

AMATEUR GARDENING FOR TOWN GIRLS.

NOVEMBER.

By CONSTANCE JACOB.

At first sight, gardening hardly seems an appropriate amusement for town girls, and yet there are many of my acquaintance who spend their hours of leisure mainly in caring for their little plots of lawn and flower-beds, and I have myself gained no small pleasure and profit, both to mind and body, from this pursuit.

Although probably the flowers grown in average London gardens would cost less to buy at a shop, yet, as compared with other amusements, floriculture is not necessarily expensive, for a girl who is not afraid of a little hard work may easily keep a small piece of ground neat and gay for a very few pounds per annum. The necessary tools are an important item in first expenditure, and should include a small mowing-machine which a lady can work easily, a twig broom, a small galvanised iron barrow, a pair of strong scissors, an old knife, a rake, a Dutch hoe, two forks (one as large as a spade, the other the size of a trowel), a small spade (but this is not a necessity), a trowel, and a good-sized upright basket. The costume of comfort is an old dress, a hat that is not likely to fall off, a pair of stout shoes (boots make one's feet swell when kneeling), a large apron, a pair of thick gloves, and a warm jacket or fur cape for cold weather. Shawls are a nuisance.

Somewhere in every garden should be a toolshed, a heap of good mould (at the back of which dead leaves may be stored), an ash-heap, and a brick or well-built wooden frame with movable glass lights, in which delicate plants can be both reared and protected.

I have a greenhouse in my little domain, but I often think that it is more trouble than use. In it I keep ferns, palms, oleanders, and many other plants, through the winter, which would not live elsewhere; but for really gardening purposes, my frames, one heated by manure, the other cold, are of far greater service.

I said just now that an amateur gardener must not be afraid of hard work, and that is indeed the secret of success. To make her flower-beds yield their due amount of blossom, a girl must weed, dig, plant, and dress them with her own hands, or, if she shrink from toil, which is, after all, no more fatiguing and quite as healthy as tennis, she had better at once make a contract with the nearest nurseryman. As to the *jobbing* gardener, he is usually the natural enemy of the amateur.

In November the work is hardest, while the immediate results are least apparent; but it is actually the most important month in the gardening calendar, and on the preparations to be completed before the frosts become severe

depends much of the beauty which we look for in the spring.

Those who want flowers in the house at Christmas should have planted bulbs in pots or boxes in September, and should have continued doing so at intervals ever since to ensure a succession of bloom; but it is not too late to begin now. I put hyacinths and lilies into ordinary flower-pots of suitable size, in which I have laid, first, several pieces of crock, then a few ashes, next, a piece of cow or horse manure, not quite fresh, sprinkled thickly with soot, then some ordinary garden mould. In this I make a hole, well lined with silver sand, insert the bulb, the top of which should be

with freesias, Roman hyacinths, lilies, and scillas planted in September. They will now want plenty of water, the fibre being all brushed out of the pots, and should be given light and heat by gradual degrees; after a while, weak soot-water, or other gentle stimulants, may be given to them about once a week. Girls who have no hot-bed or greenhouse may plunge their pots into large boxes of fibre, and keep them in a warm cupboard until the bulbs are well rooted; but in this case should put ashes at the bottom of the box, to prevent the roots striking down into the fibre. They may be forced on very well in rooms where they can have a good deal of light; but if there is much gas, will require frequent syringing. I do not care for hyacinths

in glasses, but they are very easily grown thus if placed in the dark for the first few weeks, and afterwards in a sunny window, small pieces of charcoal being put in the water.

I believe in buying the bulbs of a good dealer, even if rather expensive, and following out the directions given in his catalogue as far as possible under one's particular circumstances.

For my own part, I have given up forcing tulips; they seem hardly worth the trouble, as one can buy the bulbs in flower early in the year at two or three shillings the dozen.

In the greenhouse the thermometer must be carefully watched, and should not be allowed to fall below 45°

in the morning, which means several degrees lower at night.

When the temperature is low (and it is not advisable to have it very high—for instance, where chrysanthemums are), water should be given to all plants sparingly—only when the state of the pots makes it absolutely necessary; as, if there is not sufficient heat to absorb most of the moisture, it will generate mildew, a fatal enemy to all vegetation at this season. For the same reason, frames should only be opened for a short while in the middle of dry days; and directly a leaf goes mouldy, it must be taken away, to prevent it infecting others. Out of doors now I always go over my flower-beds inch by inch; and having many other occupations,

I generally find it takes the whole month to get them all clear of rubbish, the soil well loosened, and bulbs and other plants put in where necessary for spring blooming.

One border faces nearly south, and has a flourishing row, inside the box-edging, of carnations, chiefly the old red clove, and these were all layered in August; should, however, any old wood still protrude, the clump must be dug up and replanted deeper after taking off the young shoots that have rooted. Otherwise, I leave the division until the spring, when one can more easily see where places want filling up. I think the old idea of carnations being delicate has exploded; at any rate, although the soil of my garden is not the best possible for them, I have a large variety, which make nearly every summer a greater show than any other flowers. Still, they need care, and will not bloom at all on the shady side.



Between them I make holes about two inches deep, and three inches apart, put in some silver sand, and in each a crocus bulb. Behind are wallflowers, grown from seed in the summer, and planted out in September; these all need tying to strong stakes, and any premature flower buds nipping off. In February, 1891, nine-tenths of my wallflowers were killed by the snow; but it was exceptionally severe, and, as a rule, they do very well all round the garden. Between the wallflowers are a lot of things, such as stocks and other annuals, geraniums and nicotiana affinis, which must be taken up; the first are thrown away, after taking off any seeds one wants to keep, although I do not think it pays, on the whole, to save seed. Nicotiana are potted up, cut down to about a foot high, and brought into the frame or greenhouse, where they will soon grow into useful sweet-scented plants for room decoration. The geraniums, if good, may also be potted, after which it is best to let them rest awhile, and they will make good strong plants for next summer, so a top shelf in the greenhouse, or a warm cupboard, will do very well for them.

I then loosen the surface of the earth as deeply as I can with a small fork, taking care not to injure any roots of phlox, lychnis, lupins, and larkspurs which grow dotted about, and which may have died down, and planting such spring flowering plants as auriculas, myosotis, polyanthus, as I may have succeeded in raising from seed or can afford to buy.

Behind, again, are chiefly lilies and dahlias, both of which have bloomed well during the summer and autumn. The former will show nothing now but brown stalks, springing sometimes from a crown of green leaves close to the ground. The mould of my garden being somewhat moist and heavy, I find that lilies and other bulbs have a tendency to rot away in the ground during the damp weather; so, to obviate this, I dig with a trowel all round the bulb very carefully, so as not to chip off any pieces, and nearly fill the trench with silver sand before replacing the earth. If any worms are noticed, a little soot may be sprinkled over the sand.

The dahlias may be left until a frosty night turns the leaves black, and finally spoils the blooms. Then they must be dug up, the stems cut down to within a few inches of the roots, labels with names and colours tied on; the tubers placed in a box, lightly covered with sand or fibre, and kept for the winter in a frame or cupboard where the frost cannot penetrate.

Against the wall are chrysanthemums, which will remain in good bloom for some time yet, and, if well tied up, need no attention now; nor do the vines, which form creepers on the wall.

Having forked up very carefully all the unoccupied surface, I cross over to the opposite border, where pansies take the place of carnations. I took my cuttings off these a month ago, and now dig up the clumps, throw away those I did not care for, cut off all the long, hollow stalks of the rest, and, dividing the roots carefully, replant them pretty deeply about six inches apart, putting a crocus between each, as I did among the carnations opposite. Between the wallflowers on this border I have sweetwilliams and giant musk; but the latter has flourished so well that it threatens to destroy everything else, so I dig up most of it and replant a little, as an experiment, under some shrubs where nothing but ivy has hitherto grown.

Lilies do not like this border, so their place is taken by English iris, which must be left undisturbed, as I have only had them two or three years, and they bloomed last summer for the first time. They, like daffodils, will not make anything of a show until they have been

long enough in the ground to form good-sized clumps and feel perfectly at home. In one of my neighbours' gardens some have been settled a score of years, and with next to no attention make a beautiful picture of purple blossoms every May; this effect, therefore, I hope to rival in time.

The herbaceous plants, which fill up the rest of the border—peonies, sweet rockets, larkspurs (*Delphinium*), columbines, and Canterbury bells—on the other hand, all need dividing if they have been more than two or three years in the same place, as the crowns always get attenuated in the middle. Cutting them down, however, had better be postponed until no more digging or planting has to be done, as the dead stalks, standing erect, serve to mark their whereabouts, and prevent the roots being dug into by accident.

The middle of the garden is occupied by a lawn, just about large enough for tennis; and across one end of this is a bank, backed by a hedge of lilacs. In front of these trees is a narrow bed, which requires constant nourishment to make anything grow in it, on account of the suckers from the shrubs shooting up everywhere, and absorbing the goodness of the earth. The mauve and white spikes of bloom are too beautiful in April to allow of the trees being sacrificed; so the only thing to do is to ruthlessly cut away the young shoots from the roots, feed the ground well, and put in such plants as will grow best.

I now put in the first row crocuses, alternately with the few left from the summer, which I only cut back—do not remove—as this border is conspicuous from the windows, and the yellow-green leaves make a pretty piece of colour until the snow comes, while sufficient clumps may survive the winter to divide for borderings next spring. In the second row backwards are some auriculas and polyanthus, which, having bloomed last spring, were divided last August; and back again are wallflowers, between and behind which, where there is space in front of the lilacs, are daffodils, which I do not disturb, but dig round and powder well with sand, finding that most bulbs left in this moist border are likely to rot away. There are also at intervals some clumps of ribbon-grass, which must be cut down to the roots, and divided if too large; and, scattered all over the border, winter aconites, which, if disturbed at all, should be replanted in sand; but on their account I do not really dig up this bed, only turn the surface with a fork.

After digging up the ground as thoroughly as possible without disturbing the carnations, I make holes filled with sand to receive the twenty-four tulips which I bought at the same time as the hyacinths for eighteenpence, and which, blooming a good deal later than they, would not do on the shady side. Quite in the middle, between the lilies and larkspurs, are a few daffodils and narcissi, which did so well last year that I am now completing the row with new bulbs.

In front of the greenhouse is a sunny bank bordered with box; inside that a row of carnations, a row of wallflowers, and, back of all, lilies; and I fill up all spaces here with the best of the bulbs which did duty in pots and in the lawn bed last year. The remainder of these I then plant in any unoccupied spaces in the borders, always laying plenty of sand round them.

Crocuses and snowdrops make a very pretty effect dotted about the lawn; and holes about three inches deep may be made with a blunt-pointed stick to receive them; first putting in a little sand, and afterwards pressing the turf together again over the heads of the bulbs.

All this work has been in the back garden; in the front are two round beds filled with geraniums, blackened now with the frost;

they are taken up, given or thrown away, according as to whether anybody cares to have them, the beds well dug over, and a ring of crocuses put in each. It is not worth while doing more, for the little patch of ground is so shaded by trees that very few things will grow in it at all.

All planting means a good deal of kneeling, and for preventing rheumatism from contact with the damp earth, a "housemaid's kneeler," backed with American cloth, will be found very useful.

Window-boxes will require refilling, and some thought is necessary to arrange for bulbs and other plants succeeding each other in bloom with as few shabby interregnums as possible. Wallflowers and euonymus are very useful, as they are green all through the winter, while between and in front of them various bulbs can be planted.

An important consideration in the arrangement of window-boxes is the pleasant combination of colours. I have often seen a row of mixed crocus, backed by red, purple, pink, blue, and white hyacinths, which, before they die, are quarrelling with the gaudy tints of tulips and daffodils. Make up your mind before planting what shall be your dominant tone, and let every other fall within a harmonious chord of colour. The three shades of the crocus go beautifully together, but with them only white or purple hyacinths, yellow tulips, or daffodils. If pink hyacinths are liked, the crocuses should be white only, or, better still, give place to snowdrops and scillas as a border. In any case a row of hyacinths should be of one colour only; tulips should have not more than two shades, such as white with any other; pink with red, or heliotrope with yellow; while crocuses look prettiest mixed indiscriminately. The same precautions are not necessary in a large flower-bed, as the plants are further apart, and the surrounding green and brown bring other tones into harmony; indeed, for small gardens I think beds of one flower of one colour each are stiff and monotonous.

Before planting at all, boxes should be carefully emptied, washed out, and dried, so that no worms or insect germs remain, and after a good layer of crock and ashes has been placed at the bottom, should be two-thirds filled with a mixture of light garden-mould, leaf-mould, and sand; when the plants are all in, the boxes should be nearly filled up with cocoanut fibre.

A good plan is to have two sets, and so arrange their contents that, when one is shabby, the other may take its place.

When everything to be planted is in, and everything to be removed is out, all litters cleared away or buried, I spread over the beds of bulbs a thick layer of good earth from a heap formed of last year's dead leaves and the manure from the hot-beds, which have been rotting together since the spring, and now make a compost, which is not only the best possible nourishment, but also an effectual protection for delicate plants from the frost. Where the earth is poor—under trees, and on a bed of lilies of the valley—I dig in a very little fresh manure from the stable, and where I have noticed signs of grubs or snails, sprinkle first fine ashes or soot, and then the compost.

Wallflowers bloom best in rather a poor soil, so the borders where they are planted require no dressing at present.

Cutting of trees and creepers may well be left for next month, otherwise the garden is in its winter trim, and Nature begins her silent operations in the darkness of the earth, or in bare twigs and branches, where even so soon after the fall of the old leaves, the hope of spring is symbolised by little brown knobs, promising colour and beauty for the New Year.

"Small thanks I owe to you, anyway!" snapped the old maid. "You wanted someone to look after the house, an' you wanted *someone to look after* the child, an' in gettin' your wife's sister you saved two salaries at once. Oh, I don't deny you're smart in some ways, James, but ye ain't smart enough to hoodwink me!"

"Ef I'm such an ill-fired scoundril," said Lawton sullenly, "I wonder a pusson o' your moral standin' will condescend to live along o' me."

"I've told you a score o' times why I live with you. It's because I love Florence as though she were my own child; an' till I've seen her married to a good man an' a true man I'll never leave her or you!"

"Well, ye won't hev to wait fur a lifetime, Keziah," replied Lawton with a grin. "Florence will be Lady Beechcroft, I reckon, afore a great while."

"Never reckon your chickens while they're in the shell, James. He's a good enough young man, though he ain't got much sense to boast of; and I wouldn't mind trusting Florence to him even if she be what they call an heiress. But my impression is, James—and my impressions air generally about right—that the young man ain't got a thought of askin' Florence to be his wife in the first place; and in the second, that ef he did ask her, he'd get no fur an answer."

"Nonsense! Keziah, you make my flesh creep! Ever since that gal was knee high I've set my mind on her marryin' an English lord or suthin' of that sort, an' it weren't fur nothin' else that I neglected my business fur a hull year to go trapesin' about Europe. I found lords a heap sight scarcer than I had expected; but at last I run across one, and one as seemed jest made to my hand. He was poor as a church mouse, but he was a genuine lord, and seemed to take a likin' to Florence right off, and she to him; an' now you tell me that she ain't got a thought of him nor he of her!

Why, Keziah, it's rediklous—that's what it is. They're like brother an' sister already, as anyone kin see."

