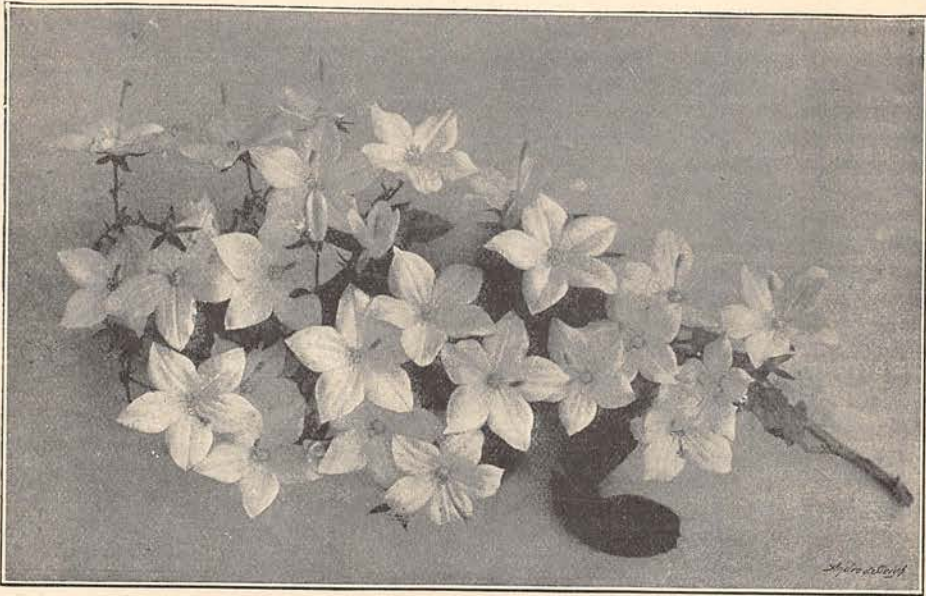


GARDENING IN JANUARY.

BY A PRACTICAL GARDENER.



WHITE CAMPANULA.



WO subjects are selected for this month—variegated shrubs and window plants, both interesting to the amateur gardener. Variegated shrubs and trees, when judiciously planted, light up the garden through the dullest months of the year.

The chief variegated shrub

is the Holly. No one will dispute its position, and no shrub in its green-leaved form is more closely woven into the folklore of our country. The tree or shrub, whichever one is pleased to call it, is the glory of many an English wood, and has been valued highly for hedges since the days of Evelyn, who writes of it in fervent language in his "Sylva."

A Holly Bush on the lawn is a fit subject for the artist, its beauty heightened with the scarlet or yellow berries, and in its variegated dress is a study in fine colours—green, creamy white, and soft yellow in tender association. There are many kinds, but the best are Silver Queen and Golden Queen. A "wrinkle" in purchasing shrubs is to pay a fair price for them. It

is "penny wise and pound foolish" with a vengeance to buy shrubs poor in health and low in price. Variegated Hollies are rather expensive, and so are the majority of variegated things. They are less vigorous as a rule, and more troublesome to raise than others, the price varying from half-a-crown to a guinea each. The green-leaved Privet is an objectionable shrub, its hungry roots robbing the border of nutriment; but buy the variegated variety for its rich variegation, a bright patch of colour uninfluenced by summer suns or winter frosts. Some variegated things get burned by the sun, and their beauty is lost. A good plant of this (variegated) type of Privet may be purchased for a shilling.

Other good variegated shrubs or small trees comprise the variegated Maple, which is largely planted, and although a beautiful tree, a conspicuous object in many suburban gardens, it should not be thought of if the place is very small or the tree is common in the neighbourhood.

If used excessively it becomes wearisome, and one loses interest in its charming colour, creamy white and various shades of green. A lovely tree is the golden-leaved form of the Catalpa. It is strange that the Catalpa which dips its leafy branches into the silvery Thames at many points along its winding course should not be more thought of for the garden, being hardy, whilst it produces a heavy wide-spreading head and handsome horse-chestnut-like flowers.

These appear in August when few trees are in bloom. The golden-leaved variety has leaves of a pure gold

colour, very beautiful in contrast to dark green. A fair specimen costs half-a-crown.

Variiegated Conifers should be kept away from smoky towns. They dislike dirt and soot, the variegation quickly losing its colour under such conditions. It is unnecessary to enumerate names. The nurseryman in the neighbourhood will supply the stock and recommend those kinds that succeed best, the price varying from eighteenpence to half-a-crown. But the Golden Yew should be chosen first. It does not vary in colour and behaves itself in a respectable way.

In the Ivy, if one may introduce this evergreen climber amongst shrubs, a rare jewel is gained. The finest variegated kinds cost on an average eighteenpence each, and clothe the walls of town or country gardens with bright colour throughout the winter and spring.

Be careful in your selection. Last winter in a London garden several ivies were practically killed, variegation signifying, as a rule, a weakly constitution.

An old friend came to me last winter in great distress. His fine variegated ivy had turned brown, and looked in aspect singed and disfigured.

"Ah," I said, "exactly so: it is the action of frost, and the reason is you have chosen a naturally tender kind, too susceptible to the influence of severe cold, possibly followed by heavy rains, frost again recurring."

Avoid such varieties and choose any of the following five (rejecting a kind commonly planted, named

Madeirensis variegata, one of the more delicate, although popular of its class): *Spectabilis aurea*, Gold clouded,



PARLOUR PALM.

(*Aspidistra lurida variegata*.)

Palmata aurea, *Angularis aurea*, *Marginata elegantissima*, and *Aurea elegantissima*.

The names are terrible, but one cannot help using such terms: the men who thus christened the varieties are to blame.

The secret of success in growing the ivy is to use a good soil, and during the first year, water the plants freely. Every lover of flowers wishes for healthy plants in room and window. The Creeping Jenny in a cracked pot on the window-sill of an evil-smelling alley is a reminder of country lanes and wild flowers stirred gently by a life-giving breeze. Thousands who cherish flowers must grow them through force of circumstances in a room.

My remarks on window plants are general, and appeal to all who wish to keep their treasures healthy under very artificial conditions. A rock upon which beginners usually come to grief is in the selection.

Those I shall mention have stood the trials of life bravely in a window. First comes the Parlour Palm, a good name given to the best of all room plants, *Aspidistra lurida variegata*. One must remember the botanical name, otherwise a wrong plant will be purchased. Parlour Palm is a little indefinite, and a true palm might be supplied instead.

The *Aspidistra* is related to the lilies, and its bold leaves are of a fine glossy green colour, relieved in the variegated form with rich markings of creamy white. Then get the Creeping Jenny, and its variety *aurea*, which has quite yellow leaves, without a trace of green, whilst the well-known India-rubber plant is king of the window garden.

It resents bad treatment, but is nevertheless hard to kill, the leaves are of a rich green colour, leathery, and never wearisome. Amongst plants valuable simply for their foliage are the Sedge, or *Cyperus alternifolius*, full of grace and delighting in abundant moisture, the fragrant-leaved Myrtle; and of Palms, *Corypha australis* is the cheapest of this beautiful class. Of flowering plants select the homely Musk, Harrison's variety for preference, "Geraniums," Fuchsias, the Mother of Thousands, Orange Tree, Guernsey Lily, and the Campanulas or Bellflowers, in whose flowery bells the dainty fairies are supposed to ring merry changes.

Campanula carpatica, *C. isophylla alba*, and *C. muralis* one often sees in cottage windows flowering to perfection, the trailing shoots studded with flowers so freely as to hide the leafage. A mantle of bloom is thrown over them, a mantle of tender blue or purest white.

Now a word as to the management of the flowers. The chief point for consideration is watering. More plants, from Orchids to Fuchsias, are ruined through careless or ignorant watering than from any other cause. If the leaves turn yellow it is concluded the plant is dry, and the soil gets into an unhealthy condition—a sure sign of speedy death if not altered. The way to tell whether moisture is required or not is not by looking at the surface of the soil—always deceptive, but by tapping the pots with the knuckles.

If a clear ringing sound is given out, the soil is dry, but it is sufficiently moist when the sound is dull and heavy. Practice makes perfect, and in time a glance at the soil will be sufficient to ascertain whether water is necessary. Rain water is best, and that from taps should stand in the open air for a few hours before being used.

Another thing is to use water about the same temperature as the room, to prevent undue shock, and always give at each application a thorough soaking. Driblets are harmful, and water should not stand in the saucers in which the pots are placed. Towards the end of summer a little liquid manure, or some approved fertiliser got from a neighbouring florist, will give vigour to the failing plant, due to the strain of a long season of flowering.

Avoid cold currents of air, and above all things, in the case of smooth, leathery-leaved plants, sponge the surface every other day, or at least every week, to remove dust.

If plants are not properly cleansed, disease quickly attacks them, the pores of the leaf get choked up, and death results. In genial summer weather they are much benefited by gentle showers of rain to free the surface of all impurities.

When sponging take great care not to bruise the leaves, and don't brush against them in moving about. This is the chief reason of palm foliage dying off at the tips. Handle the plants tenderly: they possess life.

The ardent amateur gardener is always at work. Days are short, the outside garden as bare as a desert, but many pleasant hours may be filled up in preparation for summer. Every bulb in the house should be planted when the weather is kind, and a few potted up to make the windows gay.

Writing of bulbs, reminds me of the Tulip, which is the pet flower of shoemakers, tailors, colliers, and weavers. One shoemaker at Wakefield has a little shop in the corner of his garden. The tulip beds run up to the door, so that he can pop out at all hours of the day, spend a few minutes with his pets, and go back to his last.

Hyacinths in glasses are very welcome in early

spring when one yearns for flowers, but cannot enjoy them in the open air. Roses, Primroses, Wallflowers, Daisies and Snapdragons may be planted when the soil is in suitable condition. Plant also good hardy things, such as perennial Sunflowers, Phloxes, and a hundred other kinds that might be named. A catalogue from a good nurseryman will prove helpful. The weather, however, is mistress of the situation. Snow may throw a soft mantle over the ground or the air mimic the genial warmth of merry May, inviting the amateur to indulge his hobby to his heart's content.

Geraniums for planting out in late spring must be kept almost dry, and decaying leaves picked off. Fruit trees of all kinds may be planted in suitable weather.

Raspberries, Gooseberries, and Currants are the best kinds for small gardens. If there are a few clumps of Rhubarb in the vegetable plot, cover as many as desired with an old crate or box. Heap manure about it, and juicy Rhubarb will be got for pies long before it is ready naturally.

The best variety for a small garden is Hawkes' Champagne, which is far better than the big-stalked kinds, as a rule, utterly flavourless. It is slender in the stalk, deep blood red, and of delicious quality. Get out a small list of vegetable and flower seeds for sowing in spring.

Keep plants in rooms away from the window at night. At this season it is important to have a seed bed, which may be easily made by digging out a trench three feet in depth, which must be filled with fresh manure. Over the manure put an eight-inch layer of soil, and on this bed place the frame. Nothing can be simpler, and seed will germinate readily with warmth from the bottom, whilst cuttings of all kinds may be struck.

“AS OTHERS SEE US.”



THE COLONIAL.

SOME motherless girls of our acquaintance possessed a wonderful parrot. She had a queer fashion of practising her speeches in a whisper, and not giving them to the world until she knew them perfectly. The effect was sometimes startling.

Two of the sisters appeared in walking dress one morning, and the third rose to accompany them to the door and give final messages and commissions.

The parrot burst forth with, “Yar-yar-yar, quang-guang-guang, pow-wow-wow, sis-sis-sis, yes, all right, good-bye—whoff!” This last sound resembled so closely the banging of the front door that the

girls burst into laughter, in which the bird heartily joined, running up and down her perch with delight at the sensation she had caused.

“We always say, ‘All right,’ I am certain,” said one sister.

“Yes; and fancy how we must gabble at each other, if we sound like that;” said another. The girls had a lesson, which “as the parrot heard them,” was not soon forgotten.

We do not often get such clear glimpses of our tricks and manners, but now and then we have hints. Mr. Howell's diverting sketch of the Englishman in America, who begins every sentence with “Ow,” may have called the attention of some of us to a frequent habit, while the British habit of laughing at a joke five minutes after its utterance, when the conversation has sailed to a fresh subject, is a new light to us on the dulness of our insular wit. Children give sometimes a useful hint by their travesty of a small absurdity

original estimate, although it was a guiding star to us, had to be considerably revised and fully ten per cent. added to the total for unforeseen contingencies.

May I enumerate some of them? I pass over the helpless feeling which comes over one when a man sees his house dismantled by pantechnicon men. His household goods appear to be so awfully worn out that it is not surprising to him as he stands at his garden gate, watching the vans being filled, to receive offers from rag and bottle men to buy old lumber. Old lumber! Why, most of it seems old lumber, not worth the cost of removal.

By-and-by it is discovered that these furniture men have done their best to convert most of your property into old lumber. Why else did they blacken your mattresses with their boots? Why did they secretly hide all the keys of your clocks in places which up to this moment are undiscoverable? and why did they forget to remove a score or so of unconsidered trifles, which in themselves are small but in the aggregate require a nice little sum to replace?

I did not trust wholly to the removers. I prided myself on the care with which I went through the empty house to note that nothing of mine was left in it. But such is the difficulty in seeing familiar objects, that I confess I stared at the hat rail in the hall, the tools in the garden, the scraper, the letter-box, etc., etc., without realising that they required to be moved; and, as they were left behind, I have had to buy others since.

Then, carefully mapped out as our plans were in respect to the redecoration of the new house, the refurbishing of a portion of it, and other matters, I frankly avow that none of them went quite right, mainly

because, I suppose, we vainly imagined that all the world would busy itself to carry out our behests. Put not your trust in painters, neither in decorators, nor in house furnishers. They all want time. To give them time I kept my old house on for a fortnight, but a fortnight was not enough, and still we are not straight.

My wife has slaved as no member of the working classes will, to put things ship-shape. Order has been evolved out of chaos. I give her all credit. She must have lived on sandwiches and tea for a fortnight. I am afraid to say how many carpets she has laid, how much painting, staining, curtain-hanging, and even upholstering she has got through.

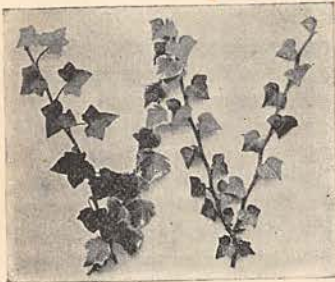
We are of that class who know that "If you want a thing done you must do it yourself," unless you have the money to pay for it. We might have employed a complete house furnisher, but where then would have been that terrible estimate, which up to the present has been our best friend—a species of brake upon the fast coach of extravagance.

