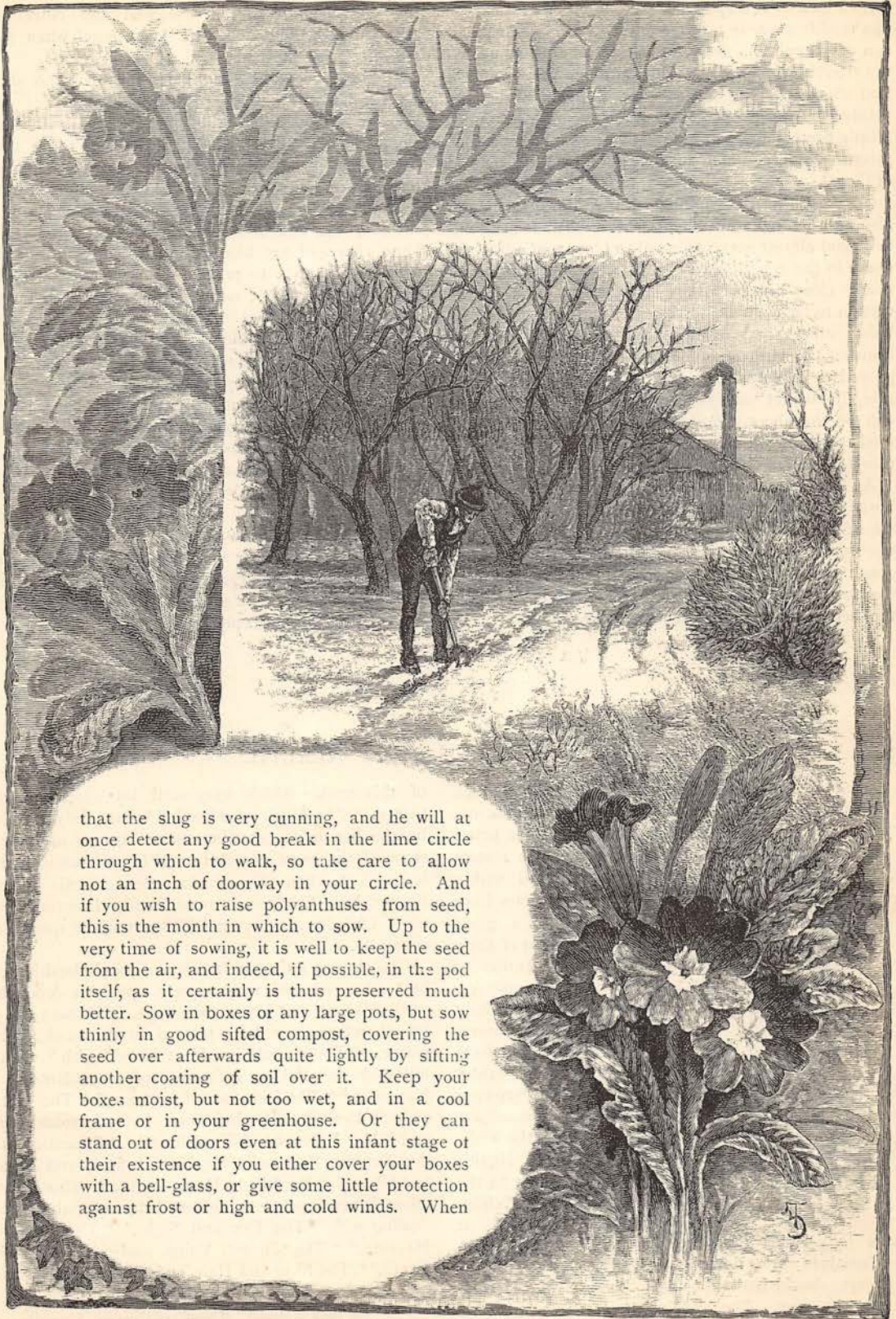


ENTERING as we are once again upon the great spring-sowing month of the year, and upon almost the first month of it, too, in which it may be said we begin to see flowers reappearing around us in the open flower-beds, it is difficult to make at once a happy selection of some one particular flower to which to give prominent attention, so great is the delightful choice now before us.

Before giving, however, a few general hints for the routine management of the garden in this most busy and all-important month, on which so much depends, we will say a few words about a very popular and very modest spring friend, the polyanthus. Now, this being the very month in which they are beginning to bloom, we may well open our remarks by noticing one of the main causes of the occasional poverty of their flowering, and this is the carelessly allowing more than one truss or bunch of flowers to develop itself. Unhappily, the tendency of the plant is to throw out

side shoots, which take very much from the strength of the principal one, as well as from each other. Great pains must, then, be taken to plant out what are called single hearts when the roots are parted after blowing, and also all little side shoots must be pinched off always, and on their first appearance, just as we pinch off those small shoots that begin now to persist in making their appearance all along the stocks of our roses. This practice throws the strength into the head of whatever flower we are growing. Yet any one must have noticed polyanthuses in the spring, whether in the open borders or under glass, with a few straggling heads of flowers round the principal one, which they have more than half spoiled by their presence.

In the month of March established plants can be planted out, and, indeed, their general cultivation may be said to be almost entirely the same as that of the auricula. By the end of the month your polyanthuses in the open border—and this, by the way, is by far the best plan for growing them—should have the soil well stirred between them, and a dressing of leaf-mould given to them. All dead leaves should be removed; and as slugs are particularly partial to the polyanthus, a complete circle of fresh lime had better be put all round your plant; but bear in mind



that the slug is very cunning, and he will at once detect any good break in the lime circle through which to walk, so take care to allow not an inch of doorway in your circle. And if you wish to raise polyanthus from seed, this is the month in which to sow. Up to the very time of sowing, it is well to keep the seed from the air, and indeed, if possible, in the pod itself, as it certainly is thus preserved much better. Sow in boxes or any large pots, but sow thinly in good sifted compost, covering the seed over afterwards quite lightly by sifting another coating of soil over it. Keep your boxes moist, but not too wet, and in a cool frame or in your greenhouse. Or they can stand out of doors even at this infant stage of their existence if you either cover your boxes with a bell-glass, or give some little protection against frost or high and cold winds. When

your young plants have three or four leaves, prick them out an inch or two apart in good large pots, which you can readily place in a frame for protection against hot sun or heavy rain. Save for a little watering, they will not trouble you again until the autumn, when you will find them touching one another. They can then be planted out in the open beds, when at times, of course, a little protection against severity of weather must be given. Nothing much further, perhaps, need be said of them.

The roses must be carefully pruned this month, and also those long and thin branches which look so untidy, and almost serve as a sail to blow your standard about in the rough March gales; cut them off pretty nearly close to where they spring from, for they are certain to be of no use for bloom or growth, and their being allowed to remain only weakens the plant. Shorten the strong shoots as far as you can, being guided by the form you wish them to assume; and as a rule, the further back your roses are cut the stronger will be the shoot. Still, of course, there should be moderation in all things, and the pruning must not therefore be *too* close.

And our standard roses naturally remind us of the lawn on which we generally find them, but of which we seldom find it necessary to say much. Yet just now, or in a mild month of March at all events, the grass begins to grow, and then the sooner the first mowing is given before the first use of the machine the better, and much trouble will be saved. Owing

to the continuance of mild weather last autumn, the mowing machine was in use well into November. A good sweeping does the lawn good when it is partially dry.

In the flower-beds, the perennials will be showing their heads well through the soil, and any subdivision of them that you may still wish to make should not be delayed a day longer, while those that were sown last year may now be transplanted for flowering in this. The seed of biennials, such as Canterbury bells or Sweet Williams, &c., may be sown by the end of the present month, though you know they will not bloom until next year. For this purpose you want to prevent too free a growth this year; sow, therefore, somewhat thinly, and not on a fruitful soil; while, as in the case of your perennials just mentioned, your biennials sown last year can now be also transplanted to where they are to bloom.

The kitchen garden work this month is heavy. Our soil having been during the winter that has left us well turned over and exposed to the action of the frost, we have it now, let us hope, in a good pulverised condition for the reception of our main seed and planting crop. Foremost, and perhaps most necessary of all, comes our potato crop. This we finish off entirely this month, but recollect that too early planting, when it is followed by a late and severe spring frost, frequently involves the after-destruction of your entire crop just as it is well above the ground. But potatoes should not be planted too deeply.

THE PRESERVATION OF HEALTH.



EVERY one will be ready enough to admit that to preserve health, to prevent disease, is far better than to cure disease, to restore health; and yet, until within recent years, few persons have been aware to what a great extent the preservation of their health and the prevention of illness depend upon themselves. The laws of health are daily becoming more widely known—with what beneficial effects the annual mortality tables plainly show—and the growing estimation in which the subject is held is evidenced by the forthcoming International Health Exhibition, the successor to the International Fisheries Exhibition at South Kensington. It

was fully time, therefore, that a large and comprehensive work, dealing with every branch of the subject, should make its appearance, as has recently been the case. The excellence and trustworthiness

of this work—which may well lay claim to the title of "*The Book of Health*"*—are fully attested by the list of its contributors, numbering as it does some of the most eminent men in the medical profession, of whom Sir Risdon Bennett, Sir Joseph Fayrer, Drs. Crichton Browne, Lauder Brunton, Bristowe, Cheadle, Savory, and Weber may be quoted as examples.

Glancing at its main features, a man's health may be said to depend very largely upon his food, his work, his rest, and his surroundings. All these things are therefore very fully treated in the book under notice, "Food and its Uses in Health" being followed by "The Influence of Stimulants and Narcotics," "The Influence of Exercise," "The Influence of Dress," "The Influence of our Surroundings," and "The Influence of Travelling." "Education and the Nervous System," "Health in Infancy and Childhood," and "Health at Home and at School" are other general subjects, followed by special articles dealing with "The Eye and Sight," "The Ear and Hearing," "The Throat, Voice, and Speech," "The Teeth," "The Skin and Hair," "Health in India," and

*"The Book of Health" (Cassell and Company, Limited).

and the cost of counsel, solicitors, witnesses, stenographers, printing, and so on, is very heavy indeed.

Every member of Committee signs a declaration that his constituents and himself have no local or personal interest in the Bill, and not to vote till he has heard the evidence.

If the Committee decide to pass the Bill, they will report that the preamble has been proved, the converse being that it is rejected. After the preamble is declared proved, opponents often struggle tenaciously to minimise the force of the measure by getting inserted stringent clauses for the protection of their interests.