"Thet's true, James; an' I didn't give ye credit fur sense enough to see it. But thet's where the trouble is. When a young gell and a young man air on terms like brother an' sister its purty certain they'll never come no nigher."

"Wal, I tell ye what, Keziah. Af I thought that, I'd— Never mind what I'd do. But thar ain't anyone comin' between them, is there? Thar ain't any other gell what the young feller's a-hangin' round?"

"I'm not rightly sure thet thar ain't, James. An' I reckon that if ye take a look at the name thet's signed to that letter, you're as like as not to see the name as Lord Beechcroft thinks a heap of."

Once more Mr. Lawton's anger blazed skyward, and for a few seconds he seemed deprived of the power of speech, and could only glare at his sister-in-law with bulging eyes, while his jaws mechanically continued their task of crunching the morsel of toast which he had just put into his mouth. "Thet's the way of it, is it?" he gasped at length. "Little I never thought I'd be beholden to you for anything, Keziah, but I am obleeged to you this time. She wants to call here, does she? Wants to find out about her father? Wants to spy out some of my secrets more like, and to meet the lord she's settin' her cap at! But let her—thet's all! Jest let her set foot inside this house, an' she'll go away wiser than she came; for if I don't give her a piece of my mind my name's not James—" Here he caught sight of a somewhat sarcastic expression on Miss Coffin's face, and amended what, in view of their recent conversation, was a somewhat unfortunate phrase by hastily adding, "Well, my name ain't what it is—thet's all." And he crumpled up poor Dorothy's letter savagely.

"Don't ye dare to bully that poor little orphan girl, James Lawton. Hard words, like chickens, come home to roost; and maybe your own daughter—the one you deserted an' lost, I mean, *my* niece—maybe where she's gettin' hard treatment, as you want to deal out to that pore gell. Even ef Lord Beechcroft hadn't an eye for her, it would be no use his lookin' after Florence, as I told you. She's not the gell to marry one man, even if he is a lord, when she loves another."

At this calm suggestion Mr. Lawton's face was a sight to see, but he managed with forced calmness to blurt out, "Oh, indeed! Loves another, does she? An' as you seem to know so much, p'r'aps you know who the someone is?"

"Wall, I guess you're blinder than I took you to be. But there's not one man in a thousand as'll see a stone wall till he barks his shins agin' it. Don't ye know that young Harry Thorndyke—him as is a doctor nowadays—is dead in love with Florence and she with him?"

"What! He's—he's a pauper! Old Thorndyke used to be a friend of mine, but since he failed in business and went bankrupt of course I ain't spoke to him. An' his son dares to cast sheep's eyes at Florence! Why, I'll forbid him the house! I'll lock Florence up in her room! I'll put her on bread an' water! I'll—"

"You'll make an idjit of yourself, as you generally do, James Lawton. However you managed to discover thet mine beats me. It must have jumped up an' hit you in the face, or you'd never hev seen it. But here come Florence and Lord Beechcroft. Pur tend to be readin' your paper, an' don't let on as we've been talkin' about 'em!" And as the two young people entered, Mr. Lawton, who stood in considerable awe of his sister-in-law, obediently did as he was bid.

(To be continued.)

AMATEUR GARDENING FOR TOWN GIRLS.

DECEMBER.

By CONSTANCE JACOB.



A n important part of December's work is taking chrysanthemum cuttings; it might have been begun last month, but I at least found quite enough to do then, and for most sorts it is sufficiently early now.

The first thing is to select those of one's old stock which are worth perpetuating, then to cut with a sharp knife the short sturdy green shoots, which by this time will be coming up from the base of the old plant. These ought to have fine roots of their own attached to them, and consequently the trouble of striking is saved. But it sometimes happens that a specially desired specimen has none of these root cuttings; then one must be content with taking young shoots from the

stalk, and expect a little difficulty in making them strike. It often occurs, too, that if a plant in bloom has been long in a warm room, the root shoots will be very pale, long, and weakly; in that case, the plant should be kept for a little while in a cooler place, that they may harden before being taken off. Even then they will be delicate to rear.

The pots used should have been previously washed and thoroughly dried; plenty of crock should be put in first, then a few ashes, and the pots nearly filled up with any good earth—loam by preference; a little leaf-mould and silver sand being always good additions to ordinary garden soil.

The sprouts should be cut from the root, as I said above, with what is called a "heel"—that is, a small piece of the old underground wood with some fine roots of its own attached; above this two leaves should be cut off, and

then the spray put in the earth up to the junction with the stalk of a third leaf—that is, about two inches of stem must be covered. If the lower leaves were left on, they would rot, and cause mildew. A similar course must be taken with cuttings which come from the stem, and have naturally neither heel nor roots. From four to six must be put close to the edge of a pot four inches in diameter, and the name should be on a stick in the centre. When all the pots are ready give them a good watering, and place them on a layer of ashes in a frame or greenhouse, where the heat is only sufficient to exclude frost. They may be given a little air on bright days; and if mildew appears they should be dusted with powdered sulphur at once, otherwise they will need no attention until the pots are well filled with roots.

The old plants can be cut down, and,

planted in the garden in any situation where a little colour will be welcome next autumn. The large show varieties do not succeed out of doors so well as the pompons, but they are all pretty certain to bloom without any special care; and even if the flowers be unfit for cutting purposes, the graceful foliage is always valuable.

Pruning and planting of trees and shrubs should be proceeded with this month; and here the carefully-watched aid of the jobbing gardener is sometimes necessary. In many suburban gardens the trees have become in the course of years a great deal too thick, and very often if one were cut out here and there it would be of untold benefit to the rest. For instance, last autumn I had dug up a horse-chestnut (which never bloomed, and became brown early every summer), and two lilac bushes (which, kept short, so as not to impede the view from the windows, had never had a chance of blooming), with the result that a variegated holly, a mountain ash, and a beautiful box-tree in their immediate neighbourhood have improved wonderfully ever since in consequence of their increased supply of light and air. On the other hand, a great deal too much pruning generally takes place in the autumn, and shrubs are robbed of all their natural beauty in the endeavour to make them conform to a uniform pattern. The great object should be to cut away all dead or weakly wood, and to let young and strong branches have plenty of space to grow in their own fashion. A little practice and observation of Nature will soon make this an easy matter, and probably some seasons no extraneous aid will be needed.

Creepers should be treated in the same way, and the healthy shoots tied on to verandahs with raffia or nailed on to walls; for the latter purpose shreds of leather are stronger and more sightly than the usual pieces of flannel or cloth, and may often be bought cheaply of a shoemaker.

When a tree-root has been dug up, it is a good plan to leave the hole open to receive fallen leaves; otherwise I always preserve the latter in a heap between some shrubs and the wall in an out-of-the-way part of the garden, throwing a little mould on occasionally to prevent the wind scattering them. They are much too valuable to throw away.

Laurels and aucubas are often planted expressly to hide the trunks of taller trees, and should then of course be kept short in order to form a close green undergrowth. Box edgings are essentially formal, and should be closely clipped now with a pair of strong scissors, new pieces being put in where any have died.

Ivy should be left untouched until spring, and of course winter-flowering shrubs like japonica and jasmin nudiflora; indeed, the latter is well out in bloom sometimes before Christmas, if the frosts have not been severe.

Daisies and all weeds ought to be taken out of lawns while the ground is soft; and if they leave very bare patches, it is not a bad idea to put groups of crocus, scilla, or snow-drop bulbs in their place. Grass-seed, I find, has a better chance if sown in the spring; should, however, the lawn be in a very bad condition, the seed may be sprinkled all over it, and then a good layer of well-rotted manure and fine mould. The London sparrow is particularly fond of grass-seed, and will pick up all he can; so many people make elaborate arrangements of tape or string and sticks to keep him off if possible. These are not successful generally, and I find a less hideous and quite as good a plan is to tempt him in another direction with dainty food, in the shape of corn and bread-crumbs, placed on a balcony, well out of the way of cats.

Decidedly most moorland plants demand purer air than we can supply them with in

London; and the same is true of violets, which I have tried to grow under every possible condition, and which do grow, certainly, but never bloom visibly, although, oddly enough, I have often found seed-pods just below the surface of the earth. Primroses are almost as disappointing, while polyanthes do very well.

Christmas roses are most useful London flowers planted in the border, or in pots of good earth with leaf mould and sand intermixed. In either case, when the buds are coming out they need protection from the frost, which makes them green, and from fog, which makes them dirty; so it is well to bring the pots indoors, or, with the border plants, to cover them with hand-lights slightly tilted to admit air during the day.

Amateur vegetable growing in London is, I consider, a most expensive amusement, and so confine my remarks chiefly to flowers; on the other hand, a little herb garden is both convenient and economical. Parsley, in particular, a costly luxury in the winter, can be grown for a few pence and the trouble of protecting it. In a shady corner I sowed in the spring a small packet of parsley-seed over a patch of about a yard square, and refrained from cutting it during the summer, so that now it is in good full leaf. As if left exposed it would soon be killed by frost, I have covered it with an unused glass light, supported on four planks stuck into the ground edgewise (if I had not the light handy, a few old mats or sacks would have answered the purpose) to ensure a good supply during the winter. To make doubly sure, however, I take up half a dozen of the best plants, and put them in pots for the greenhouse, where they are ornamental as well as useful. Tarragon and chervil will keep green if protected in the same way as the parsley, and it is economy to plant some young lettuces in a frame, if one has the room to spare. Winter salads can always be obtained by growing mustard and cress in a greenhouse, and the plan I have found to answer best is to sow the seeds thinly on the surface of rich leaf-mould in strawberry-baskets, standing the latter in saucers of water. As the seeds germinate and become ready for cutting in a few days, it is well to make fresh sowings two or three times a week according to the consumption, bearing in mind that the tiny green plants are unfit to eat when the second leaf appears. The necessary water should be given only in the saucer, and by this means the salad can be cut quite clean, every gourmet knowing that the less washing any salad stuff requires the better.

Looking round the garden, it will be found that most of the bulbs planted last month are pushing little green shiny points out of their brown covering, and in some cases the hyacinths show buds. They will probably be checked, but hardened rather than injured, a little later on by frost and snow; while for the lilies, which also are showing tender green shoots, small heaps of fine ashes are a useful protection. For all beds a layer of cocoa-nut fibre looks very neat, but I do not think it necessary to coddle bulbs very much, while to put it all round even a small garden comes expensive.

Directly the frost comes outdoor work is stopped to a great extent; but in the greenhouse there is always plenty to do, and a very important matter for thought is the arrangement of the plants. On the top shelves of all, right at the back, should be put all the tubers, like dahlias and begonias, which are entirely dormant during the winter; and next below them the cacti and their relatives, which are practically so, and want no water. On the upper front shelves, where they can be more easily watched, fuchsias and geranium cuttings, and these need watering about once a

week. Arums, oleanders, azaleas, palms, and camellias require more water, but not too much, so they should stand on shelves within easy reach. Ferns should be put all together at one end of the greenhouse, and if the atmosphere be at all dry, they will prove grateful for a daily syringing. The lightest places near the glass, and well under one's eyes, should be given to bulbs which have left their cocoa-nut-fibre bed and are now being forced into bloom. These require to be kept constantly moist, and will appreciate a little weak soot-water once a week.

Roman hyacinths, narcissi, and scillas ought to be blooming now in the greenhouse, if they were treated as I suggested last month, and two or three may be transplanted together out of their boxes into well-drained pots for rooms, the soil used being rich, and well mixed with sand. If bowls or jars receive them which have no drainage, a good quantity of ashes and crock should be laid in first; then a layer of moss; then some good earth; and after the bulbs are inserted in this, they should be covered over with fibre in which sprigs of tradescantia may be placed, as they will keep fresh for some time, and probably take root. If delicate china is used, injury to it may be avoided by putting the bulbs simply in moss thoroughly and daily soaked with lukewarm water; but the flowers will then mature and fade more quickly.

Auratum and other lilies, ixias, musk, and hyacinths to flower in the early spring, should be potted this month in a mixture of rotten manure powdered over with soot, leaf-mould, peat, and sand, and plunged, like the other bulbs, in cocoa-nut-fibre until they grow through it.

Heating a greenhouse properly is a very important consideration, and the apparatus employed must depend largely upon circumstances. But whatever the means, the result aimed at in a house such as I have described, where many things have to live, and consequently little forcing can be done, is a mean temperature, day and night, of from 45° to 55°; above 60°, or under 40°, it will be sure to kill something.

For a girl's own management I think a good oil-stove is the easiest means of heating a small greenhouse. One which I have has a duplex lamp, the chimney of which, going up into one of two hollow pipes, keeps the heat radiating, and at the same time moistens the air by means of a tray of water. It cost 30s., burns about half a gallon of oil (10d. per gallon) in twenty-four hours; and even during the severe frost of Christmas week, 1891, kept my lean-to greenhouse, measuring 14 feet by 8 feet, at an even temperature of 40° to 45°. The trouble of trimming and filling the lamp is far less than that necessary for the most easily-managed furnace, the stoking of which is always man's work. A friend of mine, who uses gas, found, during a series of fogs, that the available supply was wholly inadequate; while during very hard weather the gas will often freeze in the pipes, and so fail when most wanted.

Azaleas ought now to be showing good buds, and will be assisted by a little soot-water or weak liquid manure once a week. Soot-water is made by putting a muslin bag, about 6 inches long, full of soot, in a pail of water (soft, if it can be obtained), and liquid manure by putting as much fresh stable manure as one can carry on a spade into a pail of water and letting it stand. Stir it up daily, then after a week pour off the water and use the latter mixed with clean. I generally apply it in the proportion of half a pint of manure-water to a quart of clean. No cold water should be given to plants; the chill may be taken off either by standing it for some hours in a warm greenhouse, or by adding a very little hot when required.

discredit upon mistresses; for, being members of our families, they ought to find their recreation with us just as our children do. Outside influences avail very little, if within the home content and happiness have no existence. We should be ashamed to keep our servants without a proper supply of food, yet it is equally reprehensible to keep them from early morning till late at night, and that day after day, week after week, without any hope of happiness outside the work. Block up the highways of moderate recreation, and the by-ways will be filled to overflowing.

It may be asked what more can be required of mistresses than to give good wages, board, and lodging to those members of the family whom we designate as *our friends the servants*. Certainly, these items of wage, board, and lodging are a necessary exchange for good and honest service; but there is a large margin outside these for both mistresses and maids to shine in if they want the full amount of happiness each can afford the other, and one does not know how much that is till one tries.

It is the fashion, I know, to let servants

have a Sunday out, and an evening in the week besides, without enquiry as to how or with whom these hours are to be spent; and thus the amount of sin and sorrow strewn broadcast over the lives of these members of our families would terrify mistresses if they could see into the future. Indeed, I had no idea until a year or two ago, when I was looking into the causes which sent so many domestic servants into a special part of the various workhouses of the country, that the pernicious rule was so prevalent of mistresses sending out their maidservants on certain evenings, called *their evenings out*, from two o'clock till ten, often without a choice permitted them of remaining in the house. In many cases out they must go by the law of the house, and not return until the specified time. Imagine a young girl fresh from the country, without friends or experience, not even knowing a street or a square beyond that in which she lives, being turned out to amuse herself for eight hours, more or less, no question asked as to where she is going or with whom, or if she has money to get a cup of tea or pay for

an omnibus! While she stands considering what she is to do with this liberty, some smooth-tongued person comes to her assistance and solves for her the difficulty. She thinks the stranger kind, and falls into the trap of making undesirable acquaintances, if nothing worse. This evil is more the fashion in small households, where one, two, or three servants only are kept; but that which obtains in houses of greater pretensions is equally objectionable, and even more disastrous in results—I refer to the late hours ladies'-maids have to keep during the season, while the mistresses are at balls and receptions, even till three or four o'clock in the morning several times in the week. These are disastrous to the poor girls in every way. They are too tired for work, and they dare not sleep, lest they fail to hear the mistress's return; and it is no wonder if they choose to spend the weary hours in the company of those who are sitting up for the masters of the establishments. Much of the mischief is wrought unconsciously, and only wants thinking over to be mitigated.