Understand me, I do not say that when our labours shall have been completed that the result will not be worth the effort and expenditure, but this I will say, that moving is a frightful trial of one's temper, principle, and pocket. It is not to be lightly embarked upon. A man ought to sit down and count the cost in all respects; and then at the end of it all, you must expect to hear from your best friend the consoling remark—

"Halloa, old fellow, don't you think you have jumped from the frying-pan into the fire? I hear that your new neighbourhood is nothing but a fever trap!"

GARDENING IN FEBRUARY.

BY A PRACTICAL GARDENER.



INTER is slowly departing, the days are lengthening, and the sun sheds warmer beams on quickening vegetation. We seem to scent the flowers of spring and summer afar off, and make preparations to get them in our gardens. Everyone who has a garden of any pretensions wants a grass lawn for tennis, croquet, or to walk upon—a velvet-pile carpet of Nature's own handiwork.

The Making of a Tennis-Lawn.

This is the month to form either a tennis-court or an

ordinary grass lawn, and my remarks apply in both instances. A tennis-court must be of ample dimensions. A little cramped-up lawn, too small to wield a racket in—an apology for a "court"—is a very sorry affair. To play on it is uncomfortable, and the grass quickly wears away, through the feet constantly treading upon the same spot. A tennis-court should be about one hundred feet long and fifty wide: not less; and in its formation the work must not be scamped. Select a level position, and if the surface does not in any place vary more than six inches, it may be simply forked and raked over, drawing a tight line from corner to corner, to correct irregularities. A level spot is not, however, always at hand, and rough places must be made smooth for the game. First find the centre of the plot, and drive in a very stout stump of wood, the top of the peg to be on a level with the ground. Pegs must also be driven in at the corners of the lower end, with the top of each peg, of course, on the same level

as the central stump. This accomplished, dig out a drift from the centre to each of the higher corners of the embryo lawn. At a distance of every six feet drive in pegs, and studiously maintain the same level. Wheel the spare soil to the lower level, spreading it over the ground to the tops of the pegs. This soil must be well trodden down; then proceed to lightly fork up the ground on what was the higher level, and smooth with a straight-edge. The whole business is very simple if carefully done, and an ill-made lawn is a perennial vexation.

I am asked dozens of questions each year about lawns, and the most anxious inquiries are made as to the merit of those formed of turves or seed. Seed is, of course, cheaper; but a lawn formed in this way requires many months to establish before ready to play upon. During the following summer a lawn sown with seed has to contend with drought, birds, and in towns, cats and dogs, marauders that seem to delight in scratching and rolling about on the tender green blades of grass. The use of good turves is strongly advised; and don't spoil the affair for the sake of a few pence. Get decent turves, and well roll and beat them when they have taken root: not before. It is folly to commence "hammering" them down when they are just laid.

As to cost, one can only deal with the matter generally. Much depends upon the weather and the soil. To form a lawn last year would have cost more than usual, as turves were difficult to either get or lift. If the soil is moderately light, the cost would be about three-halfpence per superficial foot, but it would be twice as much on heavy ground.

Then comes the question of drains, which in nine cases out of ten need not be thought of, but in a stiff clay are essential. Put them six inches deep—not more—and over them place gorse or heather, filling up to the level of the ground with light soil, which should be well rammed down. The subject of weedy lawns will be considered in a future article.

How to Make a Rockery.

It is a happy idea to make a rockery when at work upon the lawn. People will persist in having rockeries. This is a good time to commence, and it is supposed that quite a small affair is to be made. The golden



HARPALIMUM RIGIDUM.

rule is to think more of the plants than the stones, or whatever is used; but eschew bricks coated with cement to make them look like natural stones. The effect is most objectionable to the eye trained to anything approaching artistic perception.

A small rockery should be the home of many pretty Alpine and other plants—flowers that gem high Alpine slopes with colour, masses of gentian like a cloud of blue on the mountain pasture. One may get such things in miniature. Mr. Robinson, in his well-known and delightful work, "The English Flower Garden," says: "The mistake generally made is that of not providing a feeding-place for the roots of the plants. On ordinary rockwork even the coarsest British weeds cannot find a resting-place, because there is no body of soil into which the roots can penetrate and find nourishment sufficient to keep the plant fresh in all weathers." This sums up the whole matter. Lay down the stones in a natural way, and give every plant ample soil. The so-called rockeries in suburban gardens are dreadful affairs—a receptacle for the family

china, while the humble oyster contributes its shell to the general effect. There should be a law against such abominations. The wonder is that even the vigorous little Creeping-Jenny deigns to spread its growth over the surface. Keep the rockery away from trees and damp corners, and let it form part of the garden proper, not a formation for hiding unsightly spots.

The selection of plants will contain things very easily grown, suitable for a small rockery, and nothing will cost more than about one shilling each. These monthly chats are for those who cannot boast of broad parks or acres of garden to indulge their love for flowers. The Prophet Flower (*Arnebia echinoides*) may be grown in light soil and on the warmest part of the rockery. Mentioning this plant reminds me of a legendary tale, which, curiously, is not published. Most legends are repeated in books until worn threadbare. This legend was told to a friend by an Indian general. In the Trans-Indus country of our Indian possessions a flower grows wild in great profusion, both in the Peshawur and Eusoofzaie districts. It reminds one of the English cowslip. The natives, who are for the most part Mussulman, call it the "Mohammedic Phwl," signifying "Prophet Flower." The name arose from the great prophet Mahomet, or Mohammed, in his earlier life being compelled to fly to the desert, followed by a band of faithful disciples. Murmurs of discontent arose at the barrenness of their place of refuge. Neither grass grew nor water trickled in that desert spot—cursed by God and forsaken by man. The prophet heard the words of despair and unfaithfulness, and roused himself from his fit of abstraction. He struck his open palm on the parched and burning sand, and there sprang up a plant bearing pleasant-scented flowers, each flower with a dark-coloured spot on each of the five petals. Mahomet then rebuked his murmuring followers.

"See!" said he, "the power of Allah, even in this barren spot, can produce this flower; and cannot he again restore our fortunes and rescue us from our present state of misery?"

The flower is therefore called the Mohammedic

Phwl, and the five brown spots, Mussulmans say, are the marks of the thumb and fingers of the prophet's hand.

This is a bright, strong, and free-blooming plant, the spots of dark colour fading with age, leaving a pure golden-yellow petal. The beautiful Milfoils—the double white *Achillea ptarmica* in particular, the yellow-flowered spring Adonis, and the Rock Madwort, that scatters its golden flowers about in early spring, are a charming trio. Then on the rockery, nestling in the more sheltered half-shady corners, one may have the Windflowers—fairy-like flowers that love to haunt the waysides, tinting them with azure blue. *Anemone blanda* has deep blue flowers, which appear in February; the Hepaticas of various colour shine forth in March; and the Japanese species, the pure white and rose, bloom in August, continuing until the season of frosts.

The free-growing white Rock Cress (*Arabis albida*) spreads with great rapidity, making a mass of purest white; and, if possible, get the little *Arenaria balearica*,



WHITE MICHAELMAS DAISY.

the Balearic Sandwort of Corsica, to creep over the facings of the stones. It is like a charming little moss: a perfect mat of green, spangled with white flowers through the summer. Moisture it appreciates, and shade, but grows respectably in exposed spots. In our selection must also enter the various kinds of Thrift—*Aubrietias*, the deep blue and the rosy-coloured *A. Leichtlini*—and Bellflowers of many kinds. The Campanulas are a host in themselves. Nothing is daintier than the deep purple *C. pulla*, nor so pure as the white *C. pumila*, which will thrive even on a poor rockery. *C. carpatica*, *C. fragilis*, *C. muralis*, and *C. turbinata*, are all worth growing, cheap, and require no special treatment. The hardy Cyclamens make bright little clumps of bloom in autumn and early spring, and the Alpine Pinks may be tried against stone, or on a sunny ledge, for instance, where the roots can get plenty of soil; but the plants can bask in the sunlight. They are troublesome, but worth a little coaxing to get the lovely flowers. The Gentianella in a light moist limestone soil is of remarkable beauty. No blue is finer; but the plant is rather eccentric in its behaviour, sometimes flourishing as a weed, sometimes, alas! positively refusing to grow. The white and purple Michaelmas daisies, and the yellow-flowered *Harpalium rigidum* on the higher parts of the rockery will create a glow of colour, and the Ivy give pleasure by trailing over the shadier corners where flowers refuse to thrive.

Do not forget, also, the perennial Candytufts, Irises, the Blue Gromwell (*Lithospermum*), Forget-me-nots, Evening Primroses, Alpine Primroses, Rockfoils

(*Saxifrage*) in great variety, Stonecrop (*Sedum*), House-leeks (*Sempervivum*), Catchfly (*Silene*), Thymes *Veronica saxatilis*, Pansies, and *Zauschneria californica*, in a hot and dry spot, besides the more hardy things, as Wallflowers, Daffodils, Squills, and other hardy bulbs.

General Hints for the Month.

The garden provides work and recreation. Many men are of the same mind as Luther, who declared that "instead of being forced to carry on tedious and other fruitless business, he would much rather, as an old and worn-out man, be delighting himself in his garden with the wonders of God—trees, plants, flowers, and birds."

It is a pleasure even to prepare for their annual manifestation of colour and fragrance. In February plant shrubs, hardy perennials; sow seeds under glass of tender annuals. Start tuberous Begonias, Dahlias, and Fuchsias on a hot-bed, and get seeds ready for sowing. Prepare the ground ready for them, as the majority may be sown in March. Sow Early Peas, as Exonian; and one may plant Potatoes for an early crop on warm borders. Finish pruning; but remember, a tree has life, and to remove precious limbs and shoots does not increase vitality or ensure a harvest of ruddy fruit. Give more air in the greenhouse, repot Fuchsias, strike cuttings of various soft-wooded things, and make up a hot-bed of stable manure and leaf-mould for seeds. Turn over the manure several times before it is used, and wet it, if dry; otherwise, the heat will prove too violent.

THE SLEEVE OF CARE.

By C. E. C. WEIGALL, Author of "The Temptation of Dulce Carruthers," etc. etc. etc.

CHAPTER THE NINTH.



MISS RACHEL ENDERBY was one of the many Society young ladies who thought Lord Chesney a most desirable "parti."

She was in the habit of constantly asking herself down to Woodlands when she knew that Lord Chesney was at home; and, on the strength of her relationship to

his mother, they called one another by their Christian names, and she tried to make herself indispensable to him by interesting herself in all his pursuits, and by sitting with him in the smoking-room whenever he was alone.

She had almost begun to fancy that she had made an impression upon him, and that his grave politeness was changing into something rather warmer, when Tessie arrived on the scene.

Lady Chesney had hardly mentioned her existence to her guests, save by stating that a young friend of hers was coming on a long visit. And neither Miss Enderby nor Holden felt interested enough to inquire any further.

So that the advent of this new personality had been something of a disagreeable shock to Rachel, and to Holden it had been something more, for he, being bound in honour to Tessie, had fallen in love as deeply as his butterfly nature was capable of doing with Miss Enderby.

Of course, he had said nothing in actual words to the lady of his admiration, but she, being quite ready to encourage any admiration of a possible sort, enjoyed his quiet homage.

Seldom, indeed, had a more disconcerted party assembled round a dinner-table than that which

Neither of the two slept much that night. Each was thinking of the other, and Alec determined that the next day should see his fate decided.

The following evening, after dinner, he escorted Mrs. Maynard into the music-room, and fetched a cushion for her and a book, and was altogether so attentive that her opinion of him went up with a run.

Finally, in the most guileless manner, he told her of his change in position, whereon she sat for some minutes in meditation.

"Evelyn," she said presently, "wouldn't you like to go on deck for the air? Mr. Fenton will take you, perhaps?" with an interrogative smile; and Alec was only too happy.

"Will you come into the bow?" he said, and she followed him without a word.

There was a faint breeze blowing that ruffled the surface of the sea, and stretching away from the vessel's side to the horizon was a broad band of shimmering moon-lit water.

She stood beside him, one hand resting on the bulwarks, the other holding the shawl she had thrown round her head. There was a brilliant colour in her cheeks, her eyes were shining. He was intensely conscious of her presence.

"How long is it since I saw you!" he said presently, "Nine months."

"Is it? It was in June, I think."

"I had wanted to have told you then," he said, almost timidly, "how very sorry I was for you when—when Mr. Haworth died. I wanted to have told you, but I was afraid of doing anything to bring back the trouble to you."

"Thank you," she said tremulously. "You are very kind."

"It must have been a terrible experience for you. I would have given much to have been able to have helped you;" and he hardly knew the depth of tenderness there was in his voice. "I don't know how you bore it and lived. You were an example to many, and among them myself."

Evelyn was crying now, catching her breath in quick sobs.

"Forgive me," he said brokenly. "Oh, Evelyn, don't cry!"

Her tears moved him, as a woman's tears move every true man, and he longed to comfort her.

"Can I not help you?" he begged.

She shook her head, and then she said falteringly—"You have spoken so kindly that I feel I ought to tell you something."

Her voice was husky, but she went on bravely—

"The night before Mr. Haworth's death I wrote a note to him—it never reached him—to tell him—to tell him that our engagement must end, for I had found it was a mistake, and I did not love him."

For an instant Fenton's heart seemed to stand still.

"You did not love him?" he gasped.

"No," she replied; and then she threw up her head with a proud gesture. "It is easy for you to blame me," she said, "but—but," with a sob in her voice, "you don't know what I have suffered."

"Blame you!" he cried. "Do you think I ever could do *that*?"

Her hand was resting on the bulwark, and he put out his own and covered it. For a minute she let it remain, and then she drew it away.

"I must go," she said. "Good-night;" and as she turned towards him the moonlight fell on her dear face, and on her eyes brimming over with tears, and his heart leaped within him.

"No," he cried; "you must not go. I want to speak to you."

* * * * *

Ten minutes later a young lady came up to a group of friends on deck.

"What *do* you think?" she said impressively. "Miss Maynard and that new man from Brindisi are in the bow, and—he's kissing her, and right in the moonlight, too, where everyone can see."

"Perhaps they're engaged," suggested someone. "They're old friends. Hush! here she is;" and Evelyn came along the deck.