Soon after the receipt of the favourable report of the Committee, the Bill is read a third time in the first House and passed. Its title is then changed from a "Bill" to an "Act," and it is sent up to the Lords, where it passes through similar stages, being a second time "tried for its life" on its merits, without the necessity, as in the Law Courts, of showing any cause for a new trial. The evidence as well as the arguments are repeated, and if the Act pass that Committee also, and the Chairman of Committees, it will be sent back to the Commons for the amendments to be approved, and on its return be ready for third reading.

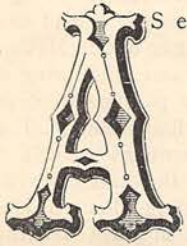
The Bill, if promoted by an existing company, must be submitted to and approved by the shareholders at a

"Wharnclyffe meeting." Occasionally promoters are obliged to withdraw it at the last moment, owing to the exigencies of finance, because, once the Act passes, the five (or four) per cent. deposit is impounded, which is a contingency the lenders are not disposed to allow at all times, unless backed by adequate security from the promoters.

As our particular promoters are of course equal to any emergency of this nature, the Bill is allowed to pass third reading and receive the Royal assent, whereby it is made part and parcel of the law of the land. The cost of opposed Bills of course varies considerably, especially if they are several days in Committee. The House fees also vary with the circumstances. Those for an unopposed railway Bill with a capital of about £500,000 are in the Commons, about £200, payable for the most part at the following stages: on presenting petition for the Bill, £15; first, second, and third readings, and report of Committee, £45 each; and in the Lords, £155, payable chiefly, on first reading, £5 5s.; second reading, £135; and third reading, £10 to £15. With a number of minor fees in both Houses, the total fees may be taken at £350. The united cost for, say, a twenty-mile line, including surveys, referencing, printing, fees, parliamentary agents, and so on, being out-of-pocket expenses, is about £1,500.

E. C. WICKES.

OUR GARDEN IN APRIL.



Each month of the year comes round with its interesting and busy routine of garden work, we are very naturally led to give a prominent place to some one particular flower which is usually supposed to be in its perfection in the month of which we are treating. And this it is often a little difficult to do at a time of the year—the first spring

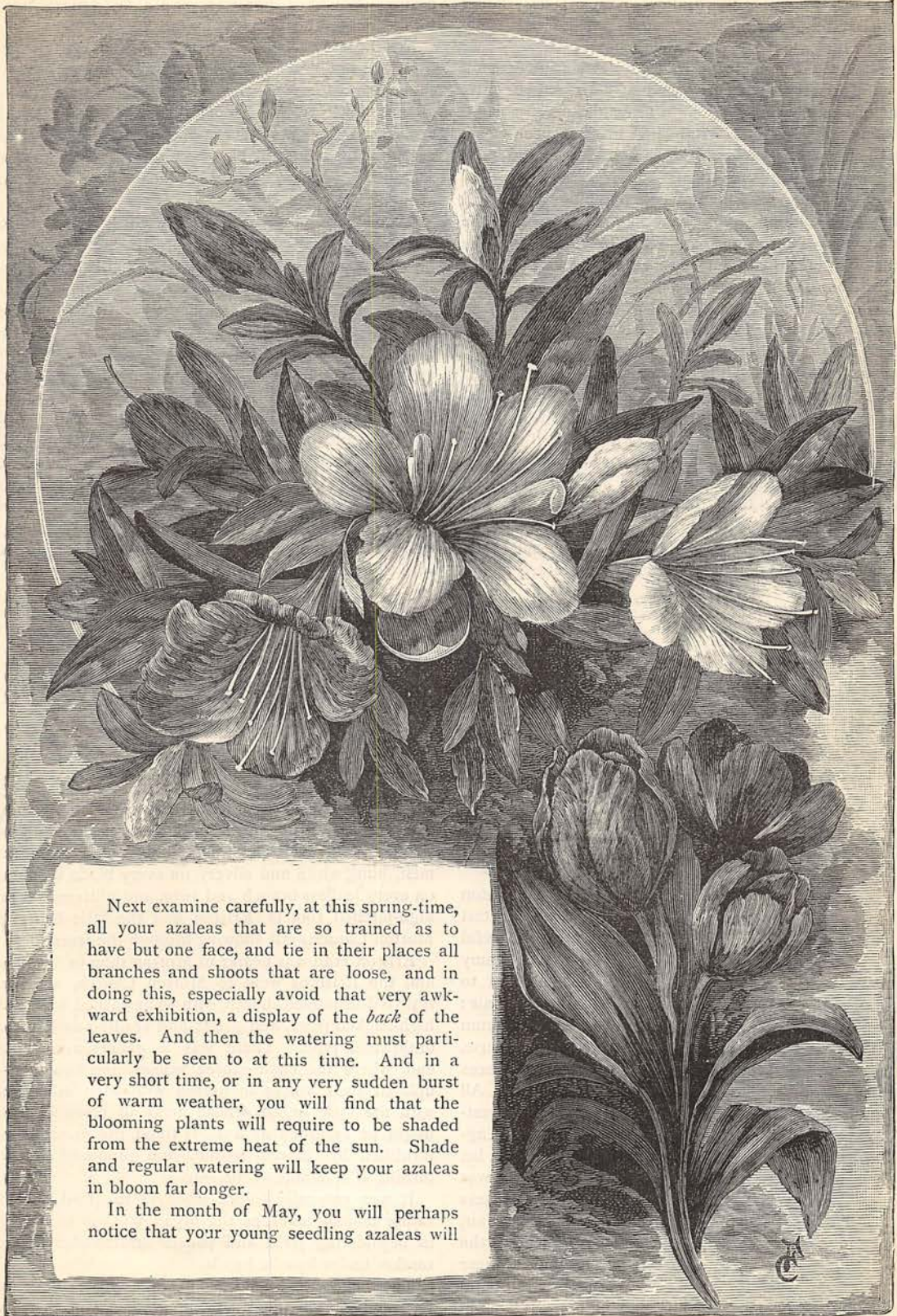
month with any pretensions to warmth—in which so many delightful flowers are necessarily claiming our attention at once. There is one greenhouse flower, however, which from its gay variety of colours seems to have just now a particular claim upon us, and about which we may therefore have a few words to say.

The azalea about the middle of April is advancing rapidly, and is, or very shortly will be, in all its perfection. A few hints then as to its routine cultivation. Always premising that a protracted winter and a cold spring naturally tend to check the proper advance of all our flowers, we shall notice first, then, that by the month of March the buds on our azaleas in the greenhouse are beginning to swell for bloom, and the great endeavour you have to make is to contrive, if possible, that your whole plant is in bloom *uniformly*. By this we mean that all the buds ought to open as nearly as possible about the

same time. And, unfortunately, you will very often notice a fine azalea full of buds, but with, perhaps, three or four of them only in full flower, while the rest bid fair to remain closed for some days longer; a large number of the buds continuing to bloom in this disorderly and irregular way.

One remedy for this, or we should rather say, the best method for guarding against this mishap, is to see that your plant as you go on rearing it has a uniformity of *growth*. No one long shoot or branch should be always allowed to grow ahead at the expense of the others. But more particularly at this time, when our buds are all making a very decided push, take care that wherever your plant is having a stronger light on one side, or part of it, than on the other, you turn and move it daily about.

Do not let one part of your plant have the lion's share of the sunshine, and the rest hardly any at all. The writer can recall, some few years ago, wishing to keep one noble azalea back for a particularly floral and festive occasion, and being afraid that the whole plant would be in bloom and past its best before the great day arrived, it was for a few days turned with its back to the sun and the light, and only allowed the last twenty-four hours to have the proper benefit of either. This had the desired effect, and the azalea in question was the theme of general admiration.



Next examine carefully, at this spring-time, all your azaleas that are so trained as to have but one face, and tie in their places all branches and shoots that are loose, and in doing this, especially avoid that very awkward exhibition, a display of the *back* of the leaves. And then the watering must particularly be seen to at this time. And in a very short time, or in any very sudden burst of warm weather, you will find that the blooming plants will require to be shaded from the extreme heat of the sun. Shade and regular watering will keep your azaleas in bloom far longer.

In the month of May, you will perhaps notice that your young seedling azaleas will

have grown sufficiently to allow of their being shifted into larger pots, and by the end of that month they may be taken from the greenhouse to any pits or frames, and have all the air that you can give them. And if you have sown any seed in February, the little azaleas will certainly be up in May, and perhaps large enough to prick out. And when this has been done, and although they are in the greenhouse, a hand-glass had better be put over them.

In the month of June the decayed blooms may all be picked off, unless you want to preserve any of the seed, in which event of course they must not be touched, but the plant may at once be set out of doors.

The growth of new wood is what you want now to facilitate. They should make growth freely, and when done they should rest, and the new bloom will then be set. Be careful with the watering all this time, and shorten or stop any branches that seem to be too vigorous in their growth, because you must bear in mind that as the plant is now forming, so it sets its bloom, and that all alterations or prunings made afterwards necessarily remove the flowers. The soil which the azalea likes the best is decayed turf and some turfy peat.

Did space allow, of course much more might be said as to little details of the routine culture of the

azalea. We must, however, give a few general hints for our garden in this most important month.

For those of us who have but one small greenhouse, this is no doubt a very trying month. In April, everything is growing rapidly, and yet we dare not turn out all our stock into the open as yet. But the calceolarias, and many geraniums, may often be got out and stood on a plank, and under a south wall, or at any rate where we can give them some protection at night.

Then there is much to do in the preparation of the flower-beds for bedding out. The ground should be well stirred, and got into a thoroughly pulverised state, before the young plants from the greenhouse and frames are put in, and many of the bulbs must be carefully lifted first of all without any injury to the decayed bloom and foliage. A plentiful sowing of annuals in the open border should now go on every month up to July, as this will enable you to keep up a successional bloom. Seeds, too, of the single wallflower should be sown towards the end of the month for next year's blooming, and a good supply got in of cuttings of the double wallflower, which is by far the handsomer. Any trees or shrubs in your garden that were planted late should be mulched and kept well watered should the spring be a dry one, as otherwise they are liable to fail.

WITNESS MY HAND.

A FENSHIRE STORY.

By the Author of "Lady Gwendolen's Tryst."

CHAPTER THE NINTH.

A SUNDAY AT ERLSTON.