(To be continued.)

AMATEUR GARDENING FOR TOWN GIRLS.

JANUARY.

By CONSTANCE JACOB.



THIS month most of the large growers post their spring catalogues to customers; and although few seeds need to be sown before March, it is well to make out and despatch our orders betimes, so as to ensure getting exactly what we want; for although old-established firms will only supply uniformly good new seed, they may of course later on have run out of some

kinds; while with nurserymen in a small way of business I fancy the first comers will always be best served.

Seed catalogues are such enticing literature that I always strengthen my economical principles beforehand by firmly deciding the exact sum I can spend on annuals, generally dividing it also into five parts—two to be devoted to cheap seeds, which have thriven in former years, two to other old friends of a more costly description, and the fifth to experimental novelties; and this is, I think, as good a financial system as any.

To many people it saves trouble, and possibly money, to simply send for one of those "collections," varying in price from 1s. to £5, which are made up by seedsmen for the special benefit of amateurs. There are, however, two objections to this course: first, that the list is sure to include the names of some seeds we do not care for, or already possess; secondly, that only certain annuals will flourish in a London garden; and the collection will not be confined to these. Individual taste must largely determine our choice, but possibilities of culture even more so, especially whether one has or has not a greenhouse, hot-bed, or frame. In my own experience very satisfactory results have ensued from growing sweet peas, nasturtiums, virginian stock, nicotiana affinis, convolvulus, lupins, poppies, malope, coreopsis, and sunflowers, all of which can be sown in the open ground. Less hardy kinds, which have

also done well, are stocks, cannas, zinnias, lobelia, pyrethrum (golden feather), phlox Drummondii, and French marigolds.

I have never been successful in growing good asters; but as they are not favourites of mine, I have only tried once or twice, and it is possible that damp summers had something to do with their failure. Mignonette is fickle; some seasons it never comes up at all; at others it appears everywhere, especially when a few plants of the previous year have sown their seeds without assistance.

I have grown single dahlias from seed, but as the colours seldom come true, and the unpleasant puce shades seem the most frequent, it is on the whole better to buy tubers later on, or to take cuttings from old plants.

Lobelia and golden feather are best sown in the early autumn, if grown from seed at all.

Salvias and celosias (cockscombs) have been fashionable for pots and borders for the last few seasons, and should be sown early; but it is useless to attempt growing them from seed unless stove or bottom heat is available.

In making out a list, a good deal of thought should be given to the permanent inhabitants of the garden, and those annuals selected which will be in full bloom when the other plants are over or only in bud, as in a small garden a succession of flowers throughout the year is required rather than large masses of one kind which will only make a show during a few weeks. In this calculation, however, due allowance must be made for the fact that all flowers bloom a week or so later in London than in the country, owing, probably, to the smaller supply of sunshine—certainly not to a lower temperature, or to more exposed positions.

Differences of soil must also influence our choice. Some things, like sweet peas, demand a good rich earth, with plenty of moisture at the roots; others, as nasturtiums, a dry, much poorer mixture, and for this reason they are useful on banks, and in places where the roots of large trees draw much of the nutriment from the ground.

It is undoubtedly safest to buy seeds from first-class firms; on the other hand, they

often only supply larger, more expensive packets than are required; when, unless one can induce a friend to go shares, it is cheaper to obtain them from a grower who will put up small quantities of good seeds for 1d. or 2d. each.

Of actual garden work there is little to be done this month except in sweeping up the dead leaves and twigs which are sure to litter the lawns and beds. The rubbish should be put on to a heap to wait until the last spring tidying up, when it may all be burnt together and the ashes dug into the ground, or saved for future potting purposes. Leaf mould ought always to be manufactured on the premises. It only means collecting all the dead leaves of the garden into a heap, covering them with a little earth to prevent blowing away, adding all other dead vegetation during the winter, turning the heap over occasionally, and using when the forms of the leaves have disappeared—generally in about eighteen months' time. If two heaps are made side by side they can be built up and used in turn. At any rate, no leaves ought to be wasted, as, mixed with spent manure from hot-beds, they form the most valuable of plant foods.

Hot-beds ought to be made up now, in readiness for the seeds which will want their assistance next month; but I must allow that this is hardly girls' work, although I have in an emergency done it myself. The beds being emptied out, the old manure should either be spread round the roots of outdoor roses, trees, or other plants which will at this season appreciate the extra protection and nourishment, or spread over the store of rotting leaves dating from over a year before. Then the empty pit must be filled with fresh horse or cow manure, and an equal quantity of the leaves collected since early autumn. These must be well shaken together, left until fermentation commences, then shaken again, and the lights kept closely shut until the bed has sunk some five or six inches, and the drops of moisture on the glass are clear, not dirty. Then, a thin layer of fine leaf mould being spread over the surface, the hot-bed is ready.

Manure is rather an expensive item in garden expenditure if one has to buy it of a nurseryman; but of course where there is a stable this has not to be considered, while, as coachmen have now often to pay for its speedy removal, and can seldom get anything for it, one ought to have no difficulty in obtaining enough from a neighbouring mews for the small expense of delivery. Used in its fresh state in a hot-bed, it will rot sufficiently for garden use afterwards, when the heat is exhausted. In such a bed should be struck, at the end of the month, cuttings of heliotropes, geraniums (supposing much of the autumn-struck stock to have failed), and those double nasturtiums which have been so attractive in window-boxes for the last two or three seasons. The slips should be cut across just below an eye—that is, the junction of leaves with the stem, all leaves removed for about two inches up the stalk, and the cuttings inserted for nearly that length round the edges of small pots of light soil plunged in the hot-bed or a propagator. Well soaked to start with, they need very little water afterwards—only just sufficient to prevent the earth from becoming dusty.

A propagator is a very useful apparatus for those who have only an ordinary greenhouse in which to rear delicate seeds or strike cuttings; but as a good one will cost at least £1, and our aim is economy, I may as well describe a substitute which I have used with some success—that is, a deep box filled with cocoanut-fibre, and supported on the top of the oil-stove with which my greenhouse is heated. Pots containing the seeds or cuttings are plunged in the fibre, and must by no means reach the top of the box-sides; a sheet of glass is laid as a cover to the whole to prevent evaporation, and both the fibre and the earth in the pots must be kept constantly damp. In this contrivance I have raised celosias, primulas, and cannas; and although a hot-bed answers the same purpose, the propagator is easier for a girl to manage, and prevents all risk of frost.

When it thaws it is necessary to take advantage of every fine morning to go carefully over the beds, loosening the soil a little between plants, and replunging anything that has its roots heaved up by the frost. Carnations, primroses, and many bulbs are particularly liable to this accident, which is technically known as "kicking"; and if not attended to quickly, are sure to perish later on.

Outdoor roses only flourish in the more distant suburbs, such as Putney, Brixton, Willesden, and Highgate; nearer town they are, I believe, poisoned by the fogs. Still, they can be grown with success even near Regent's Park, in a cold house specially kept for them, from which the air in smoky weather is rigidly excluded, and only sparingly admitted during an east wind. The aspect should be south, with sashes opening singly at either end, according to the wind, as the least draught will cause mildew. Water must be given very carefully, and no other vegetation admitted which requires, or is likely to create, a damp atmosphere. On the other hand, this is a safe home for such things as auriculas, hardy primulas, polyanthus, lilies-of-the-valley, and tree peonies, which do not require heat. Strong climbing roses like the *Maréchal Niel* should be planted in a border in the house, but other sorts do very well in pots, and can thus be brought into a room when in full bloom. I, having no proper rose-house, winter two or three bushes in the same cold frame in which I keep wallflowers and pansies, as all can stand about the same amount of exposure, plunging the pots into the earth so that the top shoots do not get damped off by touching the glass. If the pots are well covered with a thick bed of leaves or cocoanut-fibre, they will need no watering during frosty weather. If wintered

in the warm greenhouse, they would have formed long shoots much too weakly to bear bloom; but towards the end of this month the wood, thus hardened in the frame, should be sufficiently mature to allow of their removal thither to force on the blossoms. They should have been potted in August and pruned in November; but if the latter operation was missed, it must be done at once, cutting back the weakly shoots to one eye, leaving the stronger ones to nearly their full length. When the buds appear, they must be nourished occasionally with weak liquid manure, or, better still, Clay's Fertiliser, and the first sign of green-fly should be washed away with soapy water. On warm mornings they may be syringed a little, but air must be freely admitted afterwards to dry off all moisture before night. The roses which are considered most suitable for greenhouse culture are: *Climbing Niphetos*, *Mme. Alfred Carrière*, *Solfaterre*, *Lamarque*, *Rêve d'Or*, *Maréchal Niel*, and *pink Gloire de Dijon*.

In the greenhouse the chief considerations are the necessary watering, and keeping down blight. Plants on upper shelves should be gone over once a week, given a little water when necessary, and relieved of all dead foliage. Although geraniums want little moisture, and cacti next to none, it is quite possible to starve them to death; and provided that the temperature is regularly high enough to prevent mildew, the flowering season of both may be hastened by careful watering. *Fuchsias* ought now to be brought forward into a warmer part of the house, given more water, and well pruned back, preparatory to taking cuttings and repotting next month.

The cocoanut-fibre or other earth in which the dahlia, begonia, and canna tubers are at rest, must not get dust-dry, nor, on the other hand, become damp enough to start them into growth just yet.

Lobelias which were sown in the autumn should now be pricked off into boxes of good light soil, the seedlings being set about two inches apart. As they grow, the tops should be pinched off to make them bushy, like little cushions, and they should never be allowed to reach more than three inches high.

Golden feather well repays the same treatment, and both are best kept in a cool frame, where the frost does not penetrate.

Repotting bedding geraniums belongs properly to next month's work, but it must be done now if any of the plants are pot-bound, or they will be starting into bloom before they are wanted.

Old plants, however, may be encouraged in this desire by keeping them in small pots and nourishing them with occasional doses of soot-water, and they will then make useful additions to our drawing-room plants.

If a good stock of Roman hyacinths, narcissi, and freesias were bought and plunged early enough last year, we ought now to keep our drawing-rooms well supplied with flowers by bringing a few bulbs in at a time, and giving them plenty of moisture, not stagnant water. Where much gas is burnt, an occasional syringe with lukewarm water will help to preserve them; and in rooms where the frost is likely to penetrate at night, sheets of newspaper should be spread over and round the plants, supported in such a way that it cannot break the brittle stalks. Paper, by-the-by, is a great protection in frames and greenhouses where there is no heat.

Foliage plants, such as *dracenas*, *aspidistras*, palms, and *aralias* are deservedly popular in nearly every London house, and during the winter months they almost take the place of flowers. They are really very easy to manage, but in nine cases of failure out of ten they are ruined by injudicious watering. It is a safe rule never to give water while the earth in the pots is damp enough to

stick to the hand; and a still better is never to water them in the ordinary way at all, but about once a week to take them out of their saucers or outside coverings, stand them in a tub or bath for an hour, and there give them a thorough soaking, at the same time sponging both surfaces of every leaf. Unless the temperature of the room be very hot and dry, they will want no more moisture till the next week.

Quite cold water always gives them a dangerous check, and even in the summer it should stand some time in the air before being applied to any vegetable life; if possible, soft water should be saved for this purpose.

In even the sharpest winter there will come a warm soft day with gentle rain, when it benefits nearly all house-plants to be stood outside on a window-ledge or balcony for an hour in the middle of the day; but this should never be done if the wind be ever so little in the north or east, or the change of temperature is likely to have fatal results.

Palms and *aspidistras* are always graceful, whatever their size; but the *dracena* has a habit of shooting up to a height of several feet, when its long bare stalk and bunch of leaves at the top are distinctly ugly. When this happens, a little bundle of moss may be tied round the stem, about six inches below the lowest leaves, and thoroughly damped every day—in fact, never allowed to get quite dry. If this be done for some weeks it will be seen on removing the moss that a few small white roots will have sprouted, and the stalk may then be cut through immediately beneath, and the top replanted in a five-inch pot. The best sort of earth for them is one-fifth part each of leaf mould, peat, and silver-sand, with two-fifths loam, the whole mixed with a little soot. The crocks having been placed archwise at the bottom of the pot, should be covered with a little moss, then the compost pressed firmly down over the drainage, and when it is within two and a half inches of the rim the plant put in, great care being taken not to damage the tender rootlets. When finished, the earth should reach to within an inch of the rim. It should then have a good soaking, and be placed in the warmest part of the greenhouse or room. The old root may be taken out of the pot, and all the earth shaken off, when there will generally be found a number of little bulbs adhering to the main root. And if these are planted in small pots of the same compost, kept in a warm place, they will sprout, and make pretty little plants in the course of some months, and when about a year old, look very well planted in bowls instead of ferns, with *scillas* and *Roman hyacinths*. The old plant can be repotted, and if the stalk be cut into pieces of about four inches long, most of these will strike freely in cocoanut-fibre.

After a snowstorm, the careful gardener will go round and shake the snow off the shrubs, or its weight is certain to break some of their branches; and I have known many old lilacs broken short off at the root in this way. Besides, the melting snow rots the leaves of evergreens, and makes them unsightly before the young growth is ready to take their place. On the other hand, snow on the ground is a great protection to roots which are planted sufficiently deep, and saves a great deal of vegetation which would be killed by a long black frost.

A very mild January is the most to be feared, as it encourages many things to break forth prematurely, only to be nipped back by later frosts and east winds. Sometimes a few crocuses, snowdrops, and aconites peep up before the month is out, otherwise the Christmas-rose and yellow jasmine are the only flowers now to be looked for in a London garden.

"Revelations iii. 20," repeated Mrs. Turner mechanically, and her husband turned the pages with unaccustomed fingers till he found the chapter, and, with a startled, almost awestruck look, as if scarce crediting his own eyes, read the wonderful verse, deeply scored under, in red ink, by his father's own hand—"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me."

What induced Miss Norton, the Sunday-school teacher, on her way home from a meeting that evening, to call at the Turner's cottage with the little New Testament for Willie which she had intended giving him the next Sunday? She could not have told you. As her hand fell on the knocker—she meant just to leave the little parcel with a kind message only—she heard a joyful cry inside as if from upstairs; there were hasty movements in the passage, a pattering of feet, exclamations, and then suddenly the door was flung open and Mr. Turner stood before her, startled, bewildered, breathless, with little Willie in his nightshirt in his arms, his wife, with a pale, frightened face, peering over his shoulder.

"Why, it's teacher, father!" cried little Willie, quite gladly. "She'll show you that picture now, and then you'll know Him too.