"Good-night," she said, with a smile of such radiant brightness that the last speaker said again emphatically, "Mark my words: they're engaged."

And they were. And Alec, left alone, paced up and down, the moonlight and the wash of the water against the vessel's side, and the mysterious charm of the sea, speaking to him only of Evelyn, and again and again the words rang through his brain:—

"And so I won my Genevieve,
My bright and beauteous bride."

A TALK ABOUT THE GREENHOUSE.

BY A PRACTICAL GARDENER.



OWPER, in his beautiful poem, "The Task," declares that he "who loves a garden loves a greenhouse too," and a greenhouse is a garden, an indoor home for many precious flowers from foreign climes that wither in our varying temperatures.

A common question from amateur gardeners at all seasons is, "What can I grow in my small greenhouse? It is attached to the drawing-room." Sometimes the question shows that the happy owner has a greenhouse in the garden, and well supplied with hot-water pipes, only desiring to know the class of plants to brighten the structure. I will give advice to both questioners,

and first deal with the heating of a small greenhouse. This is a vexed point with most gardeners, and life is made burdensome by anxious inquiries about boilers, petroleum stoves, and other contrivances to keep out grim frost that threatens the life of tender exotics.



HELIOTROPE (CHERRY PIE).

Those who wish to buy a greenhouse should get a ready-made structure, and competition has brought the prices very low. Everything depends, of course, upon its size, and sometimes a house may be picked up very cheaply, or, if one be handy with tools, one may spend a few pleasant hours in the winter evenings making a house.

More failures result from improper heating than from any other cause.

A friend said to me last winter: "I have tried —'s heating apparatus, but the whole business is most depressing. I shall act the anarchist and blow the affair up." I gave him comfort in his trouble, and tendered the advice I now furnish my readers. Dozens of boilers are advertised, and they do their work well, as a rule; but the most satisfactory contrivance is a riveted or welded "Palatine" wrought-iron boiler, which is made by the wholesale firm of Hartley and Sugden, of Halifax, and must be ordered through a local builder or ironmonger. Avoid small cast-iron boilers. They may suddenly collapse at a peculiarly trying time, and the catastrophe is beyond repair. The piping should not be less than four inches in diameter inside, and there must be no stint. The boiler will not then play pranks by boiling over, and when the fire goes out by accident, sufficient warmth will be retained in the pipes, whilst re-lighting proceeds, without the plants suffering in any degree. It is not necessary to set the boiler in brickwork. It is provided with ample fire-space, so that the refuse of the cinder box, or small coke, may be used as fuel. A well-made-up fire will last for twelve hours without attention, and a damper

should not be used above the fire, but the supply of air regulated by the ash-pit door. By this means noxious fumes will escape.

A host of floral gems may be cultivated in a good greenhouse—not a tumble down, draughty building scarcely fit to shelter a "geranium," but heated in the way described. The Chrysanthemum—"the flower of retirement and culture," says an old Chinese writer—we have already written of in the December article. It is a useful and lovely flower for the greenhouse, requiring little heat and putting forth its rich clusters to light the months of fog and cold.

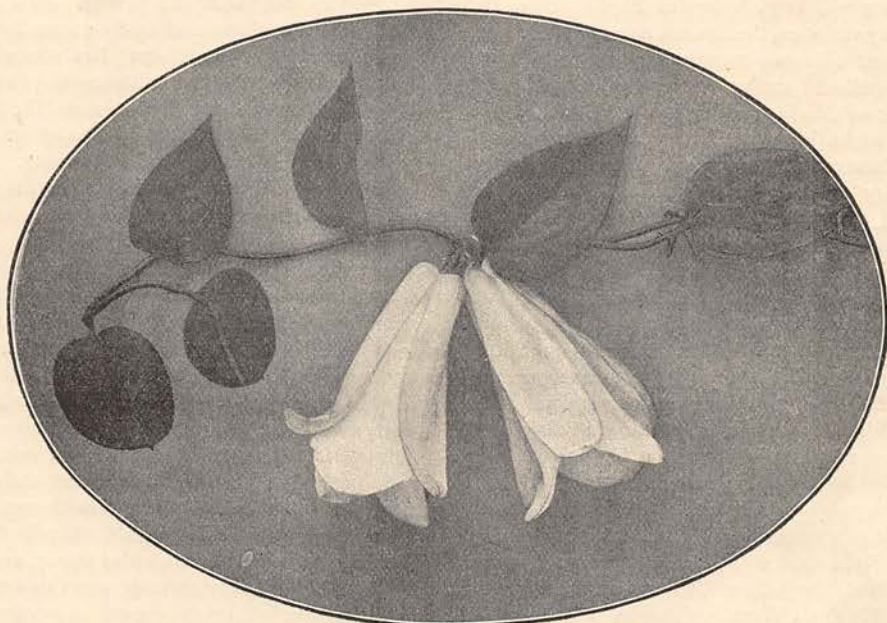
Camellias and Azaleas are splendid greenhouse plants. They do not like, but put up with, fogs, and if given reasonable attention never fail to flower. A peaty soil, firm potting, careful watering, and proper attention in the summer are the chief cultural details. A great lament in winter is, "Oh, the buds of my Camellias are falling off. What is the reason?" Well, this is the result of neglect during the summer. The plants become dry, and when in the winter an extra strain occurs they are unable to respond. Camellias and Azaleas require much the same treatment, and the best varieties of the former are the double white, the beautifully inbricated candidissima, Doncklaari, crimson, marbled with white, and the old Blush. The finest Azaleas are A. Borsig and Deutsche Perle, double white; Apollo, crimson scarlet; Bernhard Andreas, violet-purple; Jean Vervaene, rich crimson; Mrs. Turner, pink, with white margin to the petals; and Reine des Roses, rose, spotted with deeper shade.



PLUMBAGO.

The Cyclamen, or sow-bread, is a familiar greenhouse flower in winter, and called sow-bread because the tuberous roots are relished by swine. The wild boar of Sicily, where the plant is abundant, regards it as a

gonium, strike very easily in spring, and this method of propagation should be followed in the majority of cases, as for Calceolarias, Acacias, Pelargoniums of the French type, as well as Zonals, Marguerites, Chinese



LAPAGERIA ALBA (WAX FLOWERS).

delicacy. It is not troublesome to grow in a warm greenhouse. Bouvardias require more warmth than afforded by a petroleum stove. A temperature of not less than 60° is essential, or, if needed for flowering in summer, 45° to 60° during winter. Cuttings may be readily struck in brisk heat in the spring. When rooted, pot them on into five-inch pots, using a soil composed of about equal parts of loam and peat, with a fair proportion of sharp silver sand. Two delightful double varieties are Alfred Newner, pure white, and President Garfield, pink, whilst of the single kinds select Dazzler, brilliant scarlet; Priory Beauty, rose; Vreelandi, white; Humboldt Corymbiflora, snow-white; and Mrs. Green, salmon.

A useful plant for the greenhouse, but more usually grown in the open during the summer, is the sweet-scented Tobacco, *Nicotiana affinis*. It is easily raised from seed in the spring in gentle warmth, and the seedlings potted on, not planted out for summer decoration. The branching spikes of creamy white flowers send out a sweet fragrance in the evening. Writing of tobacco reminds me of the barrister who, when asked by a friend to take a pinch of snuff, said: "Sir, if the Almighty had intended my nostrils for a dust-hole, He would not have turned them upside down."

The Fuchsia is a plant that all can grow if the greenhouse is sufficiently heated. A great change has come over this flower, and hybridists have seized upon departures from existing types, from them building up a distinct class. The cuttings, like those of the Pelar-

Primulas, Heliotrope, and the Heaths; but it is better for the beginner to purchase Heaths. The wood is difficult to root, and the business is likely to prove disappointing.

On the roof one may have a Maréchal Niel rose, the blue *Plumbago capensis*, and *Lapageria rosea* and *L. alba*, that scramble over bushes in the woods of Chiloe, in South Chili. The flowers are large and waxy, as may be seen from the photograph above. A good peat bed must be prepared for them, and the rising asparagus-like shoots protected with a tubular lamp-glass when they appear. Slugs and snails have a special fondness for the juicy tops.

In the warm greenhouse it is possible to get away from the commoner climbers, creating a change by growing the climbing "Nasturtium."

A letter before me runs thus: "Can you tell me how to grow a climbing Nasturtium for winter-flowering? I saw a lovely plant the other day, a perfect blaze of colour." Happily, it is possible to get this "blaze of colour" easily, and the only difficulty is fog—the nauseous smoke-clouds that envelop the suburbs of big cities. The way to proceed is as follows: take cuttings in March, and they strike quickly in mild heat. When rooted pot them off separately. During the summer the plants should be placed out of doors on a bed of coal-ashes, to prevent worms getting into the hole in the bottom of the pot, and watered when necessary. In September take the plant to the greenhouse, and the growth will quickly run over the rafters,

the flowers standing out in brilliant array against the glaucous leaves. The best variety is Fireball, the flowers being a vivid crimson.

During recent years Cactuses have grown greatly in popularity, and they can be purchased cheaply. Eighteenpence will buy a splendid Phyllocactus, and there are many varieties, the flowers, as a rule, very large and of brilliant colours—carmine, crimson and rose, shot with a pellucid satiny lustre, a glorious sheen, characteristic of this fascinating class. Everyone has heard of the night-flowering *Cereus grandiflorus*, which has blooms fourteen inches across. A plant in perfection is a fairy vision, with its spotless white flowers developed in the darkness and creating, in the poet's words, "Worlds of light, we never see by day." Of short duration is this brilliant manifestation, the flower commencing to expand at seven o'clock p.m., gradually opening out its wealth of petals, until at midnight they are in full splendour. From thence until morning its glory dwindles, the scene to be again presented on the following evening by successional buds.

This month's talk is necessarily somewhat disjointed. The greenhouse and its inmates is a big subject for a comparatively brief article, but everything I have mentioned may be grown therein. A few more easily managed things are tuberous Begonias, which give all the colours of the rainbow, the blue-flowered *Agapanthus umbellatus*, the yellow *Cytisus*, winter-flowering Heaths, the Maiden's Wreath, Francoa, a lovely white flower in graceful spikes, the fine old Scarborough Lily (*Vallota*), which requires to be practically left alone, and the singular Blood-flower (*Hæmanthus*).

A plant of the showy *H. coccineus* may be grown to surprise friends. It requires as much warmth as the greenhouse affords when the leafless, curiously-marked stems appear, each crowned with a brush-like head of

scarlet flowers. When at rest only sufficient water is required to prevent them shrivelling. You may tell the wondering friend that the viscid, acrid juice of the Blood-flower bulbs was used by the Hottentots to poison their arrows.

One does not want all flowers, so I append the names of a few cheap and easily-grown foliage plants. The Parlour Palm (*Aspidistra*) has remarkably ornamental leaves variegated with creamy white. Then choose the graceful *Grevillea robusta*, the thick-leaved *Aralia Sieboldi*, and the Maidenhair fern, *Adiantum cuneatum*, *Pteris cretica*, and *P. tremula*.

I have refrained from mentioning orchids in general, but if a free-growing kind is desired select the Lady Slipper (*Cypripedium insigne*), which gives little trouble. It is, moreover, inexpensive, and needs a peaty soil, no heat whatever in summer, and the warmest corner of the greenhouse in winter, when its pretty flowers are borne in profusion. Of course, the house may be brightened with a few forced bulbs or plants as *Deutzia gracilis*, a white-flowered shrub that gives beauty to mountains and valleys in flowery Japan.

March is a busy month. Roll and sweep the grass lawn, finish all kinds of planting, and make the beds ready for seed-sowing. Sow now Sweet Peas, Virginian Stock, Poppies, Lupines, Calliopsis, Cornflowers, Clarkias, Larkspurs, *Convolvulus minor*, and Love-lies-bleeding. Half-hardy annuals sown under glass must not get drawn. Keep the growth as stocky as possible. Pot up bedders, and Carnations for summer-flowering kept over the winter in frames should be put out at once. See that the greenhouse plants are not infested with green-fly. A mild dose of tobacco smoke will settle these small marauders. Plant early potatoes on a warm border, sow carrots and cabbages for early in July. At the end of the month sow French beans and Exonian peas.

A FEW SAMPLES PER RAIL.



N old gardener of our acquaintance was sent up to town in charge of a horse. He received many directions from his master as to his route; his mistress went with him to the station, and bought for him a return ticket. The distance from London was only twenty miles, and William returned in safety in the evening.

The next morning, when accounts were being inspected, an item for "My train" attracted attention.

"What is this?" inquired the mistress.

"That be for my journey home, missus."

"But I gave you a 'return.' Did you lose it? Half of your ticket should have been given you in London."

"Lor-a-mussy, mum! be this it?" quoth William, pulling from his pocket the missing half. "I did wonder at he for giving of it back to I."

There are not many so untravelled nowadays as that William. A different company pass us by as we stand for a few minutes on the platform at Charing Cross or Victoria, at about five o'clock in the afternoon, to watch a few trains go out, laden with their human freight. By far the largest number of passengers are men. "Paterfamilias" may be labelled at once, from his habit of carrying to the nest some morsels for the fledglings, or for the mother bird—a basket of fish, some blue-enveloped fruit or dainty

GARDENING IN APRIL.
ANNUAL AND BIENNIAL FLOWERS.

BY A PRACTICAL GARDENER.



BOUVARDIA.

ANNUAL and biennial flowers form the chief subject of this month's discourse. They are the friends of the amateur gardener, embracing many old-fashioned favourites that charm with their colour or fragrance. "Annual," of course, denotes a plant of one year's duration, reproducing itself from seed; but I will also include biennials, of which the quaint

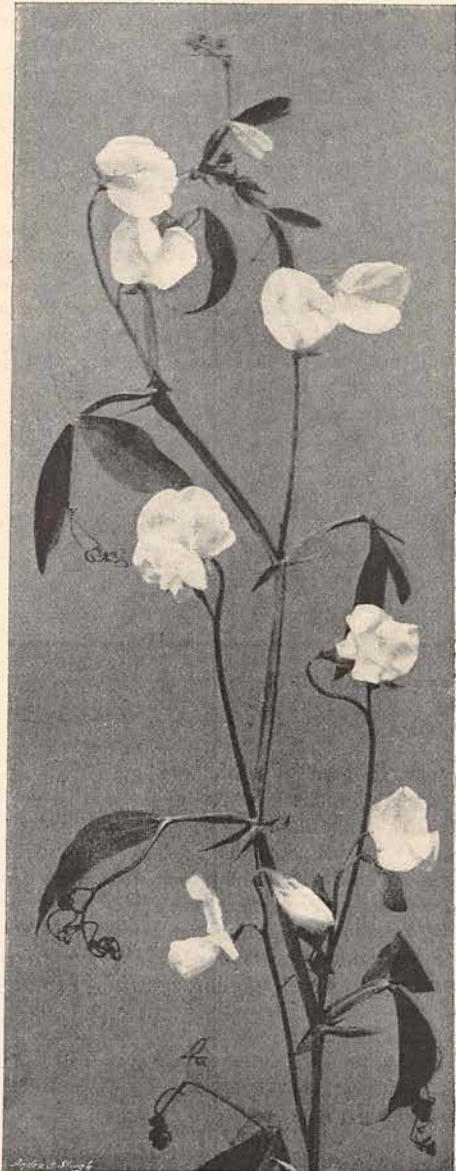
Sweet William is a familiar example.