"Perhaps it was right to dissemble your love,
But—why did you kick me down-stairs?"—J. P. KEMBLE.



muffled to our ears. The little bell of Morton Church tinkled as if from a great way off, instead of a

SUNDAYS at Erlston were the quietest and most peaceful of days. A dreamy stillness seemed to be in the very air; a subdued decorum pervaded the house, and sat on the faces of its inmates. All was sweet and restful, as only an English Sunday can be. To-day there was the added stillness of a frosty air, through which the few sounds there were came faint and

stone's-throw from the gates of the park; the yelping of John's fox-terrier and the deep bay of the yard-dog sounded remote. The frost, coming after thaw and mist, hung white and silvery on every blade of grass, on every leafless branch and twig, and glittered on the high-pitched roof of Erlston and the little belfry of Morton Church, just showing through the trees.

Erlston Hall was nearer to Morton than to Westrea, and the Erlstons went to Morton Church, a quaint little old-fashioned church, with whitewashed walls and high-backed pews, and pulpit and reading-desk of an antiquated type. There was a gallery across the end, where the choir—three women and two men—uplifted their voices in unison with each other and with the little organ, whose array of pipes in front might be regarded as a pious fraud, the music being furnished by barrels within, and produced by the turning of a handle at the side.

It was generally John's business to grind out the rather doleful tunes, as the organ was apt to indulge in bewildering jerks and pauses and sudden accelerandos, under bucolic hands.

The vicar was as old-fashioned as his church, and regarded church improvements with a conscientious horror. His prosy sermons and droning voice would

THE GARDEN IN MAY.



WITH the cuckoo in full song, and everything in our garden in that most pleasing transition state from spring to summer, we find our hands sufficiently full this month with the heavy operation of bedding-out which takes up so much of our time. And much inconvenience and labour—not to speak of time—will be saved if, acting upon our past experiences, we bring a little forethought into play, and determine to have a thorough system of routine management in the annual preservation and culture of our bed-

ding-out plants. Let us explain in brief what we mean. It is a good plan, when the summer is at its best, say towards the end of July, to take a general survey of our whole flower-garden. Everything being then in bloom, we notice at once any improvement that might be made in the amalgamation of our colours, and not unfrequently we shall find two or three flowers that, by some mistake, have found their way into a wrong bed. Or perhaps some happy thought seizes us as a great improvement upon anything that has gone before, and which we then and there—note-book in hand—determine to carry out next year. And as for those plants and flowers in their wrong places, we can readily remove them in the evening to where they ought to be, giving, of course, a watering afterwards.

With a distinct and settled purpose of the plan we intend to follow when the ensuing bedding-out season comes round, the next important thing to attend to is at the end of August, or very early in September, when we are taking our cuttings. One lot must carefully be taken from one bed *only*, set out in boxes, pans, or pots, then marked, and have its own place afterwards in the greenhouse, and so on until your whole stock of cuttings is taken. And thus, when the next bedding-out time comes, each division can be wheeled and carried out to its place in the month of May without a moment's doubt or hesitation, and told off like soldiers to their quarters. But what is it that we too often find done first in August and afterwards in May? A gardener going casually round and taking a few cuttings here and a few more there, albeit from the most promising and inviting little boughs and shoots, and then all are taken off, mixed up together in a truck-basket, potted, and afterwards placed in a very neat row, doubtless, on the greenhouse shelf. This simply means in May a prolonged job of sorting, and involves plenty of shouting to a companion—under such circumstances almost a necessity—in such terms as “Can you find

me two or three more pink roots for this bed?” “Let me have three calceolarias more for this corner, and half a dozen more verbenas for that,” &c. And then they are not, perhaps, forthcoming, or they afterwards have to be selected from another terribly mixed-up assortment on another shelf.

So that at this time of the year, just as we are preparing for bedding-out, we have thought it most important to throw out these few hints on systematic routine. Relative, however, to potted plants, there is one thing that we must notice now in its place. Very often it happens that, our bedding-out being completed to our satisfaction, we find ourselves still in possession of a number of healthy, blooming plants in pots, and we really do not quite know what to do with them, or where to put them. The month of May is passing away, and it may be we want to paint our greenhouse this summer, or if not that, we are thinking of rearing some few tender and rarer plants, and we want room for them. Well, we determine to turn out all our stock somehow, and those plants for which we cannot find room in our beds can safely, with a little management, be arranged at different intervals around our garden paths, or on flower-stands, or in windows, &c. Now it must be remembered that all potted plants, when exposed to the sun or to the wind, will require far more watering, for the pots will dry very fast, and the little fibres and roots will suffer immediately, and the beauty of your plant will be destroyed. Or if, to avoid this, you even found room to “plunge” your pots, the great objection to this is that not only do worms find their way into your pot, but the roots themselves manage to find their way out of the pot, and this would immensely serve to check the proper growth of your plant; and, what is worse, when you next go to lift the pot from the soil in which it has been plunged, you necessarily tear away the plant from all the roots it has struck out from the pot, and upon which it then so much depended. There is this objection, then, to the system of plunging.

Your pots must stand out on something hard—brick or cement, tile or slate. This will keep worms out, and keep the roots in. Or, if this is not to be had, they can surely stand out upon some ashes, or on your gravel itself. Even in this case you will find the roots disposed to strike through the bottom of the pot, but, of course, very much less so than if they found themselves in ordinary soil. The ashes or gravel, too, had better be piled all around and amongst your pots, for we ought to have said that the pots should stand quite close together in little groups, and thus all will be protected except the outside row. And around the outside row, why not neatly arrange some turf to serve as a protection from drying winds and the heat of the sun? It will be found very effective if the watering-pot be kept in pretty frequent use. If turf be not at hand, a little bank of gravel or of ashes will answer the same purpose. A plank, too, might be placed along the outside row during the hot and sunny hours

siderably. The best plan, therefore, is to sow on rather poor ground; and, if you think about it, you will generally have noticed that our hardy perennials stand permanently and for the most part on poor soil, or in shaded and less frequented parts of the garden, where we seldom carry out fully the bedding-out system. When these perennials are about a couple of inches above ground they should be transplanted, but still in quite poor soil. They will then become far better able to face the possible severities of their first winter than had you sown them, like hardy annuals, in March or early in April. Such, for example, are the Sweet William (*Dianthus barbatus*), the Indian



of the day, the only objection to this being its unsightliness.

During the months of May and June, hardy biennials and perennials may be sown. And it is best to make the main sowing so that your plants, when up, shall not have had time to become too luxuriant before winter sets in. June is perhaps, then, a better month for this, for if sudden and very severe weather were to set in during November, as is sometimes the case in this fitful climate of ours, even hardy perennials might, in the first year of their existence, suffer very con-

Pink, Snapdragon, Canterbury Bell, Red Valerian, Columbine, Lupines, &c.

If our flower-garden occupies us so much this month, almost the same may be said of our kitchen-garden, where successional sowing, constant weeding, and much else has to be done. But particularly will early-sown crops want thinning, and, of course, very many must be planted out.

Beans should be topped as soon as they have set a sufficient quantity of pods, while hoeing and earthing up will benefit them. Pick out the heart-bud from any of the winter onions that seem disposed to

run up. Their bulbs are greatly assisted by bending over the stems in the old-fashioned way with the rake. The spring-sown onion crop will want a careful thinning as well as weeding. Some four or five inches should be left between each of them. And then what shall we say of the fruit, or of those strawberry runners, those terrible gooseberry caterpillars, or of the cautious and judicious thinning of our wall-fruit? Not much of this last, however, should be done at one time, as occasionally a failure takes place when we did not look for it, and especially when the stoning season sets in.

A WHALE-HUNT.



ON a sultry afternoon in July, 18—, a brigantine, with all sail set, slowly rounded the North Head of Wick Bay, and steered to an anchorage to wait the rising of the tide to a height sufficient to admit of her entering the harbour. As the vessel passed into the bay, persons on the headland observed that she

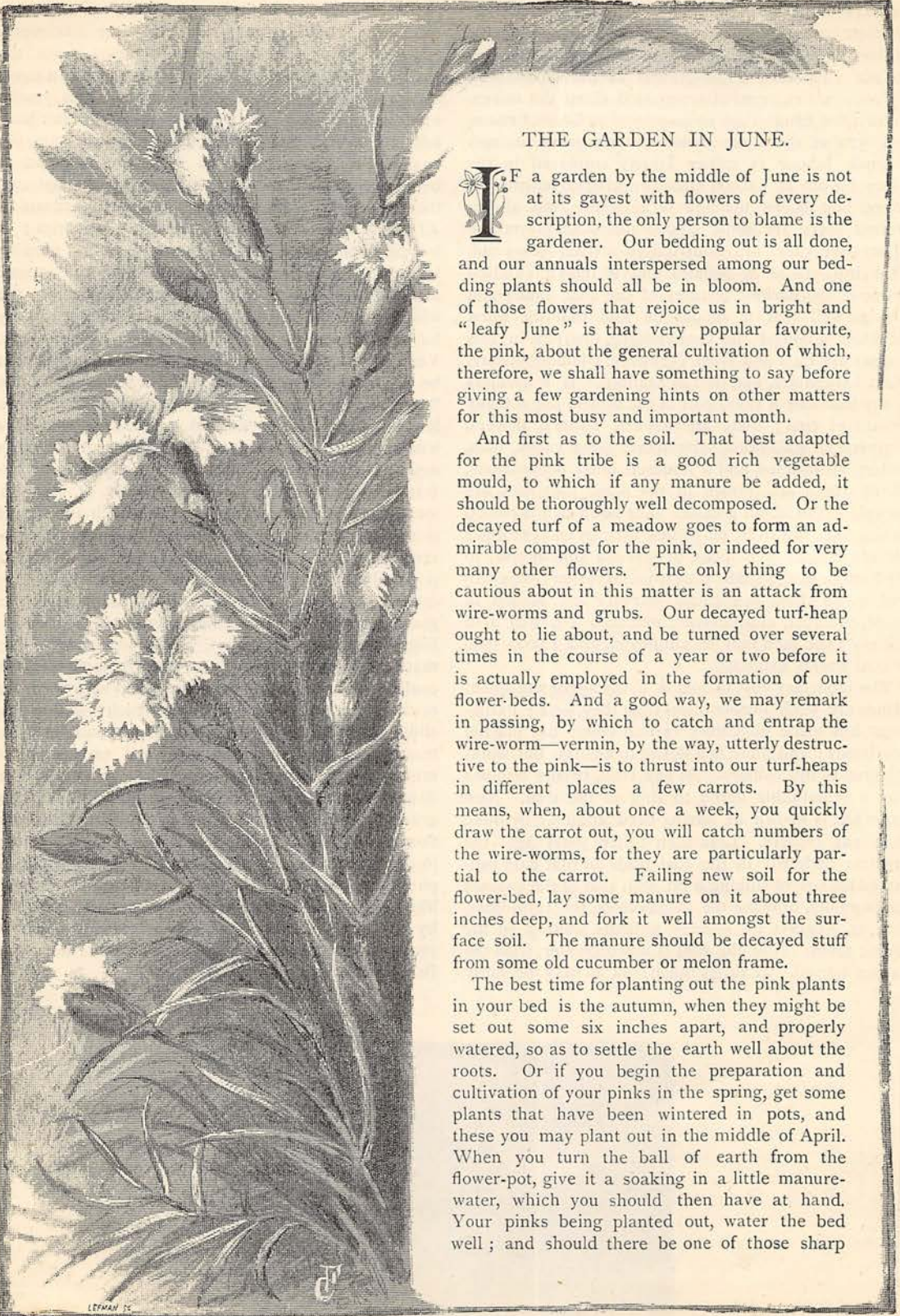
was followed at a distance of two or three hundred yards by a whale, which at intervals rose to the surface, sent a jet of water into the air, and then plunged downwards with a flourish of its tail. The appearance of whales off that part of the coast is no unusual thing, but one of those huge animals actually entering the bay was an exceptional occurrence, and was noted accordingly.