Will He come to-night, teacher? Oh, I do so wish He'd come now whilst we're all awake!"

The young girl had only meant to knock and go away again; but there she was in the Turners' clean little kitchen, with a Bible lying open on the table before her, and three faces turned somehow with sudden expectation towards hers. Surely the knock was loud in all their hearts, and hers was the trembling, grateful hand to help to draw back the rusty, unaccustomed bolts?

She could not—none of them could have told you how it was done. Afterwards it it all seemed so easy to understand, such a simple salvation to accept, such a clear, unmistakable invitation, such a gracious promise, such a real, true, present friend to make one's own. Even little Willie felt that his dear Lord Jesus was quite near and close to him, though he must wait till He called him to go to His happy home in heaven before he should see Him face to face. As for Mr. Turner, scales did indeed seem as if they had dropped from his eyes, for things looked plain and clear that he had never suspected even before, and the religion he had always considered only fit for the leisured and wealthy turned out to be exactly adapted, as it were, for such as he.

"We shall all go together now, you and me and mother, shan't we, father?" cried little Willie; he had climbed on to his

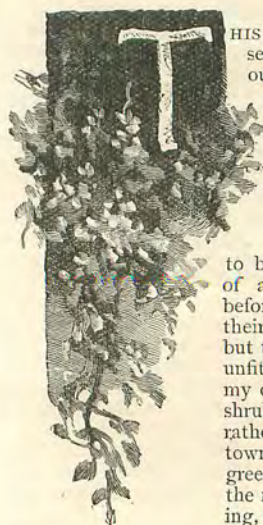
mother's lap, but his father's hand was in his, and he hugged it fondly. "You promised we should, and so does mother."

"Ay, my lad, and by God's help we will," said Mr. Turner. "And maybe as your teacher here 'll take the first steps along the way with us, and 'll read us that third chapter again out of your grandfather's book. Somehow I've the feeling that he knows all about it, and left that there verse marked a-purpose. Maybe as I'll be able to thank him for it some day."

And so the young girl, reverently taking the well-worn book, read the wonderful chapter right through again; and as they listened, each trembling thankful heart knew that to it was also promised the gold tried in the fire, to be had for the asking, and the white raiment and the new name. That their ears had heard a voice, and could never be wholly deaf again; their eyes had seen, and could never more be utterly blinded; that His promises, though given eighteen hundred years ago, are true and faithful and sure to-day; that into that poor and humble little cottage had come a Guest which should glorify and honour its poverty and humbleness for ever and ever. "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me." C. C. Y.

AMATEUR GARDENING FOR TOWN GIRLS.

FEBRUARY.



THIS is a convenient season for laying-out, or for making radical alterations in our gardens; for trees and shrubs planted now will probably do better than if they had had to bear the hardships of a London winter before getting used to their new situation; but the actual work is unfitted for girls. For my own part, I think shrubs and trees are rather overdone in our town suburbs. Evergreens, of course, have the merit of not needing, or, rather, of doing without, any special

attention when once they are planted; but their peculiar virtue becomes in time a tiresome monotony. Some trees, too, such as the beautiful acacia, are positively noxious to any other vegetation in their vicinity, as the roots spread so far in all directions; and in any case their shade prevents a great variety of plants flourishing. London gardens, alas! seldom suffer from too much sunshine.

When people take a house with a new garden, the natural desire of filling it up as soon as possible often leads them to plant aucubas, lilacs, euonymus, and similar shrubs thickly all round, by which they certainly succeed in hiding the unsightly walls; but it is useless trying to combine flower borders with a shrubbery in a small space.

Trees and shrubs which attain noble growth and graceful outline in the freedom of Dropmore or Colebrooke can only appear stunted and ridiculous in a shrubbery a few yards square. One or two well-grown trees are quite as many as an average town garden can

well support; and a few varied shrubs in a clump on the shady side are much more picturesque than a greater number planted indiscriminately all round.

Planning and laying-out a new garden is a delightful occupation, and one which requires a considerable amount of taste. The rival schools of so-called landscape and formal gardening have equally able advocates; but on the whole I am inclined to favour the latter as more suited to town plots of ground. It is impossible to make a quarter of an acre or less look like a miniature park, which is what the landscapists aim at; so it is better to consider it entirely in the light of a pleasure, where may be played such games as there is space for, and where one can sit out with work, or book, or tea-table on the few mid-summer days when it is warm. Effects of distance are lost in such close quarters, and trees as a rule should only be used to hide unsightly objects, or to screen ourselves from too prying neighbours.

I have two or three notions about gardens which I will mention here, in the hope of their suggesting better to some of my readers; for I can hardly hope for their meeting unanimous approbation. The first, however, will be generally popular, and is, that every garden, if possible, should possess a lawn for tennis, bowls, or at least croquet. This should, I think, always be below the natural level of the garden, the grass thus keeping in much better condition during the summer; and if the drainage be good there is no reason why it should be unduly damp at other seasons.

Nothing adds more to the interest of a garden than nicely-kept terraces, and I would utilise in this way any natural inequalities of level rather than have to walk up and down hill. Should the ground slope down from the house, the doors or windows of the latter should open on to a broad terrace paved with flagstones, tiles, concrete, or even red brick, rather than gravel, and having a flight of broad shallow steps leading into the garden proper. The slope of this terrace should either be of turf, which should then form a

narrow border at the top, ivy treated in the same way and kept carefully clipped, or, if facing north, it affords a good situation for a fernery built up of rough stones; or, again, if we have a mind for extravagance, it may give place to a perpendicular stone wall, on which to nail creepers, finished with a carved stone balustrade having a ledge at least a foot broad. Stucco in any form is always an eyesore and a constant expense. In the summer large pots or tubs may be placed along such a terrace, and down the sides of the steps, filled with bright-coloured plants, and fringed with creepers; while on a grass or ivy border might stand old stumps of trees, hollowed out and filled with earth, and ivy trained round them.

If the house be at the bottom of the hill, the terrace slopes should be clothed in grass, and need no balustrade. The path at the top may be in this case of gravel, and appropriately backed by a carefully-arranged shrubbery.

Every wall that is not of fine old red brick should be fairly covered with creepers, and a judicious selection of these will ensure flowers or verdure all the year round. Ivy of course is indispensable, and may grow alone in a northerly aspect; but on a warm wall clematises of all kinds may be associated with it, or any climbing annuals.

Yellow jasmine is valuable, as it will clothe a cool wall with its artistic flower-sprays in winter, and glossy green foliage in summer. *Pyrus japonica*, with its beautiful scarlet blossom, is also a delight to the eye in this dreary month, but it demands the most sunny position available.

Woodbine and white jasmine may be relied upon to succeed each other during the summer without being very fastidious, but they must not be too much shaded by trees.

The vine is a decorative creeper anywhere, and looks very well trained over a background of ivy.

Flower borders under walls are seldom satisfactory if less than four feet wide, and where this space is not available I would rather have only a narrow strip of turf between the path and the roots of the creepers.

Narrow beds and borders should be more in the midst of the garden, so that the plants in them receive light and air on all sides.

Paths are a great feature in every well-kept pleasure, and some of mine should be paved with brick, tiles, or stone, thus enabling one to walk on them with comfort after rain, while the soft springy turf of an ideal lawn would please one's feet in dry weather. But gravel should be used in a separate wild garden or shrubbery, and only there should the walks be anything but straight, unless forced to deviate by a large tree or other natural feature of the garden.

As a rule winding paths are irritatingly meaningless; and I do not like a path on one side of the garden only, as after walking to the end, to turn sharp on one's heel seems to destroy the leisurely continuity of a pleasant stroll.

All paths should be wide enough for two people to walk abreast, either going all round the domain, or leading straight down the middle to an open space at the end, or to what used to be called a "knot" of flower-beds. The latter is the best arrangement for a strip of ground too narrow for tennis or croquet, and the rest of the garden should then be lawn right up to the walls, with a line of small beds or standard roses about two feet from the centre alley. At intervals, too, cross-paths might lead off nearly to the wall on either side, and finish at some objects of interest—seats, rockeries, a sun-dial, or well-shaped vase. At the junction of these crossways light arches from each corner, passing over each other in the centre, make a pretty feature, if not allowed to become too thick.

Arches are always picturesque, especially if they appear to give access to another part of the garden; and a long strip such as I have been imagining may be prettily divided into two by a series of spans right across it, formed, in the first place, of ivy on bent wire, with clematis or other summer-growing plants trained over it. Such arches on a wall round a tennis-lawn make suitable supports for netting. Arbours are not very comfortable retreats in London gardens, as our infrequent sunshine makes them damp, and they are always the favourite abode of insects; nevertheless, a suitable position should be selected for a permanent bench, long enough to serve as a couch if required, on the warm side of the garden, yet shaded by a tree from the afternoon sun in summer; without a roof, but screened from other people's windows.

Closely-clipped hedges about four feet high of yew, holly, box, or privet, form charming divisions to gardens, as do others nearly double the height, with archways cut in them for the paths to go through; but these are apt to create a dangerous amount of shade in a small garden; and to bring either to perfection means the work of years.

To my mind nothing makes so good an edging for flower-beds as box, and I have never had any difficulty in keeping it in good condition, although I hear that it is gradually disappearing from the suburbs, on account, I suppose, of the smoke. Narrow turf is the only pleasing substitute; tiles, I think, are extremely ugly, and somehow suggest poverty.

However, the foregoing remarks are only of use to those readers who contemplate planting; the majority of us have to make the best of already existing arrangements.

Few things will flourish under trees, even grass failing; but as a change from the ubiquitous ivy, the old-fashioned periwinkle is splendid for covering bare places of this description, and it has the great advantage of bearing bright decorative flowers when once it takes kindly to its locality. Well-grown plants are quite inexpensive, and this is the time for putting them in.

This is also the best season, provided that

we are blessed with a few warm, soft days, to plant out pansies, young sweet-williams, Canterbury bells, and wallflowers which were grown from seed last spring, and have passed the winter under shelter—a plan which has perhaps less risk than that of putting them into their abiding-places in the autumn, when one considers their danger during the winter from smoke, fog, frost, riotous cats, and marauding sparrows. Ranunculi and anemones may be put into the borders now for spring display, but I cannot lay claim to much success in cultivating them in London.

The Christmas rose and yellow jasmine are winter ornaments which ought to be in every garden, and this is the best time to plant both or shift both; but the first, which likes a sunny border, should be allowed to remain undisturbed as long as possible.

In the greenhouse there is daily occupation, for besides keeping things clean, a good deal of potting may be done before the rush of spring work sets in.

The chrysanthemum cuttings which were taken in November will now, if they have been judiciously watered and protected from frost, have filled their pots with roots, which can easily be ascertained by gently turning them upside down on to the hand.

A sufficient number of very small pots should then be washed clean and carefully dried, a fair-sized concave piece of crock placed archwise over the hole at the bottom of each, and two or three smaller pieces or a little charcoal round. A compost must then be mixed, consisting of six parts loam, three leaf mould, and one silver-sand. Loam is the yellow earth which is the natural soil of some gardens; but where that is not the case, it is best to buy it at a good nursery; a bushel, or two shillings' worth, being sufficient to grow a dozen plants right on to blooming. When the little pots have been two-thirds filled with this mixture, the cuttings should be gently shaken apart, so that none of the delicate root-fibres are broken, one plant put into each pot, more compost added, and firmly pressed down. They should then be stood in a pan of lukewarm water for a few minutes, and when thoroughly saturated, placed back in the frame, or in a cool shady part of the greenhouse.

Zonal pelargoniums, or, as they are mostly called, geraniums, which were struck in the autumn, if repotted now in exactly the same manner as the chrysanthemums, ought to make good plants for bedding out in June.

Palms may be repotted now if they require it; that is, if the roots protrude at the bottom of the pot. In the operation great care must be taken not to injure the roots; and the best plan to pursue is to stand the plant in a pan of lukewarm water, meanwhile arranging a few crocks in the same way as I mentioned above, in a pot a little bigger than that in which the palm now is; cover these with a piece of dry moss powdered with soot, then transfer the palm, with roots and ball of earth undisturbed, into the new pot, and fill up the space with a mixture of peat, silver-sand, and leaf mould firmly pressed down.

Aralias and aspidistras may be treated in the same way, but the latter can be divided if it is desired to increase the number.

Another plant which should be divided now if at all is the agapanthus, an old favourite of mine, which bears a profusion of its pale blue flowers during the summer. Like all lilies, it wants good leaf manure with plenty of sand. The large plants bearing several heads of bloom are so handsome that, to my mind, changing them into larger pots or tubs is better than division. I keep them during the winter on the greenhouse floor, giving them very little water; but now the supply should be increased.

Oleanders are also among my great successes, and this is a time to strike cuttings of them,

which may be expected to bloom within eighteen months. I have found the easiest way is simply to cut off some young shoots (and as they grow tall very quickly the top ones without buds of an old plant can generally be spared), and to put them in a bottle of water on a shelf, keeping the bottle always full and the heads of the cuttings well out. As long as they remain fresh, there is a chance of their throwing out strong white roots, and in a few weeks perhaps the majority will have done so, and may be moved into small pots of good mould and peat. Myrtles can be struck in the same way, or, more safely, in cocoa-nut fibre.

Old fuchsias ought to have new shoots long enough now to strike, and these should be cut about two inches long, put round the edge of pots of leaf mould and loam, and watered with great moderation.

Most of us have, as children, sown orange and lemon pips, and been rewarded in time by the possession of the glossy-leaved trees; and although these will never bloom unless grafted with grafts from fertile trees, I think their pretty growth and foliage make them well worth the infinitesimal amount of trouble in their culture. Now is the time to sow them in good mould; also raisin pips and date stones.

The highly ornamental canna, or Indian shot, is easily grown; and the seeds should now be soaked in moderately warm water for two or three days, then placed on the surface of peat, well watered, and a piece of glass laid over the pot to check evaporation. They are uncertain things, and whereas some seeds may germinate in a few weeks, others will be months before they show any signs of life. Old roots, which have wintered on a dry shelf, may now be started into growth by putting them into boxes of cocoa-nut fibre, or, indeed, any good earth, and keeping them moderately warm and damp.

If it be desired to increase the stock of dahlias by cuttings, their tubers may be started in the same manner; otherwise they may wait a month; and so, certainly, may begonias. Where there is a stove, or the propagating arrangement mentioned in January, celosias, salvias, and cucumbers should be sown this month; the two first on the surface of sandy peat, cucumbers in rich earth, and covered about half an inch deep.

The temperature must be kept a little higher now than last month, as it is the season of growth, and most things require this kind of assistance. On the other hand, it is also a time for insect life to come forth; therefore extra watch must be kept for all manner of blight, and all possible cleanliness preserved. When there comes a really warm day, as there often will this month, individual plants suffering from green-fly will take no harm if stood out of doors in the sun, and syringed with warm Gishurst, or soap and water. But syringing inside the house is dangerous, as more superficial moisture than can be quickly dried up by the stove will generate mildew.

On the other hand, even in the unheated greenhouse, all things may receive a little more water to the roots than they have been receiving lately.

The earlier bulbs, crocuses, aconites, and snowdrops, with perhaps a few primroses, ought now to be making a good show out of doors, but neither in window-boxes nor the ground do they require any special attention; while hyacinths, tulips, narcissi, and scillas, forced in the greenhouse, should be potted up for rooms in the way I have already described.