Complaints are made to me of annuals behaving badly, getting weedy, and after a bright, but, alas! brief season, dying away—"a flash, and no more." I can imagine readers of this article muttering unpleasant things about this charming race of flowers, but failure is simply the result of ignorance or carelessness. A common plan is to sow the seed in small patches in the border, to leave half as many seedlings as required, and then to bid the plants take care of themselves. Naturally the growth gets weedy, and the flowering season is of short duration.

I will attempt to put those who have hitherto failed with annuals on the right path. A rock upon which many come to grief is in sowing the seed too thickly. Leave each plant ample space to develop, sowing thinly at the commencement, and afterwards thinning out severely, to allow ample space for the plants to form a healthy, free-flowering mass. Annuals should, like other flowers, as far as space will permit, be massed to get the full richness of their colouring. It is impossible to see their beauty when sown anyhow. Moreover, with judicious attention they will last long in perfection. Some of my readers doubtless can grow their annuals on an old border. I have in mind a border of annual flowers skirting a high Elizabethan red-bricked wall, whereon the Gloire de Dijon Rose flings its flower-laden shoots, and where in winter mosses of many kinds add a touch of deep greenery. This border is devoted practically to bulbs, the fair Daffodils in particular; and every spring annuals are sown between the clumps. They are too shallow-rooting to interfere with the Daffodils, and as the foliage of the bulbs dies down, the seedlings come up, spreading into bold masses—a sheet of flower. They are well grown, thinned out carefully, and permitted to trail on the walk, breaking up the formal edge. Such a picture is charmingly old-fashioned, full of colour and beauty, reminding one of a study by Alfred

Parsons or Henry Moore. I love to see hardy flowers overstepping the bounds of a border, and trying to hide an ugly gravel path.

One sees many old borders, similar to that described, in gardens, and it is very easy to keep them gay through the summer months by adopting this simple plan. No opportunity should be lost of boldly massing flowers; it is Nature's own way, and she spreads on the hill and in the valley carpets of lovely colouring



SWEET PEA.

for us to imitate. In the common garden border of a "villa residence" a good selection of annuals may be grown, as the soil is usually passable, certainly not too rich or likely to promote undue growth. A mixture of hardy flowers and annuals is very pleasing, the annuals breaking up the line, adding variety and preventing a monotonous effect. Such kinds as Mignonette may be associated with Roses, standards especially—two flowers that fill the garden with fragrance.

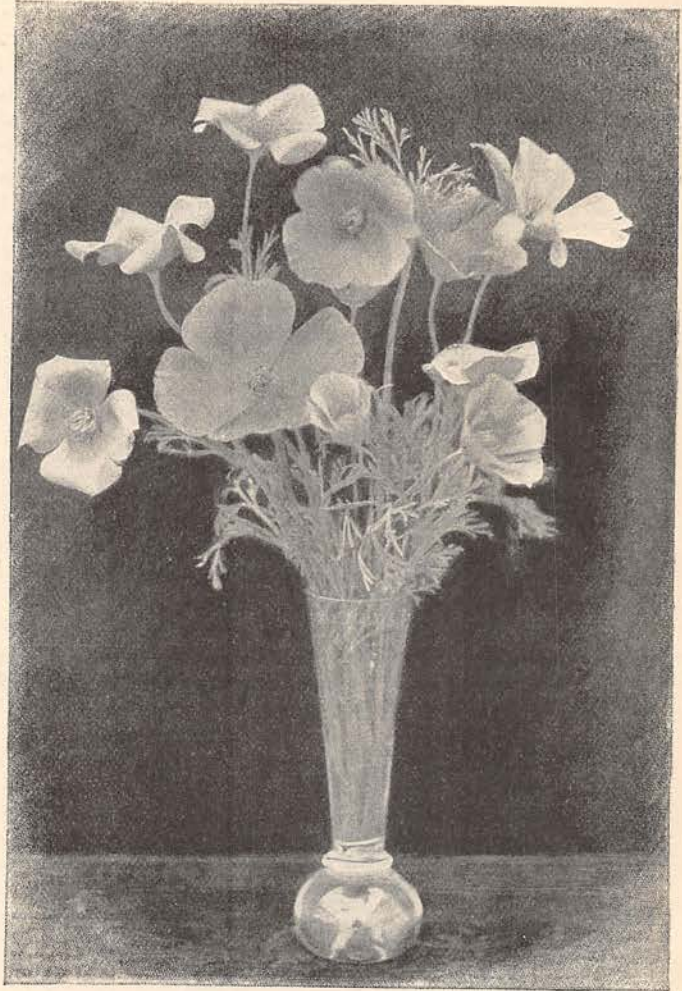
At the present time I get many letters such as this: "Kindly inform me as to the best *hardy* annuals, that require no heat." My readers doubtless know that two classes exist, one to be sown early in the year in heat, as the so-called China Asters, and the real hardy annuals, as our old friend the Candytuft.

I will first name the hardy annuals, which must be sown out of doors this month. April is the great month of the year for seed-sowing, and none of the kinds mentioned should cost more than about threepence a packet for good seed. (Cheap seed is worse than useless; one sows, but no harvest of bloom follows.) My brief selection comprises the golden-yellow *Bartonia*, the varied-coloured *Coreopsis*, or *Calliopsis*, Candytufts, Cornflowers, *Convolvulus*, Extinguisher-flowers (*Eschscholtzia*), *Godetias*, Sunflowers, Everlastings, *Linarias*, Love-lies-Bleeding, the large-flowered *Malope*, Larkspurs, *Mignonette*, *Nasturtium*, *Nemophila*, Love-in-a-Mist (*Nigella*), Poppies, Sweet Peas, *Saponaria*, *Silene*, Sweet Sultan, *Virginian Stock*, and *Viscaria*.

One of the most curious of these annuals is the bright orange-flowered *Eschscholtzia*, which gets its popular name from its distinctive cap, like the orthodox witch's head-gear, produced by the union of the sepals. Children delight to lift off this floral extinguisher.

Writing of the beautiful Cornflower reminds me of the tradition that relates it was called *Centaurea cyanus* after a youth who fell in love with the "blue-bottle" of our golden corn-fields. This youth was no bad judge, but his enthusiasm outstepped the bounds of common prudence. He was ever weaving garlands of the flowers whilst they remained in beauty, even dressing himself in clothes of the same lovely colour. At Flora's shrine he perpetually worshipped, until one day the goddess found him lying dead with garlands of Cornflowers about, and in remembrance of her youthful devotee, christened the plant *Centaurea cyanus*. So much for a rather pretty legend.

I must mention one annual that, if somewhat of a



EXTINGUISHER FLOWER, OR ESCHSCHOLTZIA (BRIGHT ORANGE YELLOW).
(From a photograph by E. J. Golding.)

weed, is a bright sunny flower, the quaint Marigold, which the unfortunate boy-poet, Chatterton, describes as "The marybudde that shutteth with the light," in allusion to the flowers closing towards evening. This feature was not passed over by Browne, who, in his "Pastorals," says—

"But, maiden, see the day is waxen old,
And 'gins to shut in with the Marygold."

The Corn Marigold is a *Chrysanthemum* (*C. segetum*), and scatters its golden flowers in English corn-fields, as its relative, the Dog Daisy (*C. leucanthemum*), does in the meadow.

Pleasant thoughts arise when the wild flowers of the field and wayside are one's topic. Everyone revels in the picture of waving fields of buttercups, dog daisies, and grasses of lovely tints, all in complete harmony, ever changing, never tiresome, the gentle breath of a summer wind wafting a sweet fragrance culled from the thirsty blossom. Nature charges

no admission money for this feast of colour and fragrance.

A certain class of annuals—the "half-hardy"—must be raised early in the year on a gentle hot-bed or in a warm greenhouse. The seed costs no more than that of the hardy kinds, and is easily raised. Sow thinly, prick out or pot off the seedlings when of sufficient size to handle, and before planting them out in the garden get them thoroughly hardy. If you do not, treacherous east winds will make short work of them.

A point of great importance in growing annuals is to keep the decayed flowers picked off, the object being to prevent formation of seed, which is a trial to the plant.

The best half-hardy annuals are *Ageratum*, *Amaranthus*, *Balsams*, *Cockscombs*, *Chinese Pinks*, *Ice-plants*, *Lobelias*, *African and French Marigolds*, *Petunias*, *China Asters*, *Phlox Drummondii*, *Salpiglossis*, and *Tagetes pumila*.

A host of fine old-fashioned flowers is placed amongst the biennials. The stately Foxglove is of the number, and on the poorest soils, where nothing else will grow, it is at home, or by the path-side in a woodland retreat. Seed can be purchased very cheaply. There are varieties with flowers of splendid size and refined colours: white sometimes freely

spotted within the bell. It is interesting to know that in Ireland the Foxglove is called the Great Herb, or Fairy Cap. In the flowery bells, dainty fairies are supposed to hide from mortal man. Readers of Irish legends will remember the hunchback herb-doctor in "Knockgrafton," who dons the Fairy Cap, or Lusmore, in his bonnet, and gets the nickname of Lusmore. As the seed is very small, it is best to sow a little in a frame or greenhouse in May. Canterbury Bells are as quaint as any flower of the border. The seed should be sown at the same time as the Foxglove, and the plants grown in the same way. Get the smaller-flowered type, not the huge cup-and-saucer kinds—coarse, ugly, and not mounds of bloom. If the seed-pods are kept picked off after the flowers fade, a second blossoming will be the reward. The Honesty (*Lunaria biennis*) is a biennial one sees little of in gardens. When once established it will sow itself freely from seed, and the silvery seed-pods are welcome in the choicest decorations. Sweet Williams, Wallflowers, and Lamarck's Evening Primrose (*Oenothera*), are all desirable biennials.

In choosing Sweet Williams, remember that the rich self colours are the most beautiful and effective. To me, the finest of all Sweet Williams is the deep double crimson, or the single variety; but in a good packet of seed many shades will appear, not a few remarkably distinct—belted, so to say, with vivid colour. Garden design is an art learned by a right conception of the beauty of flower colouring. This art may be applied to the humblest plot, and shows itself in the flowers of the border, by the display of their rich and decided tones, with careful elimination of dull and uninteresting shades. Let every amateur gardener remember that bold clumps of plants are far more enjoyable than small patches dotted about like bits of colour on bad mosaic.

April is a busy month; pruning of shrubs is as frequent now as in winter: but why prune? If shrubs be crowded together, remove a few to give those remaining more space in which to spread out their branches. Take care to avoid cutting away branches that will bear flowers. Some shrubs bloom only on young wood. It is pleasant to recall some old-fashioned garden, in which many forms of shrub-life are allowed to show their natural habit and beauty. The Lilac is bowed down with the weight of its precious burden of blossom; the Philadelphus, or Mock Orange, scents the air with a fragrance as sweet as the Syringa's; and the Guelder Rose makes a mound of white, as pure as the driven snow. One pictures this free graceful growth, sufficient to satisfy the craving soul of a hungry artist—hungry for the food of sweet garden pictures, unfettered by the idiosyncrasies of modern cultivation—and then change the scene to the town or suburban garden, where the heavy-coloured Privet is alone planted, and shrub-growth is pruned until it becomes a shadow of its former self.

Chrysanthemums for outdoors may be planted now, and cuttings struck of those required merely for



ASTER

decoration ; not for exhibition. Window plants, such as Parlour Palm (*Aspidistra*), India-rubber plants, Ferns, and Palms, may be re-potted, if required. A little leaf-mould or well-decayed manure placed about Carnations will do much good. Sow grass seeds, repairing faulty places in the lawn. If the weather is dry, Roses, fruit-trees, or anything planted earlier or in the autumn, must be well watered. Last year they suffered greatly from the dry season. Towards the end of the month mulch Strawberries with long manure, as in dry weather this prevents them suffering from drought. After last year's experience, I must

give special advice in this respect. It was only on thoroughly well-cultivated ground that strawberries bore abundantly. If neglected as regards water, the fruit is flavourless and quickly over. Ferns must have plenty of space, as the fronds are developing rapidly.

Many readers are, through force of circumstances, compelled to restrict their gardening to the window or room. Plants preserved during the winter in spare rooms are starting into growth. Cut away dead shoots, and remove the surface soil, replacing with fresh material.



SIR GUY'S ROOM.

BY WILLIAM CAIRNS.



WHEN George Overton's great uncle, Sir Marmaduke Savell, quarrelled with him for marrying poor Clare Wilmot, everybody made sure that the wealthy baronet would cut him off with a shilling, though his mother had been a favourite niece. At Sir Marmaduke's

death, no one was more astonished than George himself, to discover that the grim old bachelor had relented so far as to leave him Bygrave Abbey, a neglected old house in Gloucestershire, with a hundred acres of land, upon which were the remains of an old ruin that gave the house its name.

The only Savell who had been known to reside for any length of time at Bygrave Abbey was Sir Marmaduke's grandfather, a man of eccentric character, known among the country people as "Mad Sir Guy." He lived a life of seclusion there, and was one morning found dead in a gloomy oak-panelled room, which, together with the ruin in the grounds, had the reputation of being haunted by him.

Afterwards (although a tenant had occasionally been found for the place) it had, during most of its time, been left in the charge of caretakers ; and when George drove over from the little west country junction, the only person he found there was a man whose appearance and manner impressed him so unfavourably that he spoke about him to the agent who had been employed by Sir Marmaduke Savell to look after the property. Upon being questioned, the agent said—

"The worst I know of him is that he was discharged from Conniston Manor (Lord Duvane's place, five miles from here) for some fault or other. I can't say he's a man that is generally liked, but *I've* always found him honest enough ; and then, you see, sir, it isn't everyone would care to live alone in a house like Bygrave Abbey."