In a little time the brigantine furled her sails, dropped her anchor, and swung round on the tide. The whale, which appeared to be about forty feet in length, now passed close to the vessel, and began a series of gambols in her immediate neighbourhood. It subsequently transpired that the animal had followed the brigantine all the way from Stornoway, being evidently attracted by the bright new metal with which the vessel's hull was sheathed.

There were, as usual at that period of the year, many persons about the shores of the bay, engaged in putting things in order for the great "herring harvest" which was about to begin, and no sooner was their attention drawn to the presence of the whale, than by a common impulse a grand hunt of the marine monster was resolved upon, and a

general launching of small boats took place. When the boats were got into the water, quantities of stones from the beach were thrown into them, and the men about to embark seized such weapons of offence as were handy. The plan of attack was to form a line of boats across the bay to the seaward of the whale, and then advance towards the shore and try to drive the animal on to the sands at the river-mouth. In order to carry out this design, the boats were rowed along the shore on either side of the bay, until they got some distance beyond the scene of the whale's gambols, when they were extended into line and advanced in that formation, their crews in the meantime hallooing and throwing stones into the water. In due time the whale appeared to realise the situation, and shaped its course towards the sands which occupy the inner angle of the bay, the boats closing in rapidly on its track. When the animal found itself in shallow water, it began to plunge about wildly, and at one moment appeared to be completely stranded. By a desperate effort, however, it got away, and headed towards the line of boats. This movement created intense excitement, as it was feared that a flourish of the animal's tail might work havoc among the hunters. The shouts of the men, the beating of the water with their oars, and the rain of stones had their effect, however, and the whale again and again got into difficulties on the sands. In the meantime, the report that a whale-hunt was in progress had got abroad in the town, and the cliffs and jetties were soon lined by eager spectators.

Among the people on the shore when the whale first came into view was old Sandy Manson, who had struck many a "fish" when serving as harpooner on board a Peterhead whaler. Promptly recognising what was the proper thing to do, Sandy thrust into his waistcoat pocket the short clay pipe he was smoking, and hurried to his house, which was not far off. The chief ornament in his sitting-room was an old harpoon, a trophy of his early achievements in Davis Straits, which was slung from two stout nails over the mantelshelf, and which had formed the text of many a yarn spun for the delectation of the fisher-lads who made Sandy's home a place of resort on winter evenings.



THE GARDEN IN JUNE.

IF a garden by the middle of June is not at its gayest with flowers of every description, the only person to blame is the gardener. Our bedding out is all done, and our annuals interspersed among our bedding plants should all be in bloom. And one of those flowers that rejoice us in bright and "leafy June" is that very popular favourite, the pink, about the general cultivation of which, therefore, we shall have something to say before giving a few gardening hints on other matters for this most busy and important month.

And first as to the soil. That best adapted for the pink tribe is a good rich vegetable mould, to which if any manure be added, it should be thoroughly well decomposed. Or the decayed turf of a meadow goes to form an admirable compost for the pink, or indeed for very many other flowers. The only thing to be cautious about in this matter is an attack from wire-worms and grubs. Our decayed turf-heap ought to lie about, and be turned over several times in the course of a year or two before it is actually employed in the formation of our flower-beds. And a good way, we may remark in passing, by which to catch and entrap the wire-worm—vermin, by the way, utterly destructive to the pink—is to thrust into our turf-heaps in different places a few carrots. By this means, when, about once a week, you quickly draw the carrot out, you will catch numbers of the wire-worms, for they are particularly partial to the carrot. Failing new soil for the flower-bed, lay some manure on it about three inches deep, and fork it well amongst the surface soil. The manure should be decayed stuff from some old cucumber or melon frame.

The best time for planting out the pink plants in your bed is the autumn, when they might be set out some six inches apart, and properly watered, so as to settle the earth well about the roots. Or if you begin the preparation and cultivation of your pinks in the spring, get some plants that have been wintered in pots, and these you may plant out in the middle of April. When you turn the ball of earth from the flower-pot, give it a soaking in a little manure-water, which you should then have at hand. Your pinks being planted out, water the bed well; and should there be one of those sharp

spring frosts, it may be well to give to your newly planted-out flowers a little slight protection, such as that, for instance, afforded by peas-haulm. In a very short time there will, in this case, be no occasion for protection. As the early summer comes on, an occasional watering in very dry weather should be given, while those pinks that were planted out in the autumn might have a little top-dressing of decayed manure given to them, the soil being first stirred about with the hoe, and the hard lumps pulverised. This top-dressing of old manure had better be run through a large sieve, so that when rain comes the manure will get well and quickly to the roots. Pinks and all the carnation tribe want shading from excessive heat of the sun. And when our pinks have done blooming, we can readily propagate them by an interesting process, known as piping.

The "piping" of a pink, however, is in reality only another name for a cutting. All this comes about in this way: after blooming, the grass—which is what we call that little short foliage at the bottom of the flower-stalks—would, if allowed to remain on, send up shoots that would bloom in the following year. Now, these little pipings, or off-shoots, can readily be struck. They should not be pulled and torn ruthlessly off from the parent plant, as by this means we should certainly damage it. It is better to take off the shoots with a keen knife fairly close up to the stem, leaving on, of course, a certain number, so as not to injure the old plant.

Our little pipings, then, being taken off, remove the lower small leaves, and leave on only the few top ones, then stick them in the ordinary way into pots with plenty of sand in them, and place your pots in a frame with a little bottom heat. Some time after the grass or pipings have been taken from your old plant, you will very naturally find on this old plant that a second growth of grass has taken place. From this second growth, too, you can afterwards take some pipings; and indeed, with a little painstaking you can often rear them in pots for winter culture, only at first you will find that the second cuttings are not quite so hardy and strong as those taken earlier.

The general flower-garden, however, must have some notice this June. Our green-house we have by this time largely emptied out. Some like to have it painted

at midsummer. The only objection perhaps is that the greatest heat of the sun has yet to come, which would probably blister up our fresh paint terribly. We prefer watching our opportunity, and getting our painting done in some fine and bright week of September. Every crevice should be filled with putty then, and all ought to be made snug for winter quarters, and there is a good chance of the paint well drying before Michaelmas; whereas in July, what with first violent heat, and then as violent thunderstorm rain, much of the expected benefit of our fresh paint is taken away.

And for our flowers we still look ahead, and begin to pay some attention to our autumn-flowering chrysanthemums. These in June should be growing freely, and should stand out of doors, where they will have plenty of light and air. Some liquid manure will do them good, but they had better not yet be placed in larger pots. The camellias and azaleas will yet be making their new growth, and if possible you should contrive to let them have the proper degree of temperature suited for them while in their new wood-making stage. The way to judge fairly well as to the state into which your camellias have got, is to notice carefully whether the young shoots have ceased to elongate. If they have, and are becoming by degrees firmer and more durable in their texture, then you may consider the new growth as established, and the plants can then be removed to a cooler place; and for the matter of that, both they and the azaleas can stand out on a plank in the open, until all are housed again with the new cuttings in the fresh-painted greenhouse by Michaelmas.

In the kitchen garden, keep up the weeding, the successional pea-sowing, as well as the salads, such as mustard and cress, &c. An enormous quantity sown at one time is simply a waste of energy and of seed. Parsley is always in demand, and when transplanted it is often thought to grow finer and more curled. When you notice a fine and luxuriant growth, be sure and save some for seed.

In the fruit garden, you should be very busy thinning the wall fruit, nailing and thinning young wood, watering strawberries, and perhaps taking off a few runners for new plants as well as the rest for the benefit of the fruit-bearing ones.