Sparrows always attack the yellow crocuses more than any others, but a little soaked bread will generally distract their attention. I have tried, in accordance with Richard Jefferies' advice, strewing corn for the birds in winter, but unfortunately have found that they preferred the saffron of the crocus.

CONSTANCE JACOB.

"TWO OR THREE TOGETHER."

By MRS. G. LINNÆUS BANKS.

JUST "two or three together,"
 People of different lands;
 Youth in life's springtide weather,
 Blind age on slipping sands,
 Drawn hither by a common need
 To worship at one shrine;
 What matters diverse sex or creed
 Seeking the gift Divine?

But "two or three together,"
 Strangers, to meet no more
 Till snapped is life's last tether,
 And earthly needs are o'er.
 Here, winging one petition
 Up to the Throne of Grace;
 One in their mute contrition—
 God's glory fills the place.

But "two or three together"—
 The rich, the lowly born,
 Shod, softly with warm leather,
 Or wooden shoon, far worn.
 Gathered together in His name
 Who fills all space and time,
 Distinctions melt, or wealth, or fame,
 Where comes the One Sublime.

AMATEUR GARDENING FOR TOWN GIRLS.

MARCH.

By CONSTANCE JACOB.



THE first indoor work this month is sowing seeds of annuals, the best for London being, as I mentioned in January—ten week stocks, *Nicotiana affinis* (sweet-scented tobacco),

Phlox drummondii, sweet peas, nasturtiums, *canariensis*, *convolvuli*, *coreopsis*, and sunflowers, all of which can be brought into bloom sooner by being raised in heat early this month than by being sown in the open ground in April. The danger of this method lies in the fact, that when the little seedlings need transplanting, amateurs are apt to postpone doing so until they have grown up in a crowded pot, too long ever to be anything but starved and weakly. With all pot plants, when once they have exhausted the nourishment of their limited amount of soil, a few days' delay in repotting may ruin them for life. Those girls, therefore, who wish for as good a result as possible, with a small amount of trouble, will content themselves with fewer varieties of annuals, and sow all their seeds very thinly.

Stocks and *phlox drummondii* may be raised in frames, the soil of a half-spent hotbed being well mixed with leaf mould, thoroughly saturated with water, pressed down firmly with a piece of wood, and the seed dropped thinly in drills, then covered with a little sand. Newspapers should be spread over the bed, and the frame kept quite close for a few days; and when the plants are well up, the glass should be whitewashed and the papers removed. They will probably need neither air nor water until they are an inch high when they ought to be pricked out in the same bed about an inch and a half apart.

Another way, which I adopt, is to sow them very thinly in pots placed in the propagating box and closely covered with glass, and afterwards to prick them out into frames, or into boxes in a cool part of the greenhouse. Boxes for raising seeds are made of thin wood with a few cracks at the bottom, and are from three to six inches deep. In the latter *nicotiana* should be sown in drills on a well-drained

compost of leaf mould and old manure, and the seeds only lightly covered with sand. I find that this seed germinates very irregularly, so always pick out individual plants as soon as they are an inch high, and replant into other boxes or large pots, leaving the original undisturbed until I am quite sure that no more will come up. This box will not need a glass cover, and so must be watered occasionally (when the soil seems dry) through a rose.

The rest of the seeds mentioned above should be sown in pots very thinly, sweet peas and nasturtiums being at least an inch apart, the others nearer together in proportion as they are smaller. The pots may be placed either in a hotbed or the greenhouse, in the latter case being covered with glass. These seedlings will not need pricking out, but at the end of the month the pots should be transferred to a cold frame, and given air during the day. The following are good rules for seed-sowing: Make the surface of the soil quite flat and firm after having sifted it finely and gone through it with the hand, to make sure that no worms, wood-lice, or other insects can be concealed in it. If the young plants show any sign of being eaten by these pests, or the slimy trail of slugs or snails be noticed, dust a little soot between the drills and round the boxes. Worms can be kept from entering by the presence of a few ashes among the drainage.

Always well saturate the earth before sowing, to prevent the necessity of frequent watering during germination.

Sow very small seeds in drills, large ones at equal distances apart.

Never cover with earth to a greater depth than the size of the seed.

Neither let the soil become dust-dry nor sodden.

No doubt seedlings are hardier when raised at once in the open ground, and only thinned out afterwards, and my own private theory is that annuals and biennials both should be sown out of doors immediately the seed is ripe, which is, undoubtedly, the plan sanctioned by Nature; but it must be owned that they run so many risks of being destroyed by birds and insects, or disturbed by careless digging, that I hardly like to advise it against the general opinion of professionals.

It is still not too late to raise cucumber plants in good heat; and those amateur experimentalists who will sow some geranium seeds in a propagator may chance to produce a good new sort.

Canterbury bells, wallflowers, polyanthus, antirrhinum (snapdragons), and aquilegia (columbines), may be sown now in glass-covered boxes, in the propagator or the hotbed; but they are biennials, and, of course, will not bloom till next spring, so there is really plenty of time for that work when the annuals are pricked out.

Young chrysanthemums will possibly require repotting this month in the same way as I described last; at any rate, they should never be allowed to get pot-bound until after June, when they ought to be in their flowering pots; and will sometimes want three or four shifts. If in a greenhouse they will need a good deal of water, and on warm days may be indulged with a slight syringe: in a cool frame this is not necessary. Watch carefully that they do not run up too weakly before being repotted, or moved into a cooler place. I have once or twice had all mine spoilt through being unable from illness or other causes to shift them at the exact time they wanted it. Should any of the stock have died, no time ought to be lost in striking new, or it will be too late to have good blooms this year.

Carnations in pots, or cuttings which have been wintered in a frame, should now be brought into the greenhouse, if early bloom be wanted; or where there is only an unheated conservatory they should be moved into the warmest part. The cuttings should be transferred into five-inch pots, filled with a third part each of leaf mould and loam, the remainder being gravel, soot (or wood ashes), and sand well mixed. Directly they throw up flower stalks a little liquid manure should be given once a week until the bloom is over. Blood manure, which can be bought in a powder from any nurseryman, is also beneficial to them, and should be dusted lightly over the mould once a week immediately before the plant is watered.

Tuberous begonias which have wintered in their former pots or in cocoanut fibre must now be shaken out and planted close together

in boxes of any good earth, kept moderately moist, covered with sheets of glass and placed in a hot-bed or warm part of the greenhouse. If care be taken that the hollow side is uppermost, in a short while they will show leaves; and as each green sprout gets an inch long the bulbs should be moved into small pots of good earth and placed on a sunny shelf near the glass, or in a room window with a south aspect.

Cacti should be brought down from the back and given more water now, as the flower buds will soon show on the edge of the fleshy stalks. If new plants be desired this is the time to strike them; and almost any pieces cut off and inserted for about an inch in sandy loam will throw off roots.

Greenhouse ferns will now be showing new fronds, and will be all the better for repotting; larger space is not always required, and sometimes would make them awkward for room decoration; but it often happens that the goodness of the soil is exhausted without the fern being pot-bound. It is, therefore, quite as well to take them out of their present pots, wash these out and dry them (over the stove or pipes is the quickest method); put good drainage at the bottom of each, then some decaying leaves powdered with soot, above this placing the fern with its mass of roots shaken free of the old mould as far as can be done without breaking the fibres, and filling the whole closely round with a mixture of sand and peat coming up to within half an inch of the rim. Some ferns will be the better for a little powdered limestone, slate or chalk mixed with the other mould, but I have generally found leaves, peat and sand congenial to all kinds; and buy the peat pure, pulling it to pieces myself and mixing it with other mould as required. Ferns hate a draught, so they should be kept together at the inner end of the greenhouse. They also dislike direct sunshine, so any window which throws it on them should be washed over with whitewash mixed with green, which drying on opaquely will admit sufficient light without heat. This can be obtained cheaply at any oilshop. Constant syringing during the summer will take off a good deal, but in the winter it is not wanted, and now is a good time to renew before the sun becomes too scorching.

With regard to taking off the old foliage opinions differ considerably. Some people (I used to be among the number) cut the fronds down entirely in the winter; others remove them one by one as they die naturally, and by the time that the last is withered the new fronds will have probably grown large enough to take their place, and repotting may be commenced. This is the plan suggested by nature, and I must say my own results have been better ever since I followed it. Never throw away any of the old fronds; they are the plant's most natural food, and placed in a box with a little earth strewn over them and kept rather damp they will soon be sufficiently rotted to use.

The Wardian cases in which ferns are often grown indoors ought to be emptied out and refilled this month. Above the perforated zinc floor which ensures drainage should be a good layer of charcoal and rough bits of sandstone; then the compost, which consists mainly of peat mixed with a little rough loam, leaf mould, and plenty of sand. I have discarded *virgin cork for my case*, as it always harboured woodlice, but place large pretty pieces of stone to break up the flat surface and to form pockets for the smaller ferns. At the bottom of such pockets pieces of moss

should be laid before filling up with earth. I also put among the ferns a good-sized flat shell which always contains water, and as this is constantly evaporating it prevents the need of actual watering, sometimes for weeks together. In the summer an occasional syringe is refreshing, in the winter the natural evaporation ought to generate moisture enough.

To be perfectly frank, these cases are seldom entirely successful, and in my own I have taken to planting miniature specimens of foliage plants like *dracenas*, *tradescantia*, and *crotons* among the ferns, and find they do better. Hardy ferns do not like quite such a close atmosphere; and the oak, the beech, and the parsley have never flourished in these homes within my experience. I possess, however, a good specimen of sea spleenwort grown in this way.

Out-door work now increases greatly, and as soon as the frosts break up will occupy a considerable time every day. Even before that happens, the pruning of ivy and other evergreens can be got on with where needed; and those which have suffered severely during the winter may be saved for future beauty by being cut within a foot or so of the ground.

The box-edging should also be clipped neatly, and new pieces planted in any blank spaces if its distinctive character of trim formality is to be preserved.

White jasmine will be better for pruning now, all the dead wood being taken out, weakly shoots cut back and others trained and nailed or tied up in the direction in which they are to grow.

When the ground is soft enough, this and other summer climbers like *Virginian creeper*, *honeysuckle*, and *clematis* can be moved if young enough, and fresh stock planted in a good rich soil containing plenty of old manure.

Some perennials, especially *delphiniums* (*larkspurs*) are better divided now than in the autumn, and these are so handsome and grow so satisfactorily in London even in a northern aspect, that I think every garden ought to possess a few specimens. The same may be said of *Chinese peonies*, but the even harder English varieties ought to have been moved in the autumn to bloom this summer.

Michaelmas daisies and perennial *sunflowers* are all the better for annual division at this season, and all these require a good heavily-manured soil.

Lilies-of-the-valley, when once started, almost run riot in most suburban gardens; but the common idea of their preferring shade is a little wrong. They will grow in a shady position certainly, but will flower better and earlier in one where the sun shines on them for an hour or two during the day. Neither is it wise to leave a bed altogether to shift for itself, as is the usual custom among amateurs. Where the roots are too thick the flowers will be few and small, and now is the time to thin them out to about three inches apart, and make new beds with the surplus crowns. They also want a good soil and any amount of old hotbed manure and rotten leaves, which, however, ought to have been applied to old beds in the autumn.

Directly the soil of the lawn becomes crumbly, grass seed should be sown in all bare patches and some good earth sifted over it.

Sowing seeds in the open ground is, generally speaking, April work; but in a mild season there is no reason why it should not be done a week or so earlier.

Poppies are among the most showy annuals, and are certainly no trouble to grow. They

like a sunny situation best, and should be sown very sparsely, as they will have to be thinned out considerably when the plants are large enough to handle, and none of the kinds bear transplanting. The *Shirley* and *French* varieties are short enough for the middle of a border, but other sorts should be sown at the back, or they will smother smaller plants.

Annual *sunflowers* also like plenty of sun, as their legend attests; and if planted on the southern border will probably turn all their faces into our neighbour's garden. However, they may be sown in any convenient place, and transplanted when the second leaves appear. In spite of their being somewhat vulgarised a few years ago, they are extremely handsome, and have a good effect treated as a hedge, or screen for a wall in alternation with *dahlias*.

When sweet peas are raised out of doors, it should be in trenches previously filled with well-rotted manure; but they will only really flourish where the light and air can get nearly all round them, and are seen at their best when all the colours mixed make a sort of screen across a garden or flower-bed.

Nasturtiums and *canariensis* will do either in partial shade or bright sun, and are extremely obliging in liking a poorer soil than most annuals. The climbing sort should only be put where they can climb, otherwise they will completely run over their less athletic neighbours. The dwarfs are useful for a low border or patch, and either kind can be moved with perfect safety. The same remarks apply to *convulvi*, but they appreciate slightly richer food.

Malope grandiflora is easy to grow, and may be sown in thin patches between the groups of poppies, or on a shady border, alternately with other tall annuals or perennials. The white are the prettier, but they do not come true to seed.

Coreopsis and *cornflowers* should be sown in patches, and thinned out later.

Nemophila, *candytuft*, and *Virginian stock* must be sown where they are to bloom in rows or patches near the front of a bed, and the last-named is about the only thing which succeeds in my own too thickly-shaded forecourt.

Window-boxes, rooms, and greenhouses ought to be very gay now with bulbs in bloom, the former requiring little attention beyond watering occasionally in the middle of the day; and where the blossoms are heavy and the stalks weak, as *hyacinths* often are, they should be tied to stakes. Care must be taken, however, while driving these in far enough to bear up the flowers in a strong wind, to avoid piercing the bulbs with the pointed ends.

All pot bulbs that have done blooming should be planted out directly the earth is soft enough, in any corner where they will receive plenty of sun to ripen them.

In the greenhouse *camellias*, *azaleas*, and *arums* ought to be showing good-sized buds, and want liquid manure applied more frequently.

The principal glory of my garden (and many others in this neighbourhood) now is the almond tree, which seems absolutely to thrive on smoke and fog. *Crocuses* and *snowdrops* are still good, although the increasing heat will soon make them fade; but their loss is less noticed when the delicate spring tint comes over all the trees and shrubs—the first to be fully clothed being a black poplar, which is vividly green when the almond tree is pink; and the latest, the mulberry on the lawn, which will look brown and bare for a month or two yet, but which in the summer is, with its prolific fruit and graceful shape, an ornament of which we are justly proud.





AMATEUR GARDENING FOR TOWN GIRLS.

APRIL.

THE work this month is nearly the same as last; indeed, much which I described then can only be begun now if the winter has been long and hard.

The planting of herbaceous plants for summer and autumn flowering, such as peonies, perennial sunflowers, michaelmas daisies, and Japanese anemones ought to be finished off without delay. And this is really the best time to put in *lilium auratum* and lancifolium, both of which are excellent bloomers in our suburbs, although the former usually wear themselves out after a year or two. The lancifolium red and white last much longer and are the latest to bloom, sometimes surviving the dahlias, and therefore showy when other flowers are getting scarce. Both like a sunny spot and good soil, and should be placed in a hole well filled with sand, and sprinkled with soot.