"I suppose," said George, with a smile, "you refer to the ghost of old Sir Guy Savell?"

The agent coughed, and seemed inclined to put the question aside, but ended by admitting that recently two or three stories had got abroad concerning the spectre of Bygrave Abbey. Among the rest, it was said that a loafing fellow of the neighbourhood, who had more than once been convicted as a poacher, had late one night stolen by the end of the house where the haunted room was, and seen a face at one of the windows.

George Overton naturally made light of this rustic gossip, but as he took leave of the agent, he thought—

"I hope that when we come down here the servants won't take to seeing Sir Guy in every dark corner. It might be rather inconvenient if they did ;" for he had decided to pass the summer at Bygrave Abbey ; and not long after arrived, with his wife and his sister-in-law, Olive Wilmot.

Olive was a handsome girl, darker and taller than Clare, who was a pretty blonde below the ordinary size. She was engaged to George Overton's old friend, Philip Stanton, an engagement which many persons thought a greater folly than the marriage of her sister ; for if George forfeited his great-uncle's favour, he had a comfortable fortune from his father ; whereas Philip, though he worked hard and was already beginning to make his mark at the bar, might for years to come be too poor to marry.

Philip had an invitation to pass a part of the vacation with the Overtons, and was expected at Bygrave Abbey towards the end of August. Meanwhile, the story of Mad Sir Guy got about among the servants who had been brought from London ; but as the haunted room was in the north wing, the whole of which still remained uninhabited (Bygrave Abbey, though of moderate size, being too large for George's modest household), nothing occurred more startling than an alarm caused by a timid nursemaid, who one night dreamed of Sir Guy and cried out in her sleep.

GARDENING IN MAY.

A GAY GARDEN OF SUMMER FLOWERS.

BY A PRACTICAL GARDENER.



GARDENING is not expensive if a few good things are planted. It is the luxuries that cost money; and these are such things as the more treasured alpines, difficult to rear, like delicate children. I will tell my readers the names of beautiful plants to grow to

a good gardening wrinkle; and if people would pamper their plants less, the flowers would appear in greater profusion and individually of bolder size. The bulbs should be planted deep, and in well-prepared soil; then left alone until they are so crowded that separation is advisable. The best place of all to plant Lilies is in a bed of Rhododendrons, or dwarf peat-loving shrubs, which give protection to the rising shoots in spring; the peaty soil agreeing, too, with the bulbs. But everyone, of course, is not blessed with luxuriant banks of Rhododendron, or Azalea, to hold a festival of colour in early summer. When it can be done, a glorious effect is produced; the flowers gaining greatly in beauty with the foundation, so to speak, of massive shrub.

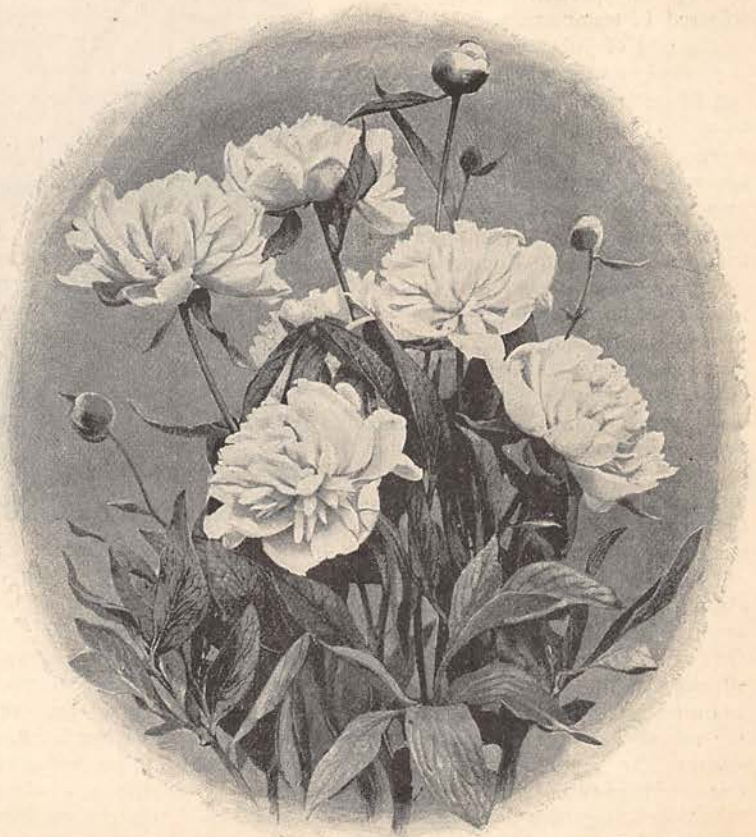
make a brave mass of colour in the garden through the summer and autumn months. It does not require a fortune to form a pretty garden. As sweet a picture as ever charmed the eye was an old-fashioned border of a number of popular things, spreading out into bold clumps, Lilies, herbaceous Phloxes, Pæonies, and a host of plants; stately Hollyhocks nodding over an old oaken fence.

On Growing Lilies.

Take the Lilies as our first group, and here we have a family of delightful flowers, varied in aspect, free, graceful, and all grown readily in ordinary garden soil. I have just answered a correspondent who inquires about Lilies, wanting to know the best and cheapest kinds, and the way to grow them. The pure white Madonna Lily (*Lilium candidum*) is one of the fairest of flowers. It is woven into many legendary tales, and graces all good cottage gardens. I want everyone who reads these monthly "chats" to watch gardens on their travels; for many a hint may be gathered from the humble cottage plot, as one frequently hears the cottager's garden described. I wish my own garden were as large, and the soil as good.

Ask a cottager how he gets such a fine mass—say, of the white Lily; and the answer will be invariably to this effect: "Well, the fact is, sir, I leaves them alone." In this answer is

One is reminded of the wish of an old Chinese writer, mentioned by Mr. Giles in his "Gems of Chinese Literature." He says: "What boots it to wear out the soul with anxious thoughts? I want not wealth; I want not power; heaven is beyond my hopes. Then let me stroll through the bright



PÆONIES.

hours as they pass in my garden among my flowers; or, I will mount the hill and sing my song, or weave my verse beside the limpid brook." In a garden of Lilies one might enjoy many pleasant hours.

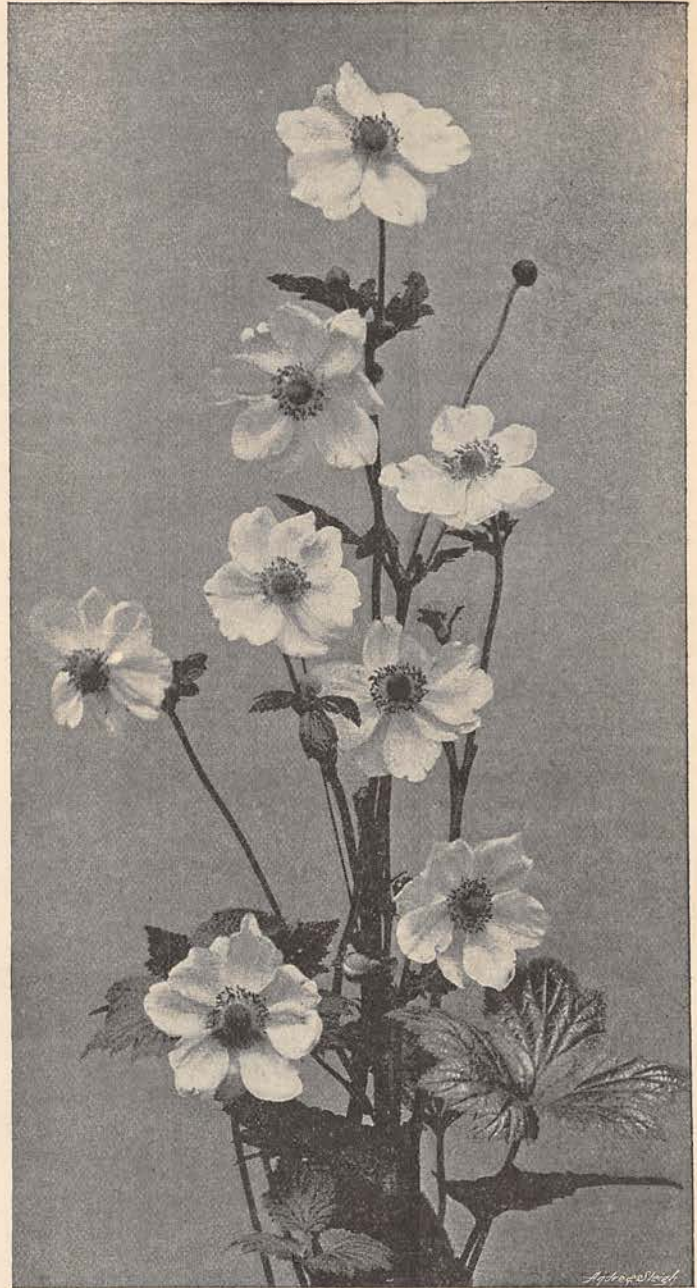
The best, perhaps, of all Lilies is the golden-rayed *L. auratum*, the pride of the Japanese, who export, one might say, millions of bulbs each year.

This likes a peaty, well-drained soil. Put the bulbs down to quite a depth of seven or eight inches. It is a comparatively modern introduction, having been sent over from the "land of flowers" in 1862. Grow it both in pots and in the border; not forgetting a few of the better varieties bearing flowers of glorious colours, laid on in the form of stripes or spots. You may then select the well-known *L. bulbiferum*, the varied-coloured *L. canadense*, the bright scarlet *L. chalcedonicum*, the orange Lily (*L. croceum*), *L. davuricum*, forms of *L. elegans*, some quite dwarf, only a few inches in height, suitable for the margin of beds, the popular Martagon Lily, the tall-growing *L. pardalinum*, the buff-coloured *L. testaceum*, which blooms at the end of July, the Tiger Lilies, particularly a variety called *splendens*, and *L. speciosum*, or its varieties, one named *album* having pure white flowers. These two important groups are autumn-blooming. All the Lilies named are cheap and readily grown, flowering, moreover, in succession from June to the end of September.

A plant that should be in every garden is the white Anemone or Japanese Windflower (*A. japonica alba*), sometimes named *Honorine Jobert*. It may be purchased for a few pence; and in a deep moist soil, and not too exposed position, flourishes to perfection, the plant producing a forest of the pure white flowers, beautiful to look at in the garden, and useful to cut for the house.

I fancy I hear readers murmuring about the long names given in these articles; I really cannot help using the big terms. One must blame the botanist; wherever possible a simple English name is substituted for the wordy Latin mixture. But there is this further advantage in the use of the botanical names that they are exact, whereas the simpler titles are often given indiscriminately to two or three different flowers.

In common garden soil will thrive well the Columbine, Asphodel, Michaelmas Daisies to blossom through the autumn, the Bellflowers, the yellow



ANEMONE JAPONICA ALBA.

Coreopsis lanceolata, perennial Larkspurs, *Erigeron speciosus*, a splendid hardy plant, bearing a wealth of mauve-purple flowers, Sea Hollies on a warm, dry border, the white Goats' Rue, perennial autumn-flowering Sunflowers, Day Lilies, the white perennial Lupine, herbaceous Lobelias, *Lychnis*, the rosy Loosestrife in a damp place, Evening Primroses, Paeonies (the old crimson kind), *Rudbeckia*, the showy Stonecrop (*Sedum spectabile*), Globe-flowers, the double white Sneezewort, and Hollyhocks.

How to Grow Hollyhocks.

A noble flower is the Hollyhock, from the nectaries of which the poet says—

“The humble bee e'en till he faint will sip.”

The bee has a special fondness for the large, gaudy, richly-coloured flowers, well stored with honey. Once, however, our old-fashioned friend was almost lost to us through the disease that for many years practically banished it from gardens.

I have had many anxious inquiries from people in various parts of England, to give them advice as to how to stop the ravages of disease. Stately lines of plants disappeared before its grim advance, especially about the years 1873-74. It is supposed to have been imported from Chili with the species—appearing first in Spain, spreading then through Europe, and to England.

Of recent years the plants have not suffered so severely; and one way to prevent its spread is to burn the leaves when they become attacked, and not to let other malvaceous plants grow near. The Hollyhock is a mallow, a relative of the common Marsh-mallow that loves to dwell in ditches and swamps.

To grow Hollyhocks well, the soil must be rich and well prepared; and you should protect the plants, when first put out, from cold nights. During the summer give plenty of water, and see that each plant is securely staked, to prevent high winds breaking the sturdy but brittle stems.

The plants may be increased by division of the roots, or from seed; and of recent years many beautiful seedlings have been acquired, ranging from purest white to deep purple. The delicate rose-and-white kinds are the more pleasing. If possible, get also the primrose-tinted variety—a soft, charming shade.

The Cultivation of the Iris.

The Iris demands more than a passing notice. It is the amateur gardener's friend, and does not mind even common soil. Brave purple flowers crown the robust clumps in June: they are gone too soon; but one is well rewarded for the annual manifestation of royal colouring.

Before, however, I praise too heartily the foreign “flags,” our native kinds deserve mention. The common Water Flag (*I. pseudacorus*) is familiar in many stream-sides of England, covering the lush margins with its stately stems holding aloft the bright yellow flowers. The Gladwin, or Gladden (*I. foetidissima*), is less common, but is familiar in shop windows, as the seed pods, decked with bright coral-red seeds are as brilliant as any flower. The Florentine Iris gives the fragrant orris root, and the family embraces a host of bulbous kinds, the pretty little *I. histrio*, that blooms in winter, being found on the slopes of Lebanon.

If any of my readers should wish to make a study of a certain family, they could have no better flower to commence with. It teems with lovely things, and the description applied to the Irises—“orchids of the hardy garden”—is not far fetched. They are first cousins to the wonderful plants that seek the jungles, the swamps, the mountain tops, and refuse

the sustenance of Mother Earth; but live amid the branches of the forest trees.

The beginner must commence with the German Irises, which will live in ordinary loamy soil, an open position, and give many fine shades of colour. Six very handsome varieties are the lavender-coloured Celeste, the deep purple type, Pallida dalmatica (the Dalmatian Iris), the flowers lavender, Queen of May, rose and lilac, Mme. Chereau, violet and white, and Victorine, white with blotches of intense purple. One shilling will buy a good plant of either of these handsome flowers.