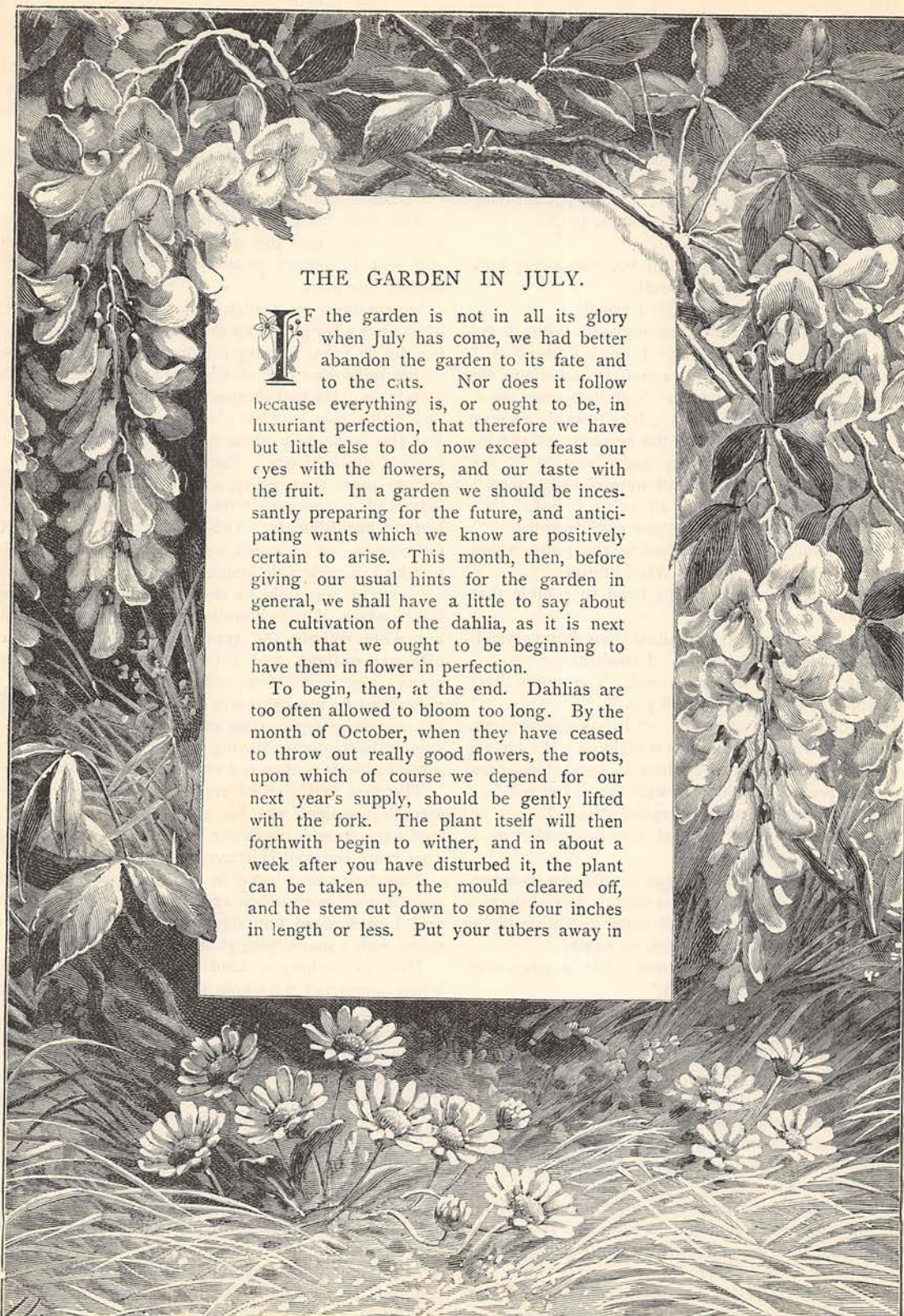
HOW TO FORM A TRICYCLE CLUB.



IT is not at all wonderful, considering the many decided advantages the wheel offers, that cycling has become during the last few years a popular pastime and healthy exercise. That the tricycle will eventually supersede the bicycle, there cannot be the least doubt, owing to the former being far safer, more comfortable, less fatiguing on a tour, and possessing as it does greater luggage-carrying capability

than the latter. Nor is it a matter of doubt that the outcome of all this popularity has been the formation of an immense number of tricycling clubs in all parts of the kingdom.

Amongst the numerous advantages of membership of a club may be mentioned sociability, immediate assistance in case of accident or attack, and introduction to brother-wheelmen, which often leads to lasting friendships being formed, with those having congenial



THE GARDEN IN JULY.

IF the garden is not in all its glory when July has come, we had better abandon the garden to its fate and to the cats. Nor does it follow because everything is, or ought to be, in luxuriant perfection, that therefore we have but little else to do now except feast our eyes with the flowers, and our taste with the fruit. In a garden we should be incessantly preparing for the future, and anticipating wants which we know are positively certain to arise. This month, then, before giving our usual hints for the garden in general, we shall have a little to say about the cultivation of the dahlia, as it is next month that we ought to be beginning to have them in flower in perfection.

To begin, then, at the end. Dahlias are too often allowed to bloom too long. By the month of October, when they have ceased to throw out really good flowers, the roots, upon which of course we depend for our next year's supply, should be gently lifted with the fork. The plant itself will then forthwith begin to wither, and in about a week after you have disturbed it, the plant can be taken up, the mould cleared off, and the stem cut down to some four inches in length or less. Put your tubers away in

a place accessible neither to frost nor great heat, but merely in a good dry place; indeed, all bulbs we should similarly stow away. Let the label of your plant be fastened with wire, as string is nearly certain to rot, and cause you some inconvenience. Stow away your tubers also stem downwards, as they dry more readily by this means.

From this time—that is, October—until early in the month of February, examine your tubers at intervals, as any that seem disposed to shrivel up or to rot ought to be potted off, the decayed part having been first of all removed. Quite small pots will suffice for this purpose. Sometimes, however, the tubers are planted out in the soil of a hotbed in order to start them. Or let us suppose that you are not very rich in general garden appliances, such for example as greenhouses and hotbeds, you might keep your roots simply in a basket in the kitchen, when, in course of time, an occasional sprinkling will cause what we call the eyes of the plant to start. Now, these young shoots that spring from the tubers make admirable cuttings, and, if properly managed afterwards, are sure to succeed. When they get some two or three inches long, they can be potted off, and at first ought certainly to be struck in heat. A cooler frame will do for them after awhile, but not until the third week in May should they be planted out, for young dahlias would not at all approve of that by no means uncommon May duet—a frost and an east wind. As soon as your plants are fairly off, the next thing to be on your guard against is that enemy of the dahlia, the ear-wig, and these vermin should be trapped in every way that you can devise.

Or if you would raise from seed, be sure, in the first place, only to preserve the seed of flowers that have been of the very finest and most perfect. It is a great mistake to suppose that any sort of imperfect flower will do from which to preserve seed. You will strengthen your whole plant, too, and get finer seed, if you make up your mind when the dahlia is putting forth its buds to pick off all poor and imperfect buds. Sow about the middle of March in a hotbed, or else in pans in your greenhouse. In your hotbed the seed will very soon be up, and will require a little air at times, and a little water too. And, by the way, we should remark that the dahlia, especially when once planted out in May, requires good and pretty frequent watering. Give the water freely at a little distance all round the plant. Your young seedlings will require the same attention, and must be treated in the same way as those raised from cuttings, until all are planted out in their final quarters towards the end of May.

Turning to other and equally interesting parts of the flower garden, we naturally find ourselves busy among the roses which we bud this month. Choose

the evening of a thundery day, and avoid commencing the operation in the noontide glare of a broiling-hot one. Any annuals that you have sown in the open you could perhaps plant out now in blank places in your borders, or where failures have taken place. And then your China asters, stocks, marigolds, &c., ought to keep you well supplied with a succession of blooms until the return of the first frost.

Your pansies you may still propagate from young side-shoots, for it is these that make the best plants. The seed of biennials, such as sweet-williams, for instance, and of perennials too, may be sown, unless you did this last month. And, when they have grown large enough, they will, when planted out, bloom even the next season; and a good sound supply of these useful and much-trouble-saving flowers it is essential to have in all gardens.

And then there are the chrysanthemums. If you want some nice dwarf plants of these, take off some top cuttings and strike them under a hand-glass, shading them carefully from a hot sun, while your old plants of the chrysanthemum tribe you can turn out into the borders, where they will make fresh shoots.

In the kitchen garden, a sowing of peas this month may yet be made, for they will grow rapidly, and the winter spinach may now be sown. The onion-bed should have a final thinning out, and the whole carefully weeded. The principal onion-sowing, however, for winter and spring use should be next month, and on a good rich soil.

In the fruit garden let us hope we are busy enough, strawberry gathering being, of course, a constant and satisfactory operation. If for preserving, they must only be gathered when dry, or your preserve will soon be worthless, for it will not keep if the fruit be gathered wet. It is worth while, where there is a fine show of strawberries, to pay them a visit at night with a lantern; you will by this means surprise some giant slugs and snails in the act of commencing their supper on the best of your fruit.

And next, as to the cucumbers in frames. To keep them in vigour, give them, if you can, a little clear manure-water, but very much diluted, and do not let the vine exhaust itself by having on too many cucumbers at once. Towards the end of their bearing season—and it is the same with the melons also—you will perhaps notice, where they have been carelessly kept, a quantity of half-developed fruit, which, nearly all of it, ought never to have been allowed to advance as far as it has. None of it will now ripen—we are speaking not of July, but of later on—but *some* could if the plant had not become exhausted by the great demands made upon it. The birds, too, will be making a raid on the Morella cherries, which will therefore require the protection of a net.



THE GARDEN IN AUGUST.

BY the time that the month of August comes round upon us a good deal of our foliage will have got into a large, dusty, and overgrown state, unless a great deal of care and pains has been taken with the general growth of our garden. But, on the other hand, many of our richest and most graceful flowers are now in their very prime. And amongst the most

should not recommend under any circumstances the growth of the passion-flower in pots, though of course in our greenhouse we are often compelled to resort to the flower-pot. Inside a greenhouse, the passion-flower looks remarkably well if trained to run up the side and against the glass on the roof. When such is the case, or when growing grapes, or indeed with any climber inside, a little care is sometimes needful



beautiful is one about which we do not remember to have said anything, or certainly not for some time past, and that is the passion-flower.

And of this most elegant and lovely class of flower, some of course require to be cultivated in the temperature of the stove; others will do very well indeed under the glass of an ordinary greenhouse; while some we know are hardy enough to be trained to flower against a wall, and under the open canopy of heaven. A south wall and a good sheltered situation are certainly very desirable for the culture of the passion-flower; and the most hardy of all is the common blue specimen—*Passiflora carulea*. The natural tendency of the whole tribe is that of vigorous-growing climbers, so that only the most free-blooming kinds should be grown in pots. Indeed, all things considered, we

when letting down the glass, as often by a little rough usage a valuable arm of the plant may be broken off.

Cuttings of the passion-flower are easily raised, but they want the medium degree of what is called bottom heat. Or they can be raised by layers; and in this month of August, by the way, when we are busy layering our carnations and picotees, we might do the same for the passion-flower. This process we have noticed on a former occasion, yet a few words may be said about it here. As a general rule, the operation of layering should not be done until the plant with which we are dealing has in a great measure passed flowering. The shoots when pegged down should be well watered, and any failure in this respect during a month such as August is generally credited with being, would very likely entail a failure in your layering

operation. Another specimen of the half-hardy and herbaceous kind is the *Passiflora incarnata*. It also, like the *carulea*, can be trained against a wall. It has three-lobed leaves and flesh-coloured pink flowers, while the filaments of the ray from the centre are of a purple colour, and it is in flower earlier in the summer than August. Or there is one, the *Tacsonia pinatistipula*, which is perhaps hardier than either of the two first-named. This tribe differs a little from the ordinary *Passiflora* in the long tube of the flowers. Some species of the passion-flower bear edible fruit, and these are called Granadillas.