Beds of carnations should now be made, and old ones attended to. They must have the warmest possible aspect, and a good well-drained soil, which may be mixed with a little brick rubbish if this can be obtained. Just at this time I always dig into the beds a good quantity of soot, or still better wood-ashes, which not only acts as a wholesale stimulant to the plants, but keeps the wire worm and the grub at a distance. Old plants must be carefully gone over and all dead or dying wood removed, the roots being well-covered where they have kicked. They are such strong bloomers in any not too shady garden that I should recommend all my readers who have none already to buy a collection from one of the large growers, and will just mention a few sorts which in my experience have given best results:—The Old Red Clove, the king of carnations both for size, colour, and scent; Germania, a large pure yellow; Pride of Penhurst, a smaller yellow and more hardy; Blush Clove, a large pink; Miss Jolliffe, a rather paler pink; Mary Morris, a large rose colour; Dorothy, buff colour edged and flaked with red, the strongest growing and most profuse blooming of any I have ever seen; Mrs. Reynolds Hole, apricot; Daisy, white suffused with pink, crimson markings; Redbraes, scarlet flaked with white; Alice Ayres, white with red markings; Morning Glory, scarlet; Salisbury, pure white; Mrs. Sinkin, large white, which is really a pink, and blooms nearly a month earlier than any other.

I have not in this list distinguished between a carnation and a picotee, but I believe that to those with different coloured edges, the latter name properly applies.

The very lovely *Malmaison* I have not yet succeeded in growing at all.

Where there is plenty of space small beds might be filled with one kind each; but where only one place can be spared it would

be as well to get a mixed collection, and only take care to keep Mrs. R. Hole as far as possible away from the scarlets and pinks, making the dark cloves, yellows and whites act as peacemakers among the rest. Very good sorts can be bought at about seven shillings the dozen.

Carnations are generally propagated by means of layers or cuttings, but of course all new kinds are obtained from sowing seeds; and although a large proportion of the young plants may prove singles or of ugly colouring, there is no reason why a few should not fully repay the trouble, and they are always extremely hardy. The seed should be sown now thinly in pans or pots of light sandy soil in a greenhouse, hot-bed, or even cold frame, and at the end of the month should be pricked out into boxes and moved to a cooler position to harden. If the earth has previously been thoroughly saturated as I have before described, very little watering will be wanted afterwards.

The cuttings may be struck almost at any time, but now is the best; and, if we take them from our own plants, the smaller side shoots are those to select. I generally layer my own plants in the summer, and beg cuttings from any friend who has good sorts which I do not already possess. The stalks should be cut straight through immediately below a joint, the lowest pair of leaves cut off and all others topped, then a cross of slits made with a sharp knife on the stalk section. Pans or pots having been filled with any well-drained earth, holes should be made with a stick, then filled up with sand and the cuttings inserted in the latter. In a room or out-of-doors they should be covered with a bell-glass, but that is unnecessary in a frame or heated greenhouse. Following this plan, I usually succeed with five out of six.

Wireworm is a terrible enemy to carnations, although for some reason or other mine have never been attacked by it; and the remedy advised by the best authorities is to put small pieces of potato in the ground near the plants, marking the spot with a stick; the worms will come to these traps, and can be easily caught in the morning.

The hardy seedlings which were raised in March in the greenhouse (not nicotiana, French marigolds, zinnias, or stocks), can be planted out this month, having previously been hardened for a week or so in a cold frame, some of them being given at once their final destinations, others merely pricked out an inch or so apart to wait until they can take the place of the bulbs now in the ground.

The stocks and other half-hardy annuals may succeed them in the cold frame.

Nicotiana, zinnias and the others can now be sown in the open ground, and a place should be prepared for them by forking up a

patch on a warm border, the earth having been well broken up, all stones removed, the bed raked perfectly smooth and watered copiously. The seed must be sown thinly in drills, lightly covered with sandy mould, and then for a day or two shaded by large leaves held down by stones placed between the drills; when the seeds have germinated these may be removed, and the seedlings will need occasional watering in dry weather.

I do not consider Chinese primulas easy for amateurs to manage who have only one greenhouse; still I have brought them up to blooming more or less feebly, and perhaps by more strictly following the directions on the packet I might have done better. Anyhow this is the time to sow, and they are certainly most valuable room plants for the winter. Good seed is always expensive, but it is useless to try with any other. The hardy varieties, *Primula obconica*, *P. japonica*, and *P. sieboldii*, all very easy to rear, will thrive even in the smokiest gardens, and in a perfectly unheated greenhouse.

Sweet williams, foxgloves and columbines must be sown now in boxes in a cold frame or the open ground, if they are to bloom at all next year; and at the end of the month mignonette in the place where it is to remain; but as it is a very greedy feeder it must not be put near less succulent plants like roses, for instance, whom it would rob of their necessary nutriment. To poppies or nasturtiums there would be no danger of this sort; nor, I think, to carnations, but the best place for it is in the front of shrubs where, perhaps, more fastidious plants would fail. Here, however, it should receive a little manure as soon as there is any indication of flower heads.

The hotbeds made up in January will have lost a considerable amount of heat, so that if they are wanted for growing cucumbers or mushrooms, they ought to be renewed now by taking out about half of the old manure, and filling up with fresh in the manner I then described; and this ought to be done before sowing primula and other seeds which require bottom heat, unless the propagator be used for them. I have done very well with cucumbers, putting the young plants into a hotbed as soon as the heat had subsided a little, watering pretty frequently, and opening the frame at the top during warm days, keeping it closely shut at night and during frost, when of course less moisture was wanted.

The spent manure will be valuable for mulching roses, fruit trees, and auricula, carnation, and pansy beds; or may be stored for future use.

I must confess to utter failure in my attempts at mushroom culture, although I have twice bought the spawn from trustworthy people; but as on both occasions I had to confide its putting in to my friend the jobbing gardener,

I can only imagine that it somehow found its way into another place than my carefully prepared hotbed.

Some camellias and azaleas which have finished blooming will require repotting, and the operation demands a good deal of care. A great difference in the size of the shifts will probably prevent bloom next year. Therefore select a pot only just large enough to contain the present one, place a number of crocks at the bottom, and cover them with a piece of damp moss sprinkled with soot, then take up the plant which has been previously well-watered, with the earth round it undisturbed, except by removing the old drainage, place it carefully on the moss, and while holding it upright fill up the space at the side of the pot with a mixture of two-thirds pure peat, pulled to pieces by the hand, and one-third silver sand. This must be rammed tightly down with a stick, and about an inch space left clear at the top of the pot to allow for watering. Whether repotted or not, all hardwooded plants after blooming must have their faded blossoms removed before they have time to form seeds, and should be kept very warm and damp, as this is the time when they make new growth for next year. Pot plants seldom require pruning, but all dead wood must be cut out.

Dahlias which were "started" a little while ago should now have shoots long enough to make into cuttings, and these being taken off the tubers will strike very easily in a hotbed or propagator.

Gladioli do very well with me, and should be planted now three or four inches deep, and well covered with sand in a fairly good soil with a warm aspect.

All bulbs going over must have their dead flowers removed at once, but their leaves must on no account be touched until they have ripened and died off naturally, or they are unable to convey to the storehouse of the bulb the materials for next year's blooms.

With the hyacinths and tulips coming into bloom, although their natural grace is somewhat impaired by staking, yet high winds make this operation generally necessary if they are inclined to grow tall; while, where cats abound, it is indispensable, as these animals, whether our own pets or nuisances belonging to other people, have a fancy for lying and rolling on flower-beds, which is fatal to all unsupported plants with such brittle stalks. For the same reason lilies need tying up loosely to strong sticks, care being taken that the bulb is not pierced, nor the raffia (the best thing for tying) tight enough to retard future growth.

It is best to first make a loop round the stick, and then another round the plant, which should be secured with a fast knot. Of course the patent flower supports save all this trouble, but naturally they are more expensive. With all these precautions last year I had the blossoms broken off nearly two dozen parrot and double tulips, the delinquent being, I regret to say, my own kitten, and when the mischief was done I put wire netting round that particular bed, which at any rate saved the carnations and ivy geraniums later on; as although he could leap over it, he did not care for that trouble. This wire-netting is also a good protection from bowls or croquet balls, and costs only about four shillings for fifty yards at Whiteley's, the proper stakes being four shillings and sixpence per dozen. Like all other plants when coming into bloom, bulbs will be grateful for a little liquid manure once a week.

In gardens where roses will grow they should now be pruned, which is done by cutting the young wood back to two or three eyes and getting rid of very weakly shoots altogether. They want an enormous amount of food, and small heaps of half-spent manure should be laid round the roots. Tea roses may wait till the end of the month for this operation.



Spring-sown pansies and Iceland poppies can now be planted out, but they will not bloom till late in the summer.

Calceolarias, which were struck and wintered in a frame, should be hardened off by leaving the glass open all day, and by the end of the month at night also; if they have grown tall or show buds, their middle shoots should be nipped off.

Lawns will be the better for rolling every fine mild day, although where crocuses are planted as mine are, in the grass, it cannot be done until they have finished blooming. Should there be a spell of dry weather, the garden hose may be freely used, unless the nights are very frosty.

There should be no lack of colour in any garden now; the crocuses with their perfect chord of gold and purple and white brought out either in devices on the brown earth, or, more brightly still, from the green background of a lawn; the snowdrops, aconites, and scillas, striking a different tone, will hardly have died away before the hyacinths yield us their wonderful variety, from which, however, the pure shades of blue, scarlet, and orange are absent. Then come on the golden daffodils and various kinds of narcissi, which really last right through next month, while the wallflowers, forget-me-nots, and pansies begin a display in which, besides bulbs, the greatest strength of spring bedding lies. More modest blooms, whose beauty must be sought for rather than seen from a distance, but whose daily opening makes a walk round the garden extremely interesting just now, are the primrose, and her more sophisticated cousins, the auricula and polyanthus. For one's own enjoyment nearly all their shades, through yellow, brown, and purple are beautiful; but to impress other people, who will gaze at them no more closely than from the windows, the orange and yellow tones are more effective.

The almond now gives place, in an early season, to the lilacs, purple and white; but very often they are not fully out till May. In the view from my windows now, however, over my neighbours' gardens, the show of fruit blossoms rivals that of many a country orchard. And the snowy masses of pear and cherry, then the blushing prettiness of the apple, make me sometimes long for them in my garden. Most of these gardens and the trees in them are very old, and one especially which I know well is ideally lovely in early spring; it is laid down entirely in grass, except for a straight path all round about six feet from the wall, which path is shaded by quaintly-grown and twisted fruit trees on either side. Some elms at the bottom shut off the view of the neighbouring mews, a vine climbs up the back of the house, and in the summer the only pieces of bright colour are those of some bought pots of geraniums placed on little rustic stands on the centre lawn. A very easy garden to manage, as the trees only need pruning and feeding in the autumn, and the lawn to be rolled and mown during the summer; and beautiful to look

upon at a time when we enjoy a garden most from the windows of our comfortable sitting-rooms—cool and shady in hot weather. But then, alas! that latter is a condition of things we seldom get too much of; the fruit trees, unfortunately, are peculiarly liable to various loathsome sorts of blight, which turn their beauty into hideousness and destroy the fruit, while the essential charm of a flower-garden is entirely absent. That cannot co-exist with an orchard, and my neighbours do well to content themselves with the latter, although something might be gained by planting early flowering bulbs like the crocus in thick masses on the grass.

On the other hand, one or two small fruit trees are delightful in every flower garden which has sufficient space for them.

CONSTANCE JACOB.

had turned out to be distant relatives of her own, and had given her the best of characters, and she had, therefore, no hesitation in giving her all the help in her power in finding a good home in the new country, her happiness was complete.

The day of departure arrived, and the young traveller set out for Liverpool. She was to sleep under the kindly roof of Blackburne House, which has sheltered so many women of all classes under all circumstances. One such traveller will never herself forget the pleasant, safe, restful feeling she experienced during her stay there previous to her departure from Liverpool, nor the kindly bevy of friends and well-wishers who came to see her off at such, to her, an eventful moment.

At three in the afternoon the sister-in-law of Mrs. Maynard, who was bound for Quebec, called for Nelly at Blackburne House, and they found themselves and their luggage on board the tender about half an hour afterwards. It was drizzling slightly, and they were glad to get on board the larger vessel and find the cabin which they were to share together.

A thick fog came on later in the evening, and this gave them the opportunity of getting out all they would require on the voyage, which they had each previously packed in small flat tin boxes of regulation size. A bag, with pockets in it, was attached to the curtain-ropes, and this contained brush and comb, slippers, hairpins, and all those knick-knacks which are disposed to slip about and hide themselves during the rolling of the ship, and the disappearance of which, at critical moments, often causes great discomfort. Miss Maynard had also brought a box of fresh biscuits with her, and a bottle of strong essence of coffee, home-made and strongly corked, as both this beverage and tea are apt to be anything but palatable when made in large quantities at sea. One lady on board, an American, and a confirmed tea-drinker, had

brought a bottle of cream with her which she induced the steward to keep in ice, and which she said afterwards had lasted her during the greater part of the voyage.

The fog lifted later in the evening, and they were soon under weigh; the night was rough, but the next morning both the ladies were able to crawl on deck, and occupy the steamer folding chairs they had brought with them, though they did not care much for the abundant meals presented to them for a day or two. The Sunday was a beautiful calm morning, and all much enjoyed the service held in the saloon, from which there were very few absentees; in the evening a number of the passengers met to sing hymns there.

A soft warmth which made itself felt one day showed that the good ship was now "off the banks," and then followed the first whiff of "Canadian cold." It was the month of April, and though she thoroughly enjoyed it all, Nelly felt that she needed then every warm garment she had. There was too much ice yet in the St. Lawrence river to make it possible for them to go up, so they would have to land at Halifax in Nova Scotia, where they would take the train. When the harbour came in sight everyone crowded on deck. To the new arrivals it was a wonderful moment when they first gazed on the shore of the new world; to those returning to their homes it was delightful too. When the vast piles of luggage were unearthed from the hold, in what seemed to the lookers-on an incredibly short time, the sight on the wharf was one to remember, and what was more surprising still, was the celerity with which it found its way to its owners.

Nelly and her friend were much interested in watching the different groups of their fellow-passengers as they landed; there were two bright girls under twenty going out to keep house for a brother in a distant prairie home; they had never left their own country before, but did not seem in the least daunted by the

prospect before them. Then there was the young nephew of a well-known canon in the English church going out to his cousin who was engaged in horse-ranching on the prairie too. Husbands and wives who had been on a visit to friends or relatives in the old country were numerous enough, some bound for homes on the northern coast which seemed very remote indeed; French-speaking inhabitants of Quebec who had passed the winter on the sunny Riviera, and who spoke somewhat regretfully of the ice and snow in store for them, in some six months or so in the coming year in their own country. Then from the intermediate or second-class deck emerged a band of two hundred little girls under the charge of a matron, and accompanied by a lady who had made this branch of philanthropy her life-work. These were bound for a home in Ontario province, where they would be housed for awhile, the elder ones being quickly drafted off into other homes where their services, if hearty and willing, were gladly accepted. Sometimes families adopt these little orphans if they prove themselves well-conducted, and a little waif and stray from some crowded alley in a great town with no one to care for her, becomes the daughter of the house, and learns in after years how to repay the kindly care of her foster-parents by cheering their old age, or else she may perhaps pass on to a respectable home of her own when old enough to take these duties upon her. Those who emigrate with the desire of doing their duty rarely fail in finding a happy lot in Canada, whether it be a married or a single one, though, of course, trials come in all states of life. If, however, we try to bear these cheerfully, remembering by whom they are sent, we know that the back will be fitted to the burden, and a fresh, bright healthy climate makes the little worries, which often magnify themselves unduly at home, seem but trifles light as air.