Very interesting are the Fraxinellas (*Dictamnus*), in both the purple and the white forms. The flowers are supposed to give out sparks in warm summer weather; but the truth is the leaves contain a volatile oil, which saturates the surrounding air. A match applied results in an almost imperceptible flash of light. Both plants are worth growing in every garden, and they thrive in ordinary soil.

The plants named will, if carefully arranged, make the garden a picture of colour through many months of the year. A succession of bloom is maintained, and the variety is interesting, changing with the months, each season bringing its own floral emblems. I have in the few articles I have written, when occasion arose, pointed out that the small garden must be modelled on the plan of the great garden of Nature's own making. A mass of the white herbaceous phlox is far better than a medley of varieties of nondescript colours; a hopeless muddle of tints opposing each other through unsuitable contrast or association.

Such showy things as the gay Petunias, China Asters, Stocks, and other plants mentioned in a previous article, add to the interest and beauty of bed and border.

General Hints.

May provides plenty of work. At the end of the month Dahlias—tender bedders for a summer display—and similar things, must be planted. Don't be in too great a hurry to bed out. The last days of May are quite soon enough, otherwise late frosts will, perhaps, injure the plants. Thin out annuals in the border; and in all garden arrangements, especially in suburban districts, one must make good use of “Geraniums.” They need not be used to the neglect of other plants, but they are valuable for providing plenty of gay colour at a time when one delights in rich hues.

The grass lawn may be mown about once a week. It is a mistake to let the grass grow too long; and keep walks free from weeds. Place Auriculas going out of bloom in a shady spot; and towards quite the end of the month put a small stick to the flower-stems of Carnations and Picotees.

Plant Pansies in a shady, moist border; and in the vegetable department several things require attention. Sow the useful and wholesome Runner Bean—and no kind is better than the old scarlet; also Peas, Onions, Turnips, Lettuces, Batavian Endive, Radishes for succession, and Spinach. Cress is useful to have plenty of, to use as a salad. Pick decaying flowers off greenhouse Azaleas; repot Pelargoniums and Fuchsias.

had any intention of coming up. Then my heart began to beat in earnest. I really thought that each pulsation would attract him. I saw him enter a bedroom, light the gas, and deliberately examine the chambers of a revolver which he had lifted. Then I knew my light had been observed, and that he was prepared to make an example of the intruder. Quick as thought I stepped past the door of the lighted room. I trusted to his not seeing me and he did not. I rapidly concealed myself in the corner of the stairs. Meantime my heart was thumping.

"I had barely steadied myself when Mr. Chumleigh turned out the gas, and muttering something to himself, crept up the stairs as cautiously as I had previously descended. When he was well on his way I crept downwards once again, and when I heard him strike the light in his late wife's room I noiselessly let myself out by the front door, and as noiselessly closed it behind me.

"You look surprised, sir," he continued, "but it was not a bad night's work. I netted over £300 for my plunder, and I had the satisfaction of not having robbed him of his dead wife's treasured rings. This in itself was a satisfaction. Of course I had committed felony, and a shameful crime, I admit; but the business of a burglar and the business of a moralist cannot be expected to agree in every particular.

"The morning papers told us of the burglary of the preceding night. As a neighbour I went up to sympathise. A sturdy policeman was standing at the door, and two others were making search inside.

"'Here's where the cove has put off his boots,' said one of the policemen, 'and a nice blooming pair of beetle-crushers they are.'

"They certainly did not look respectable in daylight.

"'He has come through this window here,' said the other, in a strong Irish accent, to Mr. Chumleigh, 'left his boots here, and gone up the stairs in his bare feet.'

"'And the coolness of the fellow!' added the other. 'Why, he has sat down and ate his tucker on the bed with the *Morning News* for a clane table-cloth.'

"Then the detectives went upstairs, and came downstairs, and measured, and studied, and looked wise. And one saw it was a new hand, and said so from the first; and the other said it was an old hand, and shook his head. Everybody was satisfied on one point, and that was that the perpetrator of the act was a shoemaker, who lived on the Beasley Road.

"I had some interesting experiences over that burglary. It was amusing to hear the theories of the detectives and the public. The police went dashing about everywhere and arresting everybody. There was not a shoemaker in the country but the 'heye' of some inspector was upon him. The mystery never was solved, and after a time I had the jewellery melted, and it turned me in, as I told you before, over £300."

"And do you mean to tell me, Mr. Ollacram," said I, "that this narrative is actually true?" I asked him angrily, as I moved further from one whose very touch seemed now contamination.

"True, sir?" Mr. Ollacram replied. "Every word of it—as true as those other detective yarns we are reading in the magazines to-day. And if this is the period for an artistic detective, why should we not invent an equally artistic and equally intelligent burglar?"

Then I knew that Mr. Ollacram had been jokingly taking a hand at his parson, but I send you his tale notwithstanding.

GARDENING FOR JUNE.

AMONGST THE ROSES.



JUNE is the month of Roses, if any definite season can be determined for the precious flower that tosses its flower-laden shoots in the soft wind and fills the garden with fragrance. Exhibitions are held throughout July, and later in the north; but in hot years, when

scarcely a cloud veils the sun from week to week, June is a more appropriate month. The ardent hybridist, who has given us of recent years many splendid varieties, has extended the season of roses until far into the autumn, when many of the delicately tinted and scented tea kinds are in full blossoming.

The present article is devoted exclusively to the rose. I must be concise, to get as much information as possible in a small space.

There are hundreds of roses, some beautiful in form—not all; others as fragrant as the Wild Rose, that flings its delicately toned flowers over the dusty wayside hedge. I revel in our wilding; its innocence is fascinating, its fragrance as sweet as the Honeysuckle, that seems proud to mingle with the little frail rose-tinted flowers, and its beauty is prolonged by the succession of crimson hip, hep, or haw.

The Rose family is split up into two great divisions, the Hybrid Perpetual and the Tea-scented. The former figures largely at the exhibition, and is the more



GLOIRE DE DIJON.

important of the two; but of recent years the tea-flowers, since a better knowledge of their likes and dislikes has been obtained, have contributed to the beauty of many gardens.

The Hybrid Perpetual—that is the class usually seen, containing such splendid flowers as Baroness Rothschild (unfortunately, scentless), General Jacqueminot, or “Jack,” in market slang—is a modern creation, descended from the Damask Perpetual and several other classes, Gallica, Bourbon, and China. It was not until 1844 that any number appeared in books, but from thence onwards many acquisitions have been made.

A few rules are given as a guide to the cultivator. First, the soil must be considered. This should be good loam, mixed with well-decayed stable manure. If the soil is very light, add cow-dung, loam, or clay. Remember that the plant wants plenty of good food, although not the nauseous applications, called top-dressings, that offend the nostrils and sodden the ground.

From stories gathered from friends that have travelled in the land of roses—Persia—the nose is not troubled there by whiffs of stable-yard odour. Nor would

the great Persian bard Hafez have received inspiration in many an English garden at the mulching season.

Planting should take place from November until March, the former month being the more suitable of the two. In planting “dwarfs,” be careful to place the point where the plant is budded and easily seen about two inches below the surface, and make the soil very firm about the roots. The longer shoots may be just shortened—not cut back. In the case of standards, securely stake the stem, to prevent winds playing pranks.

I do not care greatly for standard roses. Aimée Vibert makes one of the best, but, as a rule, they are unsatisfactory, gaunt, starved, and ill-looking, due to two causes: unsuitable varieties used for the purpose and idiotic pruning. It is idle to remonstrate with the inexperienced amateur gardener about pruning. He delights to torture his plants, and inflicts special “attention” on the standard rose. It pays the “surgeon” out by dying.

More mistakes are made about pruning roses than upon any other phase of their culture. Much depends upon the class. The middle of March is the chief season, and this may be made note of by my readers as the time for using the knife upon their fair favourites. Use discretion as to the season, and if the

plants are very forward in March, postpone the annual operations for a week or so. Shoots on standards cut rather hard back, removing very small weakly growths to give the stronger ones more space. Thin out weak shoots from dwarf roses, and cut back the strong well-ripened ones to about four or six eyes, according to the condition of the plants; if very vigorous, cut back harder than would be otherwise necessary. Teas need little pruning, just shortening back the shoots and thinning out badly-placed or very weak wood.

Whilst writing these rather unromantic directions, necessary to be followed for an ingathering of roses in summer-time, a very interesting fairy tale about the magic Rose of Bakawali occurs to me. It is an Hindu legend. A certain king was afflicted with blindness, and only one remedy existed, the Rose of Bakawali. That would bring sight even to those born blind. Away sped the king's sons in search of the precious flower, and were informed by the enchantress Lakka (the moon) that the “rose thou seekest is found in the region of the sun, where not even a bird may reach it. Bakawali is daughter of the King of the Fairies, in whose garden this rose is found. In the midst of

the garden is a tank, the sides whereof are set with diamonds, whilst the conduits around are studded with the finest pearls. The tank is filled with rose-water, and in the centre thereof rises an unexpanded flower, fair to see, and of exquisite odour." The rose was discovered with fairy help, and the travellers returned to the king. His eyes were touched with the magic flower, and the king's sight immediately restored.

One might write pages of stories and legendary tales connected with the rose, but my readers possibly yearn for something more practical.

Budding is an interesting and important operation. Everyone likes to bud his own roses, and the operation is not difficult. A warm showery day in July should be chosen. Late budding is a mistake, for the sap ceases to flow as quickly as in midsummer. Choose for budding stocks growing with moderate freedom, as upon such examples the buds will *take* better. It is a pardonable fault in beginners to get stocks overflowing with vigour, but the fact is they are too strong; the bark grows over the bud, and completely smothered it. A simple test to ascertain whether a stock is sufficiently ripened is to break off a few of the prickles. If they snap without tearing the bark, the stock is in suitable condition. The first thing is to select the bud of whatever kind it is desired to use, and give preference to that of moderate size. Remove thorn and leaves, retaining a little of the stalk to hold. Always have a very sharp knife; you can get a weapon especially adapted for the purpose at any good nursery. Cut carefully about half an inch above the eye, drawing the knife a little below it. Then secure the eye and insert it on the stock, which should be previously prepared by opening the bark in the most suitable position, this being done by just slitting it in the centre of the shoot. Then cut it across, making a kind of T figure upside down, \perp , and insert the bud by cautiously raising the edges of the bark. Tie it in firmly with bass (raffia) or cotton, but leave the point visible. As the bud swells, loosen the ties and cut back the stock level with the budded shoot.

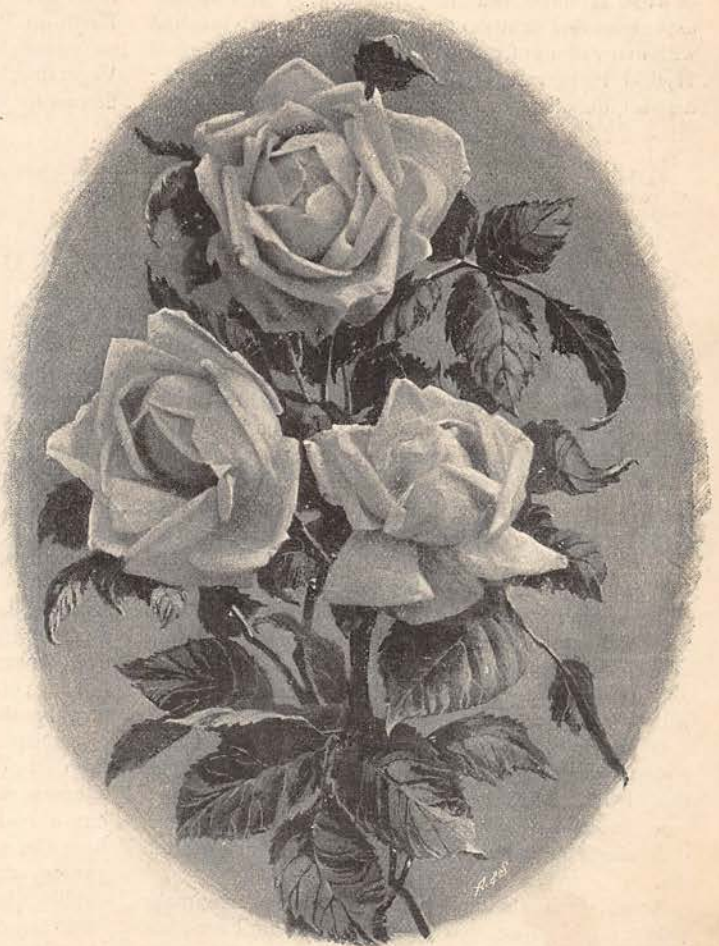
The best general stock is the cutting Brier, but much depends upon the varieties. The Manetti is troublesome, as it produces a forest of suckers, but is useful in certain cases, such as for Hybrid Perpetuals of vigorous growth. Seedling Brier and Hedge Brier or Dog Rose are also available.

One may get roses on their own roots very easily by striking cuttings in the early autumn. Make them of the well-ripened wood of the current

year, and from nine inches to twelve inches in length, getting a heel to each, if possible. Don't remove any of the eyes, and tread the cuttings in firmly. In the course of a year they will be transformed into healthy plants, and then plant them in the proposed positions. Tea-scented roses must be struck under glass. The cuttings will not succeed as well in the open as the more robust "h.p.'s.," as the Hybrid Perpetuals are familiarly christened.

A word about pests. Green-fly afflicts the queenly rose. It cares little how beautiful a flower is, and, to our dismay, one gathers a rose to find the delicate petals smothered with these small green-coloured marauders.

Mr. Benjamin Cant, who has covered many acres with roses at Colchester, recommends the following preparation: Take four ounces of quassia chips, and boil them ten minutes in a gallon of soft water, then strain it, and, while cooling, dissolve it in the same quantity of soft soap. To this may be added another gallon or two of water. Syringe the plants frequently with this, but be careful not to use it when the sun is out. It is best done early in the morning or in the evening.



LA FRANCE.

The only way to kill caterpillars and maggots is by careful hand-picking. These enemies to the rose are readily discovered by the leaves curling up or by perforation.

Two dire diseases should be mentioned, because unfortunately rather common. One is mildew, which afflicts some varieties more than others; and no remedy is better than the old-fashioned one of flowers of sulphur, applied immediately mildew is detected. When the foliage is dry, syringe it before applying the cure. Red fungus, or rust, is incurable. It comes late in the flowering season, and the only way is to burn affected leaves, to prevent the disease spreading to healthy parts.