August, however, brings with it plenty of very general garden work, which we cannot possibly afford to pass by. Our auriculas should be potted this month, and everything in the shape of a grub should be carefully got away from the compost that we use. Any annuals that we have in pots will want watering and shading, as well as trimming of all dead and decaying leaves. The seed of perennials may be sown at the beginning of this month, and if planted out afterwards, by about the end of October, the young plants will gain strength in a nursery bed. If, however, you have taken the precaution to sow your perennial seed some six weeks sooner, your plants can be planted out in the spot in which they are to flower. The anemones should be taken up afterwards, if they have thoroughly decayed down. Anemone seed should be sown on rich light soil, and covered well but not too deeply over; and they will want plenty of water, for the soil, when once they are sown, should never be allowed to get dry.

And now a word or two as to the recently-budded roses, for July is, we know, the month in which the interesting operation of rose-budding is attempted. All the newly-budded stocks, then, will want a careful examination. You will, of course, find that a constant and provoking little growth will continue to push out all about your stock. This greatly exhausts all that strength that ought to go to the bud, and it must, therefore, be carefully pinched and rubbed off whenever it makes its appearance. This neglected, and your bud is pretty nearly certain to fail. The suckers too, as they are called, those flourishing little stocks in miniature that persevere in springing up, at and

around the base of the stock, must be bodily grubbed up. Another difficulty with our newly-budded rose-tree, and one sometimes more difficult to get over, especially in an early September gale, is that caused by a young and flourishing bud becoming, after having made a capital start, long enough to be blown bodily out of its place before it has got sufficiently attached with firmness to its stock. When the bud, then, has pushed to a length sufficient to endanger its being carried away by the pressure of a high wind, secure it carefully to a stick, to your stake to which the stock is fastened, or indeed to the stock itself. The stakes too will, as the autumn advances, sometimes require fresh and stronger securing.

This, again, is a month for securing the seeds of many flowers, and though they may have, after a few August suns, all the appearance of being thoroughly dry and ripe, it is a good plan to keep the seed in its pod, gathering, that is, the pods themselves, and allowing the seed afterwards to ripen still more in the pod. Speaking of seed-pods reminds us that these should be taken off from the rhododendrons as soon as the blooms begin to decay, and the plants should then be well watered, as this better secures or increases the chances of a good bloom the following season.

In the kitchen-garden, one of the experiments worth trying this month is a mushroom-bed. And there are plenty of ways of making one up. In some counties—Norfolk, for example—they grow as rapidly as the grass itself, and without any making up of a bed at all. What we require for a bed is some short dung or droppings in a partial state of fermentation; lay the mushroom spawn, and cover it quite lightly with a little clean loam. Or sometimes it happens that our cucumber-frame is about stopping its supply of cucumbers; if this be so, remove all the vine, and scrape off also all the mould but some two inches in thickness on the manure. The heat, of course, should not thoroughly have departed from your bed. Make holes down to the manure, in which insert the mushroom spawn; cover all up with the mould you have taken out of the holes. Close the frames, giving of course a little air at times, but keep off the sun by means of mats, and you will soon have mushrooms.



"Yes."

"Your father gave you no intimation of his intention to consult with us?"

"None whatever."

"So far, your answers tally exactly with the statement of Benjamin Ford. Now, sir, tell me if the discovery of those remains in the garden which was in your father's possession at the time of your birth has not, together with other considerations, opened a doubt in your mind?"

"I know nothing of those remains. I heard them spoken of for the first time yesterday."

"Nevertheless, there was a paragraph concerning them in the *Wrotham Guardian and Ightham, Serle, Plaxtol, and Kitford Messenger*."

"I never read that newspaper. I know nothing about the remains you speak of."

"Here is the fact:—A gardener employed by the

person to whom your father's former residence now belongs, while engaged in sinking a pit in the garden adjoining the house, came upon a piece of rotten leather, and on pulling it up from the ground, discovered some fragments of bone which excited his suspicion. He spoke to the police at Sevenoaks; the bones were subsequently examined by a medical man, and declared to be the bones of an infant, but how long they had been in the ground it was quite impossible to tell. Now, sir, this discovery seems to have had a powerful effect upon Benjamin Ford, and stimulated, perhaps, as much by a fear of justice as by a sense of gratitude to you, he came here on Monday, and told us"—another reference to the paper—"first, that the leather was part of an old apron of his; and secondly, that the bones were those of his son, John Ford."

END OF CHAPTER THE TWELFTH.



THE GARDEN IN SEPTEMBER.

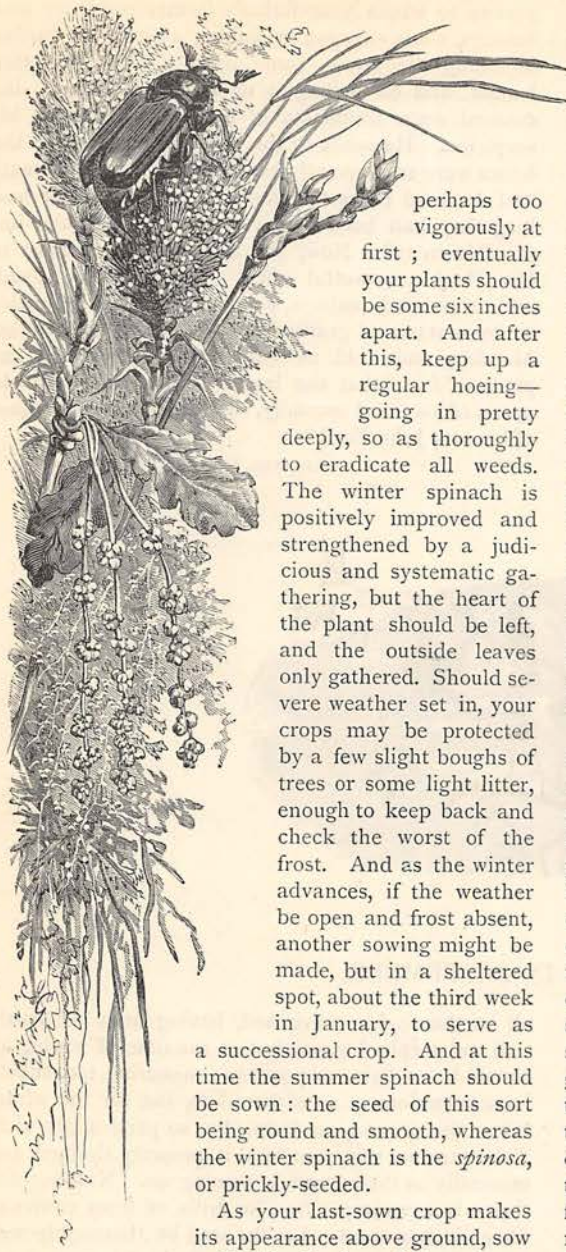
SO much attention have we given to flowers of late, that as the time of year is beginning to overtake us when flowers, at all events in the open garden, are certainly on the wane, we will, before turning our attention to the housing of them and other kindred matters, say a few words about a very homely subject, and a very practical one to boot, and that is the cultivation of our spinach. And the fact that it is so often badly managed and wasted is an extra inducement to say something about it, particularly too as about the end of August or the first week in September is the very time for sowing our winter crop.

A good old English authority in gardening matters tells us that spinach "was first noticed as a culinary vegetable in this country about 1568, but there can be little doubt that it was in cultivation long before that period even in this country, if not elsewhere, in the religious establishments, which in the times preceding the above date were almost the only places where anything deserving the name of gardening was carried on."

For the sowing of the winter spinach, then, choose a fairly sheltered situation. The soil should first of

all be thoroughly pulverised, having been previously well and deeply dug, so that at the time of sowing all should be as light as possible; manuring, too, should have been done at an earlier date, but for the winter crops the ground need not be so particularly rich. Take care too that your land is properly drained, and especially as the autumn is coming on. Nothing will thrive in a swamp. Sow in drills of from twelve to fifteen inches apart. Let the seed be thoroughly well covered with soil, having, say, an inch of it upon them. And to expedite the vegetation of the seed it is a good plan—especially at the end of a dry August or early in September, the first half of which is so often quite hot—to water the drills before you put the seed in them. At any rate, you must give an occasional watering in sultry weather, or choose a thundery and showery day for sowing.

Rake your ground over level, and you may tread the seed through very slightly, but as far as you can avoid it, walk as little as possible between the rows. Watering, however, is very important, for a failure in water will mean a failure of your spinach itself. When the young plants have attained a size sufficient for manipulation, you may begin thinning, though not



perhaps too vigorously at first ; eventually your plants should be some six inches apart. And after this, keep up a regular hoeing—going in pretty deeply, so as thoroughly to eradicate all weeds. The winter spinach is positively improved and strengthened by a judicious and systematic gathering, but the heart of the plant should be left, and the outside leaves only gathered. Should severe weather set in, your crops may be protected by a few slight boughs of trees or some light litter, enough to keep back and check the worst of the frost. And as the winter advances, if the weather be open and frost absent, another sowing might be made, but in a sheltered spot, about the third week in January, to serve as a successional crop. And at this time the summer spinach should be sown : the seed of this sort being round and smooth, whereas the winter spinach is the *spinosa*, or prickly-seeded.

As your last-sown crop makes its appearance above ground, sow a third lot, having, of course, your chief sowing, as of most other vegetables, about the end of March. And in the summer season it is a good plan to sow your spinach crop between your rows of peas, beans, &c., as the shade thus afforded to the spinach is certainly a great advantage to it, and what is more, you economise your room by this means, and there is also a less chance of the spinach being drawn by the sun, and suddenly running up to seed. But in any case we unhappily too often contrive to have a large quantity of refuse from our spinach, though for this the pigs will always thank us, as they are particularly fond of it.