(To be continued.)

AMATEUR GARDENING FOR TOWN GIRLS.

MAY.

By CONSTANCE JACOB.



By the end of this month bedding out summer blooming plants ought to have well begun, the beginning must be mainly occupied with preparations for that work. Any empty beds or spaces on borders should be well forked up, and raked smoothly over, all dead plants got rid of, and a general survey made of one's resources, together with a careful plan of the ground to be filled. In small gardens the bulbs are now occupying places intended for geraniums, etc., later on; but as I said in April, they must not be removed, although many, like the hyacinths, will have finished blooming until the leaves turn yellow at the tips. When this has taken place, crocus leaves may be tied in knots, and left for some little time longer; those of the hyacinths and tulips

may be cut off. All bulbs increase well if left in the ground throughout the summer, but in small London gardens this course is not generally advisable, as they are likely to be cut up in future diggings, or overcrowded by the roots of the summer occupants of the beds, so it is better to take them up when the leaves have really begun to wither, and lay them for a month or so on a sunny shelf in the greenhouse. As crocuses are in my flower-beds used only as borders, and their locality therefore is easy to remember I leave them in until the autumn, and when I cut off the leaves, plant between the clump some small borderers like golden feather, or lobelia. The former is a showy edging for almost any position; lobelia, I find, wants a sunny aspect, and is only telling where the colour is well lighted up. The dwarf kind grown in cushions is the best, and even this will run to leaf on a moist, heavy soil. Both can be put out directly the weather becomes warm. So can stocks, zinnias, French marigolds, and calceolarias, which have been properly hardened: indeed, the last-named ought to be in the ground before the frost has quite gone, although in our delightful climate there is always a chance of continuing right on through June. Stocks like a sunny border, and always show to advantage under a north wall, while a good arrangement is to let them succeed tulips in a bed which has been previously planted in with

autumn-sown Iceland poppies, the latter will be out before the tulips are over, and thus a continuous show of bloom is ensured. My tulips this year were planted among carnations and will be succeeded by ivy-leaved geraniums.

Calceolarias, on the other hand, like a more shady situation with plenty of moisture, so are useful to mix in with pansies.

Nicotiana, which may now be planted out, is a thing which does very well on the shady side of the garden where the fragrant star-like blossoms will be open for longer during the day, as they always close tightly up in direct sunshine.

Foxgloves, which bloom freely in shrubberies and look extremely picturesque in front of trees or bushes, whether self-sown or raised in patches should now, at latest, be transplanted into their flowering-places.

Calliopsis, or coreopsis (as it is variously spelt), and phlox drummondii should also be planted, and make very good bedders, if the middle shoots be nipped out and the side ones pegged down with hairpins. The coreopsis can also be allowed to grow tall and tied to stakes at the back of lower growing things.

Geraniums and marguerites may be stood out on the garden paths for a week or two before being planted at the end of the month; but it is still too early for fuchsias and begonias to dispense with some shelter at night.

Marguerites are very popular London plants

but, as bedders, I do not think they are particularly successful. The white are useful for window boxes, and if the old flowers are carefully removed, they will last in bloom for some months, but the yellow are much more delicate.

Both can be easily propagated by cuttings which may now be struck; strong shoots without buds being taken if possible to the length of three or four inches, five or six being put round the edge of a pot of sandy soil, either placed in gentle bottom heat, or stood in a warm shady part of the greenhouse.

Poppies, cornflowers, and other annuals, sown in the open ground last month will now want thinning out, and the process must not be delayed if handsome free-blooming plants be desired. Neither of the two mentioned bear transplanting very well, but the seed is so plentiful that if they were sown thinly as advised, it is not worth troubling about the superfluity. The large grey-leaved peony-flowered poppies ought to have at least a foot space between them, the smaller shirleys and other annuals of about their size, six inches; so the strongest plants of a patch should be selected, and all others within that radius ruthlessly cleared away. The only year that I neglected to do this I was ashamed of the small blossoms on the poppies, whose beauty is generally a great feature of my north border.

Zinnias like the same sort of treatment as stocks. French marigolds will do with a less heavy soil, and as good kinds grow very luxuriantly, they should be set well behind smaller plants.

Arums ought now to have finished flowering, and must be nursed up for next year's growth. After following two or three different plans advised in the past, by as many gardeners, I have found the best results come from planting them out at this season in a border facing north-east, heaping some good well-decayed manure round the roots, and giving a constant supply of water during dry weather. This enables them to store up a larger amount of nourishment than they could do if left in the pots during the summer.

Spiræas and deutzias answer well to the same treatment.

Carnations should now have a little liquid or blood manure given regularly once a week until they have done blooming, which will ensure large blossoms without the need of thinning, and the same should be given to larkspurs, peonies, and, indeed, any herbaceous plants or biennials showing bud.

My carnations are now throwing up good flower-spikes, which will need the support of stakes, one to each stalk. These numerous flower-stakes do not exactly add to the beauty of a garden; but then half the charm of these flowers is lost if their heavy heads hang down to get splashed and dragged on the ground. So the only thing is to let the contrivance be as inconspicuous as possible, putting in a few short ones at first then some longer and more frequent as they are required.

If any carnation seeds were sown in April, they ought to have from four to six leaves now, and should be pricked out about six inches apart in a sunny situation, the soil having been previously forked over, raked, and mixed with some rough sand; here they may be left until they bloom next year, and then all the inferior sorts can be weeded out.

I have seen the system of tying up carried to a comical extreme in the case of some pansies, which were tied so tightly by the necks that they looked strangled.

Chrysanthemums ought now to be shifted into their blooming-pots, which should not be less than eight inches diameter, the compost as before. They should be tied to good strong stakes with loops of raffia which will allow for growth, and stood out either on a bed of ashes or on the gravel path in a sunny position. Every morning when it does not rain the leaves must be well syringed, and every evening sufficient water given to fill the space left at the top of the pot, not less than an inch down from the brim. This removal ought to take place directly the frost has gone, as, if left too long in a close atmosphere they will get irrecoverably weak and spindly.

Lawns must now be cut regularly once a week, and the first time a scythe will be wanted. This implement of course very few girls could manage, but with a small mowing machine in good condition, one ought to be able to keep the grass in nice order for the rest of the summer. A pair of shears is needed for banks and edges; but these are not so hard to handle, after a little practice, as a beginner might imagine. Nothing gives a garden a greater air of refinement than a closely-clipped, well-kept lawn, however small.

All the accumulation of rubbish, not leaves, which has been cleared off the beds should be burnt in a convenient spot before the planting out is proceeded with, and in common charity I think a cold day should be chosen when none of our neighbours are likely to be sitting out of doors, and also when the wind is in such a direction that the smoke will blow into the least possible number of windows. The ashes preserved and added to the oldest heap of leaf mould greatly increases its value, or, kept separate, they may be mixed as required with the soil of plants which need a little extra nourishment.

Decaying grass makes a very unpleasant smell, but it is invaluable material for mixing in a hot-bed in course of formation. When the first heavy crop is off, and the grass is seeding, it may be strewn over the lawn with advantage, and afterwards the amount taken off a small plot will not be any great annoyance, and may be buried in the heap of manure and leaf mould, or spread out thinly behind shrubs.

Window-boxes, arranged in the way I advised in the autumn, ought now to be gay with wallflowers, tulips, and daffodils. Other bulbs which have finished blooming should be planted in the ground to ripen, if there be a garden, although the crocus grass makes rather a pretty edging hanging over the front. When their present inhabitants fade, the boxes will need refilling altogether, and this opportunity ought to be taken of doing any necessary repairs, painting, etc. Where there is no garden or greenhouse for rearing the needful stock the double set of boxes which I have before advised is the most economical system. Now, for instance, while the one set is doing duty, so to speak, the other would be in a light cool room, where there is no gas regularly burnt, and set with young plants coming on for succession.

In such a room a considerable amount of nursery gardening might be done if one had a large tray made, and fitted with a wooden rack on which to stand the boxes and pots containing hardy seedlings, such cuttings as geraniums, fuchsias, and double nasturtiums, tuberous begonias, and nearly any other bulbs, carnations, polyanthus, and auriculas.

In the winter all water standing in the tray would have to be drawn off before night, and

the plants covered closely up with a low tent made of newspapers sewn together; indeed, their treatment would be exactly the same as if in a cold frame or unheated greenhouse, and it would be easy at all times to rear in either place *enough flowers for filling* our outside window-boxes.

On warm dry mornings the syringe should be directed to the greenhouse roof inside, so that the body of water breaks up into fine spray, and so fills the air with moisture. The floor should also be sprinkled; but the actual watering of plants had better be left till evening. This is now the best time of day for all outdoor gardening, unless one be energetic enough to get up early and do a few hours' work before the sun is on the garden; and although, of course, it is rather a nuisance to do hard labour in one's dinner dress, the plants thrive much better if transplanted after the sun has lost its power, and the gardener herself runs less risk of sunstroke, from which I have more than once suffered during the bedding-out season. Large shady hats are now required; but as these are apt to be blown about by every wind, and catch in the shrubs and tall trees, I personally prefer a handkerchief folded in half diagonally and tied in a knot on the forehead, so that two corners hang down and protect the neck.

My little fernery or rockwork-garden is at this time looking its best; the unrolling fronds all show that lovely fresh green tint which they lose next month, *and they are not yet* large enough to hide the wild flowers, bluebells, garlic, and arums blooming among them. The first of these came of their own accord, having probably been attached to the roots of some ferns brought from Scotland or Devonshire, but seeing how well they thrive, I have tended them, and added to their number. There are also violet roots here, but they never show any flowers, although oddly enough I have found seed vessels underground. A white nettle is only too luxuriant, and requires yearly thinning; but it is too pretty to get rid of altogether. A giant hemlock also, which came up last year, self-sown, has spread so tremendously that it has to be at once reduced to the one original rhubarb-like shoot.

I sometimes think May is the prettiest month in the year in our suburban gardens. The lilacs, laburnums, chestnuts, may, and acacia trees succeed each other in masses of soft colouring. The beds are still gay with wallflowers, pansies, jonquils, and narcissi, when come with a rush the blaze of tulips, the stately form and regal colouring of the purple iris, the delicate lilies of the valley; and before these essentially spring flowers have faded, the mid-summer is heralded by turk's cap lilies, red peonies, and lupins, blue, pink, and white. All these, except wallflowers, are grateful for a little weak liquid manure occasionally till their blooming-time is over; and all without exception should have dead flowers removed immediately. With perennials seed-bearing takes away too much of the plant's energy to make it worth one's while to save it from one's own plant, except in the case of wallflowers, which are best sown fresh every year, and so one or two plants whose colours are liked may be left unchecked, the rest being pulled up and thrown away directly they fade.

Sometimes, too, one's friends ask for seeds of things which they happen to admire, and it would be ungracious not to save them some, not to mention the pleasant pride which the genuine gardener always feel in assisting her fellow-amateurs.



depend on my own industry and determination to win the place in public esteem that would ensure my future success.

My heart rose high with hope for the golden days to come, and with gratitude to Mrs. Arbuthnot. I went home and penned a long letter of thanks to her, my dear fairy godmother.

I may as well confess that she became a very ordinary and nineteenth century kind of godmother in my estimation, after my first business interview with Signor Ortelli.

"I will send you on a cheque, and as Mrs. Arbuthnot prefers always that I settle all her business matters, I will deduct the amount of her commission."

"Her commission? Mrs. Arbuthnot?" I asked in great bewilderment.

"Why, but certainly, Mademoiselle Ida. It has to be paid, and it is pleasanter for you two ladies that I arrange all business and money transactions. As a rule, the money

would be paid to Mrs. Arbuthnot, and if you prefer it—"

"Oh, no, no," I exclaimed, eagerly, "please arrange it all for me. I ask pardon for my hesitation, but I thought—I believed—"

I stopped in hopeless confusion.

"Ah, I see," said the signor, smiling, "you do not know that, like many others, Mrs. Arbuthnot, though quite a lady, the poor relation of a noble family, increases her small income by transacting various little matters for her friends—concerts, dinner-parties, introductions, etc. Having found a charming new singer, in whose advent we all rejoice—here he made me a profound bow—"she asks for a commission on your first year's engagement. Well, what would you? It is very moderate; many agents ask for it for three years."

I hastened to explain that I did not at all object to paying the money, even had it been thrice the sum mentioned. Nor did I, but it was a shock to find that instead of a great

lady who had been charmed by my singing into taking me as her *protégé*, Mrs. Arbuthnot was a poor and needy aristocrat, whose "dear" and "most intimate" friends were in reality her employers.

However, I soon became reconciled to the idea, the more readily as I reflected that it was really far more honourable in a lady of fallen fortunes to act as agent for her friends and visiting circle than to be dependent on them or relatives for her means of livelihood.

My name is known now, and the fame and fortune that once seemed so far off will, in good time I trust, become a happy reality.

I still teach Mrs. Gorrings's daughters, and I always sing, if possible, for friendship's sake only at the Croydon "At Homes" and parties. I should be most ungrateful ever to forget that it was on "that old barge" as Mrs. Arbuthnot rudely called the big city state-boat, that I made my first appearance as a professional singer.

AMATEUR GARDENING FOR TOWN GIRLS.

JUNE.

By CONSTANCE JACOB.



unassisted, my designs would not be complete until most of my family and acquaintances were out of town, and one naturally desires the best results of one's labour to be appreciated as widely as possible. Here, however, follow notes of some mixtures which were particularly admirable in the summer of 1892, which may yield fruitful suggestions to some of my readers this year.

Some well-grown dracenas, surrounded by scarlet begonias, and these edged with the white lobelia called snowflake.

Grey-blue campanulas with yellow calceolaries.

White summer chrysanthemums alternated with liliun lancifolium rubrum; such a group should be bordered with some earlier blooming

shades, but especially the green and golden, were extremely lovely, but a good deal of heat would be needed to bring them into bloom soon enough.

One of the best features of the very latest development of the bedding-out system, is the universal carpeting with low growing things, or with such as can be pegged down, of beds where a mixture of tall herbaceous or bulbous plants are thinly set. Another is the more frequent use of neutral tints, such as grey, to mix with the brighter shades of pink, red, or yellow; and still another is the large number of old handsome specimens of fuchsias, geraniums, and heliotropes, now preserved and used either singly in the grass or in large beds. A few years ago the old plants were all thrown away at the end of the season, only the cuttings retained, the aim being to get several hundreds next year, all of exactly the same size for the everlasting "ribbon border;" while now some of the best effects are obtained from using the old roots; and in Regent's Park especially, the beds of big fuchsias in 1892 were particularly grand.

In the same place masses of German scabious in all colours, salpiglossis, and of the pink carnation, Raby Castle, were beautiful right on to September.

The decoration of window-boxes requires much the same treatment as bedding out, with the difference that, instead of close-growing borderers, there should be climbers like tropeolum, canariensis, or ivy-leaved geranium, to hang down over the front of the box. The same creepers planted at each end of the box, may be arched by means of wire, or flexible cane from end to end, provided that such a screen be not objected to by the inhabitants of the room. Some of the prettiest combinations I remember have been composed of flowers of one colour and abundant foliage; among others the following:—

Palms, white marguerites, white campanula, and mignonette; yellow calceolarias, double yellow nasturtiums, creeping jenny, and brown coleus; yellow marguerites, or calceolarias, and musk mimulus with mignonette (this for a shady aspect). Geranium, Happy Thought (white and green leaf; it should not be allowed to bloom), pink ivy geranium, and red coleus.