A delightful class is the Tea-scented, and during recent years we have got to understand the plants better. They are not so tender as many suppose, if the position is moderately warm, with protection from cold winds. The beds should be raised a little from the surrounding level to throw off heavy rains, and during severe winters protect with furze or bracken. Even when the shoots are cut down they will be replaced by new growth from the bottom, to provide a feast of flowers from summer until autumn. No section of rose is more beautiful, the flowers of exquisite expression and dainty colours, the fragile petals touched with many tones of yellow, absent from the more formal Hybrid Perpetuals. Their fragrance is distinctive: a sweet, delicious, and characteristic perfume.

I should have mentioned that a good way to keep the plants as safe as possible through the winter is to mould them up with soil to a height of about six inches. If the tops get cut down, this portion is safe.

I will give a brief selection of the best varieties in the several classes as part of my next month's chat. One cannot plant at this season, so this phase of the subject may wait. But let me refer to the two familiar varieties illustrated: the fragrant La France and Gloire de Dijon. No rose rivals the beautiful "Glory," as gardeners call it. It is the pride of many an English village, tumbling over the thatched roof, and peeping in at the latticed window, scenting room and garden with its burden of fragrant blossom. In town and country it is alike at home—a vigorous, free, and delightful flower.

General Hints for the Month.

All tender bedders may be put out now: Dahlias, Cannas, etc. Keep decaying flowers picked off annuals, otherwise they will soon lose beauty. Roses want careful attention. A watchful eye must be on the alert to detect green-fly. Tie up the stalks of Carnations and Picotees. Make a sowing of Runner Beans. Earth-up Potatoes, sow Turnips for autumn, Lettuce on a north border for succession; also Endive. Plant Vegetable Marrows. Plant out Cabbages and Cauliflowers for the autumn.

FIVE-CORNERED COTTAGE.

BY J. E. HODGSON, R.A.

FIVE years ago we had a severe winter, and the snow lay on the ground well nigh all through the month of March; when the thaw came the roads became almost impassable for horses, and it was pitiable to see the poor beasts trying to drag loads up our steep hills; not a day passed but what accidents occurred, and the doctor at Great Wellerby found himself put to attend to his practice, all his horses being incapacitated, and a poor woman, so it was said, had actually died in an outlying village for want of medical attendance. Such an unusual and memorable season naturally fixed all the events connected with it in my memory.

It was in the first days of the thaw, when I was trying to take exercise, more by sliding than walking, that I met Miss Betty, who had cunningly drawn woollen socks over her shoes, and seemed to be bouncing along merrily. She had a piece of news to tell me.

An old gentleman had made his appearance in the village; he had accosted her and asked to have Sale the blacksmith's house pointed out, as he, Sale, kept the keys of a cottage which was to let.

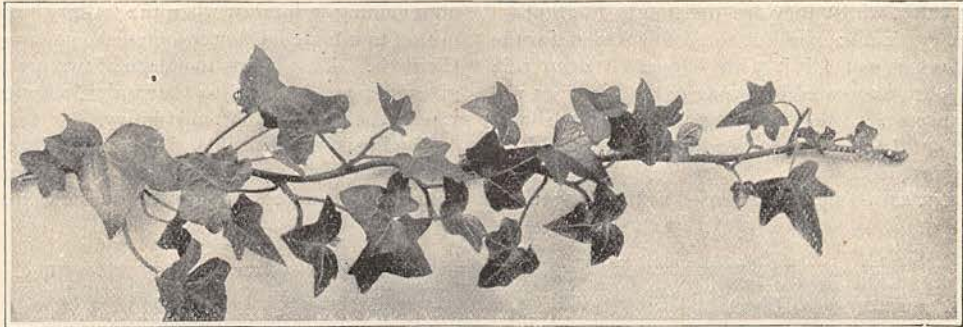
"He is a fine-looking man," she said, "quite distinguished-looking, in fact, with white hair, beard, and moustache—military, I should say, by the look of him; but why should he want to look at Five-cornered Cottage?"

A few hundred yards beyond Rose Cottage, or Miss Betty's, as we call it, and on the same side of the road, there is a narrow lane which branches off from the main highway at an acute angle; and in the angle stands a cottage. Its ground plan should have represented a parallelogram, but the lane being in the way, a corner had to be cut off; hence its name, as it has five corners instead of four.

This cottage is of that superior type which in our neighbourhood lets for five shillings a week; it is very picturesque, both when seen from the main road and from the lane. Miss Betty and I hold different opinions as to which of the two views is the best. She has a real talent for art, and when she finds leisure from the calls of her dairy, her poultry-yard, and her garden, executes really beautiful drawings. I also dabble a little in sketching, and we have often sallied forth together and sketched Five-cornered Cottage, she taking the lane view from choice, and I that from the high road.

A GARDEN OF CLIMBING PLANTS.

BY A PRACTICAL GARDENER.



IVY.



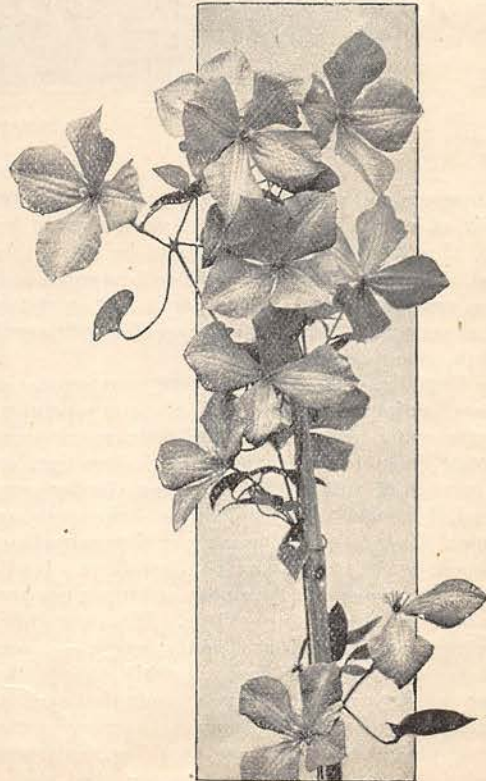
GARDEN without climbers cannot be beautiful. The beds and borders may be aglow with flowers of many kinds, but much of this summer beauty is lost through the presence of ugly brick walls, rickety fences, or black palings. Drape these unsightly spots with flower and leaf, let the Clematis run over the bare surface and the Jasmine waft its fragrance abroad, or the Gloire de Dijon Rose hold aloft its sweet-smelling flowers, and the garden will be a changed place, touched with a magician's wand that costs little to wield. Nothing mentioned in the course of these notes on climbers costs more than eighteenpence each, and the majority may be obtained for ninepence a-piece; but it is better to pay a little more for a vigorous article.

I can imagine many readers wishing for information on this subject. Only about a dozen plants have been mentioned, and six of these are especially alluded to. Two good things for winter flowering are the *Jasminum nudiflorum* and *Chimonanthus*. The Jasmine is called the "Naked-flowered Jasmine," as it flowers when leafless, the slender shoots being wreathed through the winter and early spring months with golden blossom. It will bloom freely in suburban gardens, and is very hardy.

I was walking in winter through Hammersmith, and caught sight of a glorious mass of colour—a wall burnished like gold. On close inspection, I was delighted to find the cause of this shimmering surface of yellow was this Jasmine, the shoots closely trained in and in full blossoming. Hammersmith is not a

country village, nor is it Utopian for the growth of flowers.

The *Chimonanthus* blooms in the depth of winter, It is not exactly a climbing, rather a wall plant, stiff, but suitable for such a position. "Why, I have never heard of it," I dare say some will declare. Perhaps so; but then, one does not know of all the good and cheap things that abound. Nurserymen will tell you the *Chimonanthus* is not often asked for, and a good



CLEMATIS JACKMANNI.

nursery must be visited to get it. It is a Japanese plant, and introduced into England as long ago as 1766. The flowers are borne close upon the leafless shoots—a mode of production botanists call “sessile”—and the colour is creamy yellow, set off by deep crimson calyx, whilst they are deliciously fragrant—a rich, heavy, exotic perfume. A few twigs in the drawing-room will fill it with odour. A deep soil, sunny aspect, and careful training of the branches will ensure success. After flowering, the younger shoots may be cut back, but the leading ones should be simply shortened.

Climbers, as a rule, are regarded as things that will

Another popular climber is *Clematis Jackmanni*, of which an illustration is given. It wants gentle treatment at first, liberal watering, and cutting back of dead shoots. In late summer it is a mass of deep purple flowers, a lovely colour, quite unique amongst climbers, and gaining in interest when the “Glory” rose is permitted to mingle its flower-laden shoots amongst the *Clematis*. This happy marriage of two pretty flowers gives increased charm to the garden, as pretty in its way as a cottage embosomed in ivy.

The Ivy is indispensable. I like it most when mantling a tower or high wall, assuming as it approaches the summit a more tree-like growth, dense, luxuriant, and



CLEMATIS MONTANA.

live anywhere and stand bad treatment with impunity. This is, of course, a mistake. It signifies ruin, for plants, if to be grown at all, should be reasonably tended. Always plant firmly in a well-prepared soil, not the remnants of a builder's yard; and no matter whether your plant be an ivy or a rare saucer-flowered *Clematis*, give it equal treatment.

The Virginian Creeper is one of the most popular of climbers, but it gets tiresome from constant repetition. It meets one at every turn: the same monotonous surface of green leaves, changing to glorious tints on the approach of autumn. If only one climber were required, I should vote for Veitch's *Ampelopsis*, or Virginian Creeper, simply because it is of marvellous hardihood, quick growth, and not fastidious. It will live almost anywhere, in the smoke of large cities and in the pure air of a country village. It is close-growing, clings tightly, and has pretty leaves. It was introduced in 1868 from Japan by Mr. Veitch, the famous nurseryman at Chelsea, and the original specimen brought home is rambling over one of the houses in the nursery. With age the foliage undergoes a decided change, getting broader, more lobed, and a deeper green.

Thousands of black berries cluster into small heads in the winter, and add to the solemn, imposing effect of our favourite climber. The best variety of all is *Emerald Gem*, or *Green*, as it is also called, a quick-growing polished green variety, very different from the sickly variegated kinds, such as *Maderiensis variegata*, that are seldom satisfactory, and are tender, easily hurt by winter frost and summer sun. *Atropurpurea* is a very beautiful purple ivy for the winter.

The fragrant Dutch Honeysuckle is a delightful climber. In quite a suburban district I once planted the common kind of the hedgerows, and it flourished amazingly. Each year it poured forth a wealth of fragrant flowers, and would possibly have still continued a joy to the possessor if certain repairs had not, unfortunately, called for its destruction. This plant was bought from a hawker, who had deprived some flowery lanes of many beautiful ferns and climbers. Still, you will say, “Why buy such things, to encourage spoliation of a lovely flora?” Well, I offer no excuse. I wanted a honeysuckle, and therefore secured the prize. Since then I have travelled much in English counties, and never now buy dug-up plants.

Amongst the most beautiful of climbers are the



HONEYSUCKLE.

Vines. No picture of rambling growth is prettier than a vine against a house or old-fashioned wall, or twining its wriggling growth round a rustic pole, while clusters of rich plum-coloured fruit hang in profusion from the slender stems. Many will say, "This is a rosy picture indeed. The vine seldom fruits well in the open in England." It does, however, in hot summers. Last year, for instance, it gave a heavy burden. Still, I write not of the Hamburgs or the Sweetwaters which the poet pictured when he declared

"The vine her curling tendrils shoots,
Hangs out her clusters glowing to the south,
And scarcely wishes for a warmer sky,"

but the North American vines, the Isabella Grape (*Vitis Labrusca* or *V. Thunbergi*), and the Fox Grape, which grow more quickly than our common kind.

To my small list may be added the Wistaria, the *Pyrus Japonica*, *Pyracantha*, and the Forsythia, which flowers profusely in spring. It is just the kind of plant to ramble over an outhouse, covering it with a sheet of yellow flowers. A good climbing Rose besides the *Gloire de Dijon* is the carmine-flowered Cheshunt Hybrid.

GARDENING IN AUGUST.

SMALL gardens, and especially in the neighbourhood of large towns, are usually dried up in this month of golden corn and poppies. Water must be given with no sparing hand, and remember that one thorough soaking is better than a

hundred dribbles, which simply encourage surface-rooting. The tender fibres quickly get dried up by the sun, and the plant succumbs. In the autumn a few remarks will be made, about deep digging, the best preventive of accidents from intense heat. Pick off ripe seed pods from Snapdragons, Pansies and other biennials. They may be sown in a shallow pan of light soil and placed in a cool, shady corner of the garden. Always water through a fine-rosed pot. If not done, layer Carnations at once, thin out fruit on apples and pears where the crop is exceptionally heavy, and be careful that all tall-growing things like Dahlias are securely staked. Thin out the shoots, as too much growth is made after a spell of wet or showery weather in particular. Everyone values a good sward of green grass. Where the turf has been much played upon, it is of rusty aspect; but this is simply the result of bad management. The grass must be watered and soaked well to ensure success. Window plants, in rooms or on ledges, get thirsty under a warm sun, and a gentle syringing in the cool of the evening is refreshing to dusty foliage. Tomatoes or "love apples" are ripening rapidly, and the fruit takes on its ruddy colour more quickly if the leaves over-hanging it be removed. It is foolish to leave the tubers of potatoes in the soil after they have finished growing, so lift them, to avoid risk

of disease. Sow winter vegetables, make frequent gatherings of peas and runner beans, and do everything possible to promote free bearing. If seeds are allowed to ripen, the produce is poor. One cannot reap both satisfactorily. Greenhouse plants dry up quickly at this season. They require watering at least once a day.



MARGUERITE DAISY.

lavished upon me. Then he told me he had ceased to love me; for I was mad, and it was impossible to love a mad woman. I got angry at last; I pulled his ring from my finger, and flung it away. But he knew his power over me: no bird caught in a net was more helpless than I. He made me believe that I was really mad, and then he left me. Just as he had told me I should do after he was gone, that I did; some unseen power urged me on. I cannot tell you all I endured; but the spell he cast over me is broken for ever, and by your hand. I cannot love as I loved him; all the fire has died out of my nature; what affection I have is yours. If you are content to have me thus, I will be your wife."

"I am content with love without passion," I answered. "But one thing I must tell you: Eustace Manvers is not the only man who has a strong will; and, Phina, I mean to *make* you love me."