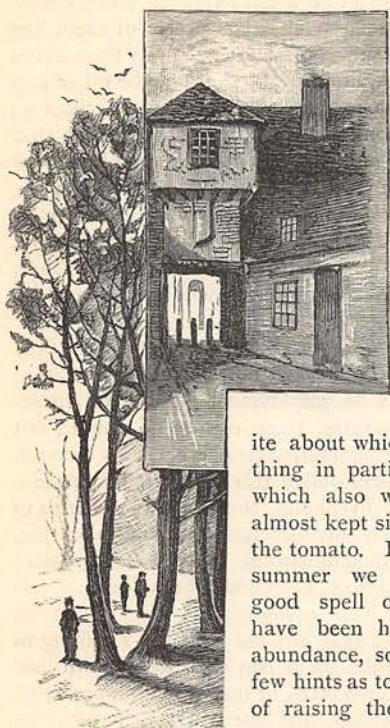
But this month we are particularly busy in our flower garden, preparing for our annual change from

the open beds to the greenhouse. August is generally recommended as the month in which cuttings of geraniums, &c., should be taken, but in a favourable summer, if all be done in the first week or ten days of September, the operation may generally be postponed with safety to that time, should we happen to be particularly pressed for time.

The objection to taking our cuttings at too early a date, especially where our space is limited, is that by this means our young stock of cuttings will make such a vigorous growth that by the following spring we often find ourselves inconvenienced and overcrowded. Moreover, the longer that we can with safety postpone packing our greenhouse full with our miscellaneous plants, the hardier will they be, and the better chance do they run of standing a severe winter, should one be in store for us. By Michaelmas, however, the camellias should certainly be under glass, as their buds are already sufficiently apparent, and by Christmas or soon after we look for flowers on some of our early-showing specimens. Now, our cinerarias we look to for flowering about February, and very gay they are after the worst of a dreary winter is past. The earliest of these will be assisted by re-potting and a little weekly dose of diluted manure-water. A similar medicine will help those fuchsias that seem still disposed to go on blooming.

As for the calceolarias, if you are pressed for room in your greenhouse there is no occasion to stow them away there. An old cucumber or melon frame set out in a sheltered spot will be sufficient protection for them. We do not mean that it is necessary for their preservation to plant them in the old decayed manure, but the frame itself can be moved away, and the young cuttings will thrive very well if planted in rows in the ordinary soil, having the frame simply placed over them : upon this in intensely severe weather a little extra protection might be thrown if necessary. Inside the same frame, too, you might stow away for safe custody during the winter some few of your large geraniums that you have cut down and taken up from the open flower-beds : they should be reduced almost to dwarf stumps, and set in a small flower-pot. The only fear is of their damping and dying away under the frame ; therefore in the best of the day give a little fresh air, and let this be done daily. Water they will rarely need during the winter months ; the season itself must, however, influence you a good deal in the management of your flowers. The chrysanthemums next require attention, being the last flower of the season. If you are growing them in pots, and have not yet placed them in their blooming ones, this should be done at once ; or if they are planted out, they must now be taken up and potted ; and in doing so, take up with them as much earth and roots as you can, place them in some sheltered situation, and give a good watering. A little clear manure-watering will benefit them once or twice a week. Or if you want some dwarf plants, the tops of the blooming shoots may be either layered or planted as cuttings, but the shoots should not be topped later than about the middle of September.

THE GARDEN IN OCTOBER.



THIS is our fruit harvest month, or perhaps we should rather say the last of our harvesting months. And before giving our brief gardening calendar for October, we shall select this time a popular and eatable favour-

ite about which to say something in particular, and about which also we have hitherto almost kept silence. We mean the tomato. By the end of the summer we should, after a good spell of hot weather, have been having them in abundance, so that perhaps a few hints as to the best method of raising them may be just now opportune. There are, of

course, several varieties of the tomato, but the one best known to us is the large red tomato, which has deeply-divided leaves, and whose flower is a bright yellow. Perhaps, however, we had better hint first at a few of the popular varieties.

Next to that already mentioned, we may notice the small red tomato, which has globular fruit. Then there is a rather more tender variety, called the pear-shaped tomato, but its fruit does not ripen so readily as some others. The red cherry species, thought to be originally the parent of all the other varieties, is about as large as the largest-sized cherry. Being somewhat more acid than some of its descendants, it is perhaps the best for pickling whole just as it is. The yellow tomato, whether large or small, is a somewhat inferior variety, and not being particularly worth cultivating, we shall merely notice it and pass on.

The tomato, then, is, in the first place, of easy culture. It is of a rather coarse growth. It likes a sheltered spot, plenty of heat, a light and rich soil, and no damp lurking about underneath. The presence of over-much damp and wet, or the absence of sun, is the cause of the failure of tomatoes, as, instead of ripening, they would often, under these adverse circumstances, become mouldy and rot off.

About the middle of March, then, sow the seed in pots filled with light rich earth. Cover the seed only lightly, and place the pots inside your cucumber frame, in which of course at that time there would be plenty of room. Very soon they will make their appearance,

when the young plants must have some air, otherwise they will soon begin to get drawn up and become early in a weakly condition. As soon as they have attained the height of some two or three inches, pot them off again in small pots, one or two in a pot, according to their size. Once again must they then be set in a close frame of some kind until their roots are well established, when they will also want more air, and should from that point, in fact, become gradually accustomed to the open air.

This process of hardening off, with a little painstaking, and protection from the frosts of a May night, will easily be accomplished; and about the third week of May, when the season is fairly favourable, your plants can be turned out and planted against a south wall, or say, in the small spaces that you probably have between your fruit-trees. Your plants will now rapidly advance. Where you have no wall, some sort of sloping embankment of earth will be of service to them, or even a good board, provided it be thoroughly and strongly supported against being blown down by the wind, which would entail the destruction of your plants.

Against your wall or embankment, then, your young plants should be nailed or secured, as they grow, and when the two first trusses of bloom on each shoot are formed, the little branches should be stopped just beyond the leaf which is above the second truss, nor should any more lateral shoots be allowed to form. Try also carefully to preserve the foliage, and especially those leaves that are very near the blooms. On each plant the number of shoots should vary from three to five, having thus from six to ten trusses of fruit on the plant; for if you overburden your plant it will become exhausted, while a moderate and reasonable amount only being left upon the plants, your fruit will not only be larger, but stand a better chance of ripening. As the fruit ripens, the leaves should not be allowed to shade it. Small or badly-placed berries had better be removed, while the fruit if clinging too closely together are liable to damp and moulder off. By October, or a little earlier perhaps, the last of it will be on the plant, and as the first frost will destroy your plant, your remaining fruit, whether ripe or not, should be gathered and laid in a warm and dry room, or on a shelf in your greenhouse, where it will probably colour and ripen well.

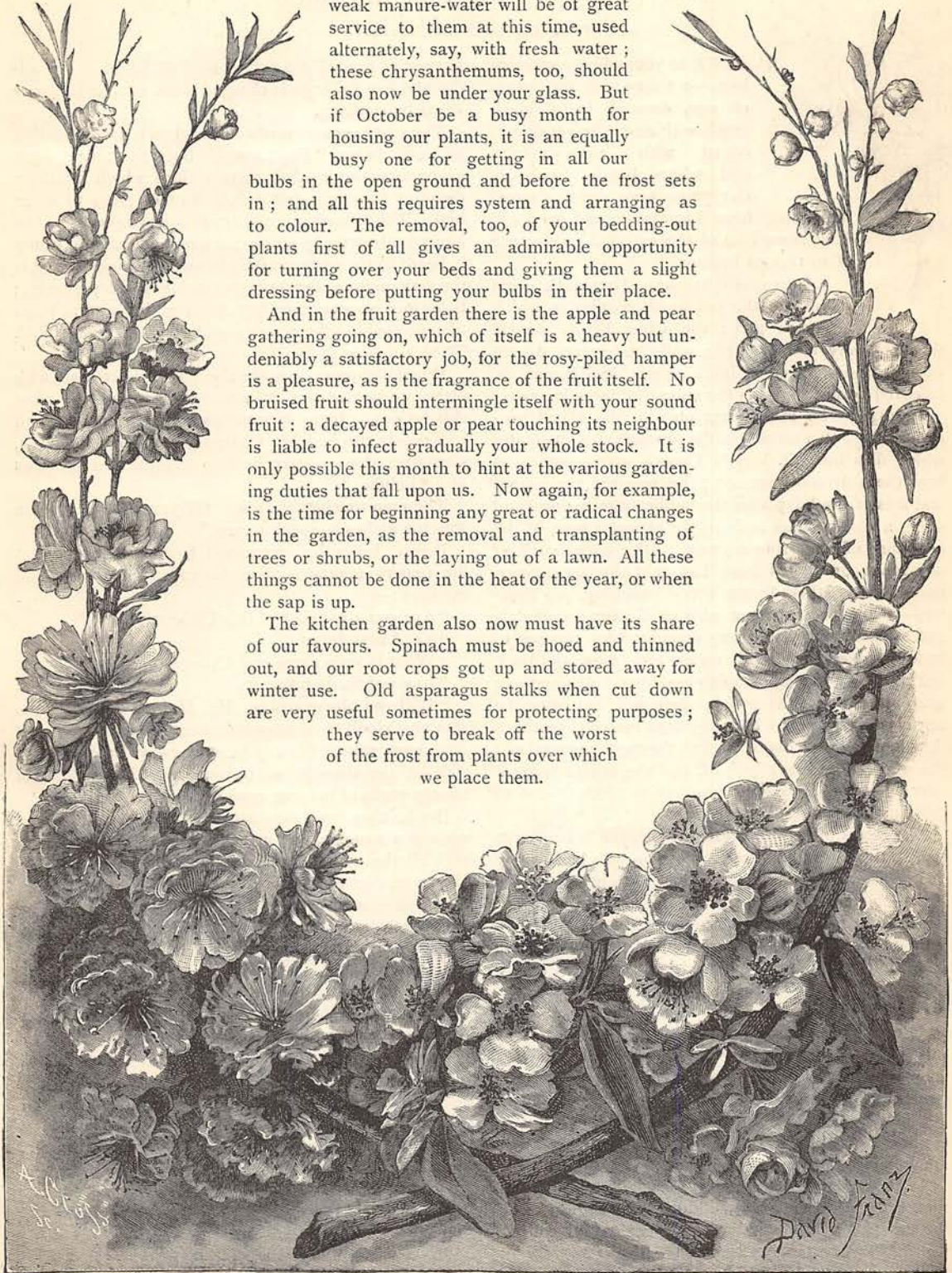
And, to turn to the general garden, we are certainly busy during the early part of this month in housing our plants and getting everything snug into winter quarters; but the greenhouse should have no fires as yet, unless for the purpose of drying during an excessively wet season. The chrysanthemums, our final hope of flowers for the fading year, will naturally draw upon our time and pains. Give them as much air and light as you can while their flowers are expanding, as this will make their colour both clearer and brighter. Keep them also just now well watered: a little

weak manure-water will be of great service to them at this time, used alternately, say, with fresh water; these chrysanthemums, too, should also now be under your glass. But if October be a busy month for housing our plants, it is an equally busy one for getting in all our

bulbs in the open ground and before the frost sets in; and all this requires system and arranging as to colour. The removal, too, of your bedding-out plants first of all gives an admirable opportunity for turning over your beds and giving them a slight dressing before putting your bulbs in their place.