What I read in the tender pathos of those dark eyes was sufficient answer for me.

When Mrs. Fielden returned to Eltonbridge, it was with the distinct understanding that I was shortly to follow, and claim Phina as my own.

We were married with what Mrs. Fielden called "indecent haste"; but I was glad to get it quietly over, and to carry off my wife to new scenes and sunnier climes.

She grew brighter and more beautiful every day, and I was so happy that I never once thought of asking her if she had learned to love me. She was always sweet and gentle to me, and what could a plain, homely man like John Leslie desire more than that?

One morning, when we were walking along the Rue du Beaune, Paris, we came face to face with Eustace Manvers.

I felt Phina's grasp on my arm grow more firm, but she walked bravely on, after looking fixedly at her former lover. Neither of us returned his polite bow. When we were in our private room at the Hôtel de l'Elysée, free from interruption, I looked at my wife, to see what effect this unexpected encounter had had upon her.

Perhaps she read in my face the question my lips would fain have asked; for she looked up at me with a glad smile, and said—

"I am so thankful, John, that I am your wife, and not his. I cannot understand how he could ever have gained such influence over me."

"Shall I tell you the secret?" I asked. "Eustace Manvers is one of the most clever mesmerists I ever knew, and in you he found an easy subject. You were too nervous and sensitive to resist."

"I wonder if he practises his arts on his wife?" Phina said dreamily.

"He has no wife."

"But, John, when we were married it was reported in Eltonbridge that the next wedding would be that of Mr. Manvers and Miss Seldon."

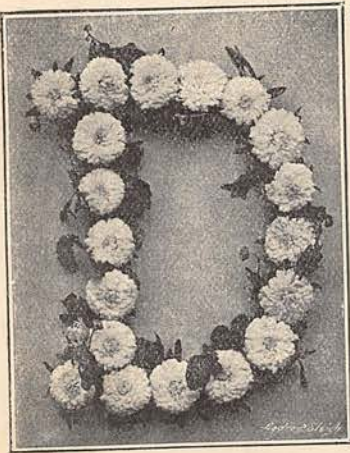
"Yes; but that happy consummation has not yet taken place. I believe he went so far as to offer himself to Miss Seldon."

"Yes?"

"Well, she refused him."

GARDENING IN DECEMBER.

BY A PRACTICAL GARDENER.



DECEMBER is a month of few flowers, at least of those that appear naturally in the garden. But the amateur gardener, whether in town or country, may have choice specimens to adorn his table, if he so wishes. Where means are at command, and ample time is given to the plants, forced

lovers have to rest content with things that require far less attention.

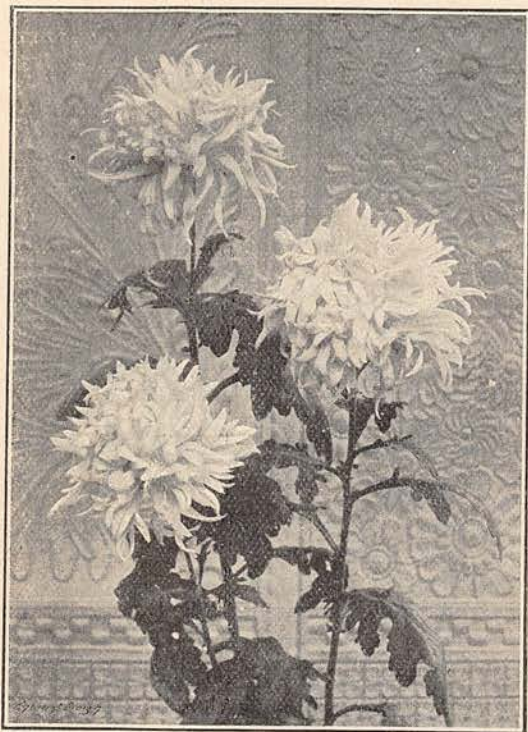
The chrysanthemum is a poor man's flower. It thrives as well in the suburban districts of large towns as in the pure country air. It belongs rightfully to November, gilding the month of fogs with brilliant colour; but the flowers may be gathered through the present season if the cuttings are struck in March. Gardening is, it must be remembered, a recreation that demands patience and perseverance. If things fail at first don't get discouraged, as one in time learns the likes and dislikes of the various things from many quarters of the globe that find a home in the small border or the humble greenhouse. Even the varieties that bloom in November may be had in perfection now by striking the cuttings in August, whereas the show blooms are produced on plants struck the previous November.

To get flowers in December simply means striking the cuttings later in the year. A few varieties are in full beauty naturally in the festive month, and the most popular is Princess Teck, a very old but worthy

bulbs, violets, and many other things may be obtained.

It is not, however, everyone that can thus indulge his hobby for gardening, and the majority of flower-

kind, the flowers white, beautifully incurved, and produced with great freedom. Then one may have the tasselled kinds, usually known as the "Japanese"—waving masses of florets, flung about in a charmingly



CHRYSANTHEMUM—LADY SELBORNE.

irregular way, a kind of flower that sends the artist into raptures of delight.

Of such a type, Golden Gem, rich orange touched with red, Ethel, pure white, Pelican, creamy white, and White Ceres may be mentioned as of great merit. Grow the plants on with little stopping of the shoots, pinching them back when about four inches in height to encourage side growth. It is advisable to reduce the shoots, otherwise they will be unduly crowded, ill-ripened, and the flowers consequently poor. It must not be expected that they will rival the large specimens to be seen at exhibitions, for these are produced by high feeding, an elaborate system of disbudding, and untiring energy throughout the year.

A little greenhouse attached to the house will shelter a host of beautiful things, but none more charming than the gay chrysanthemum, the joy of the Japanese and the pride of English gardens. Whilst this Eastern flower is before us I should like to draw the attention of my readers to its beauty as a wall shrub. It may appear at first sight a mad freak to plant it against a wall, but last year the writer was pleased to see in quite a small garden in Hammersmith a wall smothered with blossom, a perfect covering of the brightest colours.

The secret is to choose good, strong, well-ripened

plants, and put them out in the month of March, at the base of the wall, in rich, well-prepared soil. Leave a space of from two feet to three feet between each example, and the bottom of the wall may be beautified with the dwarf-growing pomponé kinds, such as White Travenna and St. Michael, which has rich golden-yellow flowers.

Very careful selection is necessary, as the plants have to fight against the trials of an English winter. The incurved and reflexed classes are of peculiar value, the flowers throwing off heavy rains, which quickly spoil the more lumpy blooms. It is wise in the event of unpleasant weather to throw a canvas over the wall; or, better still, fix a coping board to the top, on which the curtain can be adjusted. Protection will be afforded the flowers when necessary, and on fine days the curtain can be easily drawn up.

My selection of varieties for walls would be, of the incurved and reflexed classes, Mr. George Glenny, bright primrose yellow; Princess of Wales, blush; Venus, pink; Nil Desperandum, bronze; Golden Empress, Jardin des Plantes, deep yellow (a lovely kind); Golden and Pink Christines; and King of the Crimson, deep crimson.

Of the Japanese section choose Peter the Great, yellow; Margot and Bouquet Fait, two well-known kinds; Mons. Mousillac; Elaine, white, and Jules Lagravère, which is the king of outdoor chrysanthemums. Its deep purple marone flowers keep in perfection over a long season, and their colour is rich and telling. The soil at the base of the wall must be enriched by a liberal addition of manure, and well trodden about the roots of the plants. With the exception of the pomponés, which should have six shoots to each plant, reduce those of the other varieties to four, and they must be nailed to the wall as in the case of ordinary climbers.

Do *not* top the branches, but carefully train them out. During the summer give liquid manure, water occasionally, and syringe the plants in the evening. This refreshes them, and removes dust from the leaves. They will continue to bloom throughout November and December, unless the weather is exceptionally wet. Damp kills more flowers than frost.

A small greenhouse is a blessing. One may have in it the Christmas rose, *Helleborus niger*, and this is the most precious jewel of December. It is the flower of the festive month, and an appropriate table adornment. Why the hellebore is not more grown by amateurs is to me a mystery! It is perfectly hardy, and the white flowers are of great beauty. Except perhaps a stray primrose, or the fragrant coltsfoot, it stands alone in dreary December. The plants may be purchased, if of ordinary varieties, for about ninepence each, the price varying according to their size.

There is a host of kinds, differing merely in degree from each other, and from this imposing throng may be selected *Altifolius*, which blooms early, being in perfection in late November; the pure white St. Brigid and Major. One variety would be sufficient in small

gardens, and my choice would be Major. Its flowers are large, of the purest white, and a spreading clump in the garden is full of charm. But please remember that it is necessary, in order to protect the flowers from heavy rains, to place over each clump a handglass, putting this on when the buds first show themselves in the thicket of leafage. They will then expand in fresh beauty, unsullied by the treacherous weather of December.

The Christmas Rose, like the homely Hepatica, strongly dislikes disturbance at the root. Amateurs are strangely fond of killing their plants with kindness. The Hellebore, once at home in a light, loamy, well-drained soil, should be left alone for a few years. An ideal staple for it is loam mixed with sufficient leaf mould to make it moderately light; but it is unnecessary to provide such a diet when the ordinary soil of the garden is deep and moderately rich, not a



CHRYSANTHEMUM—MADAME DESGRANGE.

medley of brick ends and broken glass, the usual condition of small plots, in the suburbs of large cities in particular.

I can tell of another way to get an abundance of Hellebore flowers in winter. Lift a large clump from

the open ground, remove a little of the rougher portion of the soil, and place it in an ordinary market basket. Fill up with cocoanut fibre refuse, which may be purchased cheaply at a neighbouring florist's, and place it in the warmest corner of the greenhouse. Keep the fibre moderately moist, but not too wet. You will be rewarded by splendid flowers, as pure as the driven snow, and with nice long stalks.

When the beauty of the "winter rose" is over, place the clump out of doors, protecting it from frost with a mat, and when the ground is in working order again, transfer to Mother Earth. This clump must not be lifted again the following year, but if you have, say, two or four clumps, you can ring the changes upon them. The forcing treatment is too much for them every December.

A bright, hardy plant this month is the Winter Cherry, known botanically as *Physalis Alkekengi*, which belongs to the same family as the potato, and was introduced into England from Southern Europe in 1548. It does not flower in winter, although in full beauty now. This arises from a large calyx of scarlet colour enclosing the small tomato-like fruit, and these calyces hang on the shoots like little Chinese lanterns.

Good plants cost from sixpence to one shilling each, and must have a warm light soil. Damp and shade are fatal. A large clump makes a brilliant picture of colour, and the shoots, with their gay-coloured calyces, last, when cut, and used like everlasting flowers, over twelve months. I was in a drawing-room recently where several spikes were placed in a large epergne, and I was astonished to find that these were the same "sprays," if I may so call them, that I had given the hostess fourteen months ago. They looked as fresh as when first gathered, and brighter in aspect than many flowers.

Once a good clump is secured, the plants may be divided in the spring and exchange made, if possible, with friends for other things.

One of the most beautiful berried shrubs this month is the popular Fiery Thorn. It is not expensive. At a respectable nursery a good plant can be purchased for two shillings, and it is money well expended. The Thorn will succeed in either a north or east aspect, and if you can get the variety named *Lælandi*, which costs no more, it will be an advantage, as the berries are borne more freely. I have not yet described the Fiery Thorn.

Firstly its proper name is the *Pyracantha* or *Crataegus pyracantha*, and it belongs to the Thorn tribe. Its shoots are covered in the dull time of the year with a profusion of orange-scarlet berries, thickly massed together, and very brilliant in the weak sunshine of a winter's day. It has a fine aspect when planted against an old wall, and in the early summer its white flowers are pretty, standing out in contrast to the deep green evergreen leafage.

This fine wall Thorn will succeed in ordinary soil, and when established grows quickly. The feathered songsters rather appreciate its gaudy fruit, which provides a splendid banquet in the hungry winter



CHRISTMAS ROSES.

season. It is unkind to drive them off, but it must be done in the interests of the garden. Provide other food to tempt them from the Thorn berries. Throughout the whole of the year the *Cratægus* is presentable. Its rich green leafage is strikingly handsome, and in the winter the shoots are a blaze of colour with the bright fruit.

Now as to a good climbing plant for the winter. My selection is the Winter Jasmine, which, when purchased, should be described as *Jasminum nudiflorum*. It will live in gardens of all kinds, town or country, even in backyards where one would consider plant life impossible. But there, amid uncomfortable surroundings, the leafless shoots of this climber are throughout the winter brightened with yellow flowers. If an Ivy happens to be climbing near, intermingle the twigs to get a rich contrast of colour—deep green foliage against intense yellow.

An excellent specimen may be purchased for about one shilling or eighteenpence. It is a mistake to buy a weakly plant for the sake of a few pence. When vigorous they grow at once, and soon clothe the wall with beauty. Last winter a wall in a suburban garden was a sheet of yellow—a glorious feast of colour, and a perfect picture. Such splendid results are easily obtained. It is only necessary to plant in a good soil and keep the shoots carefully trained to the wall.

Doubtless many amateur gardeners are caught napping in the winter, and their plants get frost-bitten. This is serious; but death may be averted by keeping the afflicted things quite in the dark until they have recovered, not plunging them at once into strong heat

or exposing to bright sun. The temperature should be just sufficient to prevent further catastrophes. When the leaves have revived, gradually accustom the plants to the light, and water carefully. Unless plants are quite hardy they must be kept in a warm corner during periods of severe frost. Remember also that if the foliage is kept dry and the soil not too wet plants are less liable to suffer from frost. The greenhouse can be sufficiently heated with a small oil stove, which will enable "geraniums," fuchsias, and similar things to be kept throughout the winter in health.

Little work has to be done in the garden during this month. All bulbs, such as hyacinths, tulips and daffodils, not yet planted must be got in without delay when the weather is favourable. Hardy plants may be put in, but everything depends upon the condition of the soil.

Frequently in December it is impossible to do much work in the garden, but there is no need to be idle. Get out a list of annuals you want for sowing in the spring, and make labels or sticks for flowers from deal laths.

As regards the plants in the greenhouse, give water cautiously during the winter months. It must not be sprinkled about as in summer. Sunshine is now too weak to dry up superfluous moisture quickly, and a small oil stove does not give out a very strong heat.

Remove decaying leaves and flowers; keep everything sweet and clean. Cleanliness is important in the culture of flowers. On fine, warm mornings admit a little air to sweeten the atmosphere; December is not always a month of frosts and cold winds.