And in the fruit garden there is the apple and pear gathering going on, which of itself is a heavy but undeniably a satisfactory job, for the rosy-piled hamper is a pleasure, as is the fragrance of the fruit itself. No bruised fruit should intermingle itself with your sound fruit: a decayed apple or pear touching its neighbour is liable to infect gradually your whole stock. It is only possible this month to hint at the various gardening duties that fall upon us. Now again, for example, is the time for beginning any great or radical changes in the garden, as the removal and transplanting of trees or shrubs, or the laying out of a lawn. All these things cannot be done in the heat of the year, or when the sap is up.

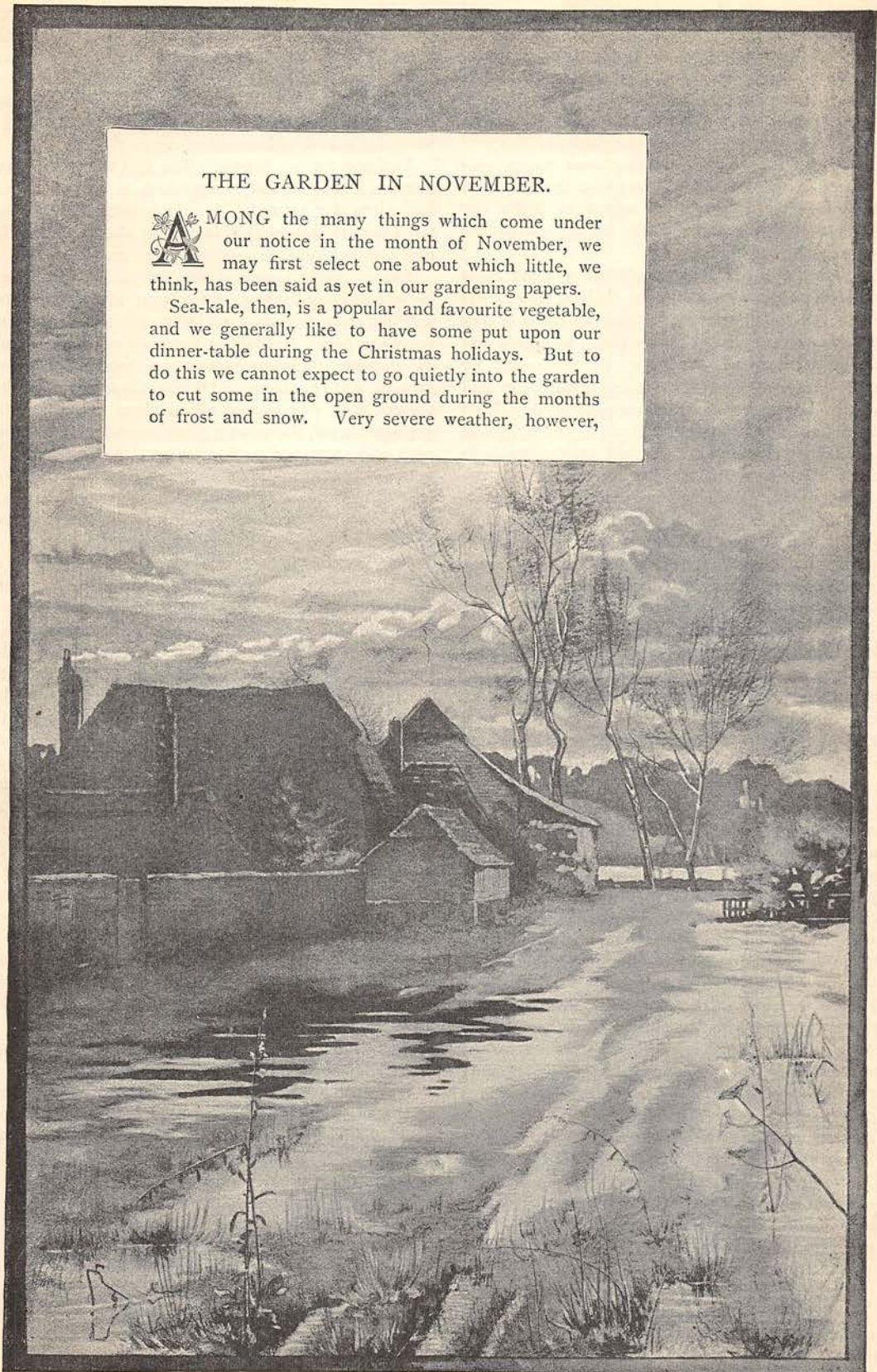
The kitchen garden also now must have its share of our favours. Spinach must be hoed and thinned out, and our root crops got up and stored away for winter use. Old asparagus stalks when cut down are very useful sometimes for protecting purposes; they serve to break off the worst of the frost from plants over which we place them.



THE GARDEN IN NOVEMBER.

AMONG the many things which come under our notice in the month of November, we may first select one about which little, we think, has been said as yet in our gardening papers.

Sea-kale, then, is a popular and favourite vegetable, and we generally like to have some put upon our dinner-table during the Christmas holidays. But to do this we cannot expect to go quietly into the garden to cut some in the open ground during the months of frost and snow. Very severe weather, however,



certainly would make our forcing operations a little more difficult.

These little esculent white stalks are British natives, and along the sandy sea-shore, in some parts of Sussex in particular, they used to be gathered and eaten, so it has been said, in years gone by, very long before we began to cultivate it regularly in our gardens.

Before speaking, then, of raising some young sea-kale plants from seed, we will suppose that we have some already in existence on which to begin our forcing operations; and this forcing we begin about the second week in November.

The plants then in the ground being some three years old, we cover over with our sea-kale pots at the time just stated; but before doing this, we throw a very little lime over the crown of our plant, as also a few coal-ashes, to keep off our enemy the slug—and we generally prefer to do all this during a fairly dry and open day—and round our sea-kale pots we now heap our leaves, and it is not very difficult to collect leaves in the month of November. Leaves are preferable to manure for putting round the pots, for manure gets too hot, and the kale gets drawn up unnaturally by overheating. Get, then, the driest of the leaves against the pots first of all, and let there be quite a foot thick, or indeed rather more, of leaves all round your pots. A temperature of about fifty-five degrees is the best to have for your forcing purposes. Some who do not care to incur the expense of sea-kale pots, cover over the kale itself with a heap of leaves, and as soon as the stalks seem long enough, which can readily be ascertained by the removal of a few of the topmost leaves, the kale can be cut.

This, of course, is not such a quick way of raising your kale. As to the leaves, we omitted to say that care should be taken, after they have been piled carefully round your pots, that they are not allowed to be blown away again by the gales which we rather look for at this time of the year. To prevent this, have round the outside of your heap some long and straggling litter, such as the long and now pulled-up stalks and foliage of your scarlet-runners, peas, convolvulus, and for once in a way the decayed bear-bine might be useful for this purpose. It does us harm enough when in the ground by winding and worming itself round the roots of our plants and shrubs, so that at least let us find some use for it now that we are grubbing it up. Anything long, in fact, or in the shape of what we will call a vegetable string, is handy for this purpose of keeping our leaves together in a compact mass.

Now (to go back to the sowing), as sea-kale is a plant that has thick and fleshy kind of roots, which go deep down into the soil, it is far best to sow your seeds in the spot in which you afterwards intend your plants to remain, just as we do our asparagus. First, then, in the early spring well trench and manure your ground. The soil, perhaps, best suited to kale is a good deep and rich loam. Sow in good, and not in frosty, weather in April. The plants will afterwards, of course, require the usual thinning out. Keep them also clear of weeds, and

give, too, a slight top-dressing of thoroughly and well-decayed manure, which serves as a slight protection against the spring frosts which sometimes linger on so long. Leave from about four to six young plants in a patch when you thin. When your kale has been some three years thus established, you can begin forcing it when the month of November comes round.

And now for our flowers. The first thing to be done at once, if not already completed, is to get all our bulbs into the ground. A sudden severe frost would put a stop to this, so that not a day should be lost before finishing off this important business.

Those chrysanthemums that are still in flower must be watered regularly, and let them stand where they will get their full share of light and fresh air. Take away the faded and fading flowers from these plants, as allowing them to remain on tends to damage flowers still in bloom. When they have finished flowering, if you cannot afford them room in your greenhouse for the winter, place them against a south wall, and stow and pack all about and amongst the pots plenty of sawdust or some tan, to serve as a great-coat of protection for them. Nor had you better cut down the old flower-stem, as if you allow it to remain on it may serve as a sort of shelter for the young suckers. And, indeed, this month we must give all our plants that cannot stand the rigours of a winter some sort of shelter. All that we want to do is to keep, perhaps, merely a small stock of flowers alive to help us the following spring, when we begin bedding out again; and for this purpose an unused room in the house, perhaps a box-room, a cupboard, a dry cellar, or an old garden-frame, may help largely to supply the place of a greenhouse, if we do not rejoice in one. Only, somehow give fresh air, avoid damp, and rarely give water, except to keep the plants from altogether drying up; and of this there is but little fear in an English winter.

And November is our second good month for material alterations in the garden, and for moving or putting in new shrubs. Everything of this kind may now be done with safety. In moving a shrub, dig well round it, and at some little distance, first of all, from its stem, so as to get it gradually and carefully up without damaging the fibrous roots more than you can help. If you are in too much of a hurry, and tear it quickly away from, perhaps, its parent earth, the chance of saving your shrub is much diminished, even though you transplant it at the proper season of the year.

We can but barely hint at much that has to be done in the kitchen and fruit gardens. In the former, fork over the asparagus-bed, and cover it with some manure. The final earthing up of the celery should be seen to, and so contrived as to prevent much damage from rain and snow, if you are wanting to save some through the winter. Have the ground you intend for an onion-bed deeply trenched and manured; and your currant-bushes, too, will be improved by digging the soil round them and giving them a little manure. Dig also between the strawberry rows, or, what has been recommended as better still, give them a little top-dressing of manure and loam.