Among other mixtures yellow and white marguerites; any yellow flowers with purple; dark-red geraniums with white or very pale pink; salmon colour with greyish mauve;

BEDDING-OUT operations should now be finished as quickly as possible if the weather be at all genial; and by bedding out is not necessarily meant the formation of stiff "ribbon borders" of the crudest tones of scarlet, pink, yellow and blue, and of "carpet beds," which used to be the only signification of the term. At this date I need hardly express my personal abhorrence of such a system of gardening, and my preference for mixed herbaceous beds and borders; but even among these one may with advantage mingle patches of more delicate annuals and perennials; and, as I suggested last month, when the bulbs die off, their places must be filled up by ready grown plants.

In the London parks of late years, considerable taste and variety have been shown in the arrangement of the flower-beds, and any amateur will do well to spend a morning or two in Hyde, Regent's, or one of the other large parks every summer, taking notes of the beds which most please her fancy. Such notes will be chiefly useful for future seasons, however, as I always find I have to start a little in advance of the professionals, or being

plant like the carnation, and once planted would be practically a permanent effect.

Tall specimens of heliotrope and nicotiana affinis rising from a bed of the carnation Alice Ayres, which is white flaked with crimson.

A mass of scarlet begonias edged doubly by a little golden-leaved fuchsia called Meteor and iresine walsii, but this last is difficult to grow without stove heat, and for its size rather costly to buy—about 1s. 3d. to 1s. 6d. per dozen.

A mixture of sweet peas trained to branching sticks with white abutilon, grounded by viola Blue King, and edged by golden feather.

Abutilons mixed with liliun longiflorum. A bed of the latter carpeted with pink-blossomed ivy-leaved geranium.

The brilliancy of tropeolum Scarlet King was enhanced by being alongside of an ordinary greyish purple petunia.

A novel effect was produced by interspersing among begonias young plants of the ordinary vegetable garden asparagus, whose feathery foliage brought into notice the less delicate beauty of its neighbours.

Entire beds of the feathery celosia of all

orange-coloured tropeolum with pale yellow and brown, are good: but scarlet with blue, yellow, or white, although only too usual, is always vulgar; while the mixtures one often sees of all these shades, with the addition of mauve and pink in one box, can only have the excuse of careless ignorance. Anyone who has been in Italy knows how graceful carnations look when allowed, as they are there, to hang down through the twisted iron grilles in front of windows; and there is no reason why a similar effect should not be obtained in London, by planting them in front of the window-boxes, to hang over, instead of being tied up to stakes, as is necessary in the garden; at the back of them begonias might be set, care being taken that their colours harmonise; and there would be the advantage in such an arrangement that both plants are ornamental, whether in or out of flower, while the begonias would blossom for a month or six weeks after the carnations were over.

Stone or stucco vases, tubs, or extra large flower-pots stood on a lawn, terrace, or wide stretch of gravel should always, I think, be planted formally, the best plan being to have one large standard, such as a geranium, fuchsia, heliotrope or marguerite; a foliage plant, such as a palm or aralia; a large climber such as a plumbago or clematis, or a group of annual climbers like sweet peas, nasturtiums, or canariensis, carefully trained round a circle of stakes, edging the arrangement with climbers of suitable tints such as ivy geraniums, creeping jenny, tradescantia or tropeolum, which when well-grown should nearly hide the pot. Should the centre standard be too small to reach to the edge, a row of low foliage plants like tricolour or other fancy geraniums could fill up the space.

When the boxes, beds, and vases are first filled the earth should have a good soaking, then water should be given very sparingly until the roots are well-established, when a little weak stimulant may be given once a week to all plants showing bloom.

Watering out of doors requires great judgment, and it is always better to give too little than too much. If one have a hose, it may be used with advantage every evening in dry weather, especially on the lawn; but to most plants in the ground, a fair quantity of water given once or twice a week to the roots will be sufficient, while a daily sprinkle from a rose is worse than useless. Pot plants, however, if they have proper drainage and are stood out of doors, need watering daily. And the pots should always be filled to the brim; moreover, most will be grateful for an additional syringe over the foliage. Indoors the moisture will not evaporate so quickly, and should only be given when the surface of the earth is too dry to stick to the fingers.

In hot dry weather the matutinal syringing of the greenhouse should never be omitted.

Fuchsias and begonias are the last things generally to be planted out; but they should all be in the ground before the end of the month, having stood in the open air in their pots to harden for a week or so first. If wanted for blooming in pots they had better now be shifted into larger, the compost used being fairly rich, and plenty of water and nourishment given directly the buds appear. The rule with pot plants is that they will not bloom profusely until the roots have filled all the space at their command, and then, the amount of earth being limited, they need extra feeding to support the strain of flower-bearing into which they are forced to throw all their energy.

Dahlias, which ought now to be showing good strong shoots, if they were started or struck as advised in March, may be planted out as soon as there seems no further danger of frost. I find they do almost equally well in partial shade or in full sunshine, so I utilise them for positions which sunflowers and late

blooming lilies do not like. In a heavy rich soil they are apt to run too much to leaf, and in this case it is well to cut off all the side shoots, leaving in the centre two or three stems which will then bear flowers more abundantly. Each stem should be tied to a very stout tall stake, inserted in the ground when the tubers are planted to avoid the risk of piercing them. Earwigs are their natural enemies; and the best trap for catching them is the unsightly one of a flower-pot containing a piece of moss, hung bottom upwards on the top of the stake. This must be examined, however, very early in the morning, if any of the creatures are to be caught.

Sunflower seedlings should now, if reared under protection be transplanted into borders or if sown out of doors the patches must be thinned, leaving at least two feet space between each plant, as they are strong feeders, and form immense bushes when well developed. The same remarks apply to hollyhocks, which, in backgrounds of borders are too seldom seen in London. As they are biennials, this is the best time to sow the seeds, sowing them thinly in drills in a shady part of the garden. They will thus make stronger plants than if raised in heat, but they must of course be protected when up from the attacks of slugs and snails, encircling lines of ashes or soot being their best defence.

Other things for next year's blooming which should be sown now in the same way, or in boxes in a shaded frame, are columbines and sweet sultans; but auriculas require a little gentle heat.

Young wallflowers will need pricking out into their blooming place according to usual custom; but according to mine, as perhaps more suited to the London climate, into a cold frame, from which, until come the frosts and fogs, the lights should be removed. In either case the roots want planting very deeply.

Canterbury bells and larkspur seedlings may be treated in either way; but they are harder than wallflowers and stand the winter pretty well without any protection.

Polyanthus seedlings should be pricked out into a cool position for the summer, not being planted where they are to bloom in the spring until the hottest weather is passed.

If the room can be spared it is well to keep a small part of the garden for nursery beds, but in any case when all our summer plants are in the ground there will probably be a few patches left vacant by the removal of wallflowers or other purely spring bloomers where the young stock may find a temporary home and be all the better for a little shading by its taller neighbours.

Should the earth seem poor, a little old manure might be with advantage dug into it before anything else is planted.

This is the best time to prune lilacs, when the bloom is quite over, and before they have wasted any strength in seed-bearing.

I nearly empty my greenhouse this month, and, following the example of the parks, use such of the palms, dracaenas, aralias, and india-rubbers as are not wanted for the decoration of the sitting-rooms, and a long loggia-like balcony outside the windows, in groups upon the broader paths, or planted out in the beds where backgrounds are required for bright, low-growing flowers.

This is a good opportunity for spring-cleaning, in which I always have the help of the housemaid, as such cleaning is a work which only women properly comprehend. A man's way is to shift the plants a little, skim lightly over the unoccupied shelves with a handbroom, swill the floor with water, broom it out, and the deed is done. Our way is to choose a fine day, take everything movable into the open air, well syringing and watering it there, and scrubbing most of the pots outside with a hard brush and soapy water; sweep down the roof,

wall, and shelves, then syringe the former. During this operation I am always astonished at the number of spiders' webs which are dislodged, but am the less troubled at the fact, because, being carnivorous creatures, they probably do more good than harm; still, their presence argues that of a large amount of other insect life mostly baneful. Next the shelves must be scrubbed with warm water and carbolic soap, swilled down with clean cold water, and then rubbed nearly dry with old dusters. After this the plants, which are coming back, can be put into their places; the floor must be swilled down, and, if of tiles, may be scrubbed with soap and water.

After some of the best ferns have been selected to make a group in the drawing-room, together with two or three large-leaved begonias, the rest of mine are replaced at the shadiest end of the building; agapanthi, cacti, and oleanders coming into flower are placed conspicuously in the middle of the house, so that they can be easily syringed and fed, and, as soon as the buds show colour, are transferred to wherever their bloom will be most appreciated.

A plumbago I take on to the balcony mentioned above, and tie the shoots to the railing, matching it by a clematis jackmanni in a pot, which has been wintered in a cold frame. Neither of these will show much bloom before August, but some pots of climbing nasturtium in between supply colour meanwhile. At each of the boarded-in ends of the balcony, and therefore out of all draughts, I make a handsome group, consisting of orange plants, agapanthi, palms, large double red geraniums, small dracaenas, and, in the shady background, musk, for sweetness sake, exchanging some of these later on for other things in bloom. The agapanthi do not flower every year; but when they do, are well out for six weeks or two months, and need to stand all the while in saucers of daily-renewed water.

Before the balcony-ends were closed in I could keep nothing here on account of the draught, but now anything flourishes well, except ferns, for which the aspect is too sunny.

An old aloe in a big pot is brought out to the middle of a wide piece of gravel next the house, which in my garden does duty for a terrace, and surrounded by other smaller eccentricities of Agave family which I possess without admiring; this group being flanked by two immense flower-pots containing, the one a fuchsia, the other a pink ivy geranium, edged with creeping-jenny and tradescantia, as I have described above.

The roses which have done blooming are put in a warm position outside the greenhouse door, but the camellia and azaleas must return for another month.

My salvias and celosias are never forward enough to use as bedding plants, but they will come in nicely for the rooms later on; and are now shifted into their flowering pots (five inches diameter is large enough for any one specimen) and placed on a shelf in the middle of the greenhouse. When the roots have grown sufficiently for flower to appear, they will want a good deal of feeding with liquid manure or other stimulant.

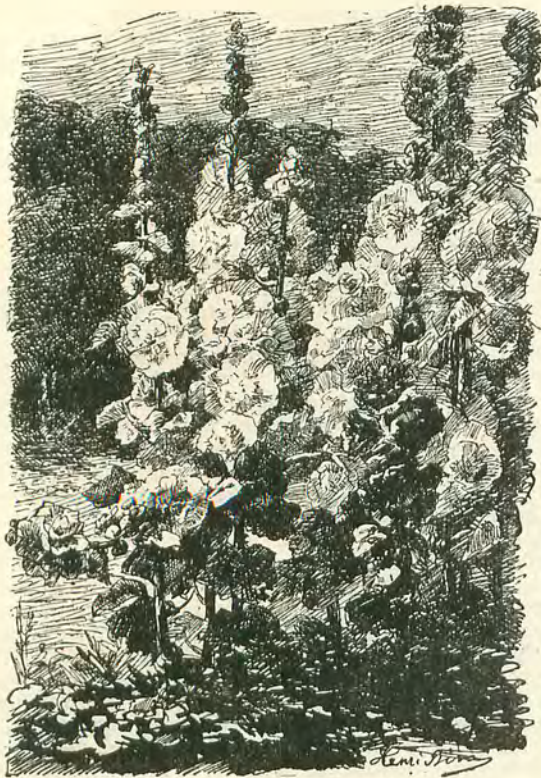
Although the spring show has faded, my little pleasure now is delightfully gay; the Chinese white peonies succeeding to the old-fashioned red ones, yellow iris to blue, white madonna and orange tiger lilies joining the Turk's cap varieties; the large white pink, Mrs. Sinkins, the true carnations, gilly-flowers or July flowers, as they used to be called.

In the herbaceous border, larkspur, lychnis, lupin, foxglove, sweet william, and giant musk, are at their best; and among annuals the Virginian stock, nasturtium, cornflower, and coreopsis, make brilliant patches, while the geranium and other bedders are recovering themselves.

AMATEUR GARDENING FOR TOWN GIRLS.

JULY.

By CONSTANCE JACOB.



PROBABLY the hardest part of this month's work is the destruction of weeds and noxious insects. A Dutch hoe will often save a good deal of backache in the former operation, but it is a dangerous tool in the hands of a careless or short-sighted person, apt to do a considerable amount of injury to unassuming flowers. In a full mixed bed nothing answers so well in the end as kneeling down, and picking out each weed with the hands, and if this be done in time to prevent them seeding, there ought to be no need to repeat it during the summer. In many cases some self-sown annuals like the soil so well that they actually become weeds by simple force of numbers, and must either be thinned down to prevent them spoiling each other's growth or else entirely removed to prevent them killing their more delicate neighbours. I am, however, always averse to casting out any self-sown and presumably healthy seedlings unless I have something very superior with which to supply their place.

With regard to insect pests, they must be carefully watched for and killed without pity; for, sad to relate, gardening tends to make the most tender-hearted person cruel on occasion; one may personally hate killing anything, and yet one cannot see the carefully tended and defenceless flowers being slowly eaten without seeking to destroy their enemy, only trying, for mercy's sake, to do that as quickly as possible.

Slugs can be kept away from special plants by strewing around soot or fine ashes, which they will not cross, or, as the gardening books recommend, soot mixed with slaked lime, but I have never found the latter necessary; they can generally be tracked of an evening with the aid of lanternlight, by the slimy traces which they leave wherever they have touched. Snails can be as easily discovered,

and it may be taken for granted that wherever one is seen another will be found in the immediate neighbourhood. They come out boldly on damp evenings, but, in the sunshine generally gather together in any thick cover, such as a box edging, or at the bottom of a wall to which the earth comes close up.

If a pair of thrushes build in the garden one can sometimes get one's murder done by deputy by throwing snails into a conspicuous position, and waiting quietly until one hears a peculiar little knocking, which means that their shells are being broken on stones or wall.

In the greenhouse a toad is a similarly useful confederate; but where there is a cat, the latter would be sure to torture the poor reptile; and as I once heard the screams of a frog with which a kitten was playing, I will never willingly allow them to associate again.

I have already described the orthodox manner of trapping earwigs on dahlias; another way both for them and woodlice is to half fill some flower-pots with dry moss and lay them on the ground, when the insects will crowd in them to rest after feeding, and may be caught in numbers.

Worms are only harmful in pots, and will usually make a speedy exit if the earth be treated with hot water,—about 90° to 100° Fahrenheit—which will do the plant no harm and certainly drive out the worms. For all kinds of blight and caterpillars Gishurst's compound should be syringed, or better still brushed on the plant affected; and in very obstinate cases, half a pint of paraffin mixed with a gallon of soapsuds is always effectual.

Warm soapy water is very valuable for cleansing the buds and foliage, but not, as some people seem to think, for a plant food. The soap, however, should only be the best plain yellow, and neither it nor Gishurst should be applied in full sunshine, or it will blister the plant treated.

There is a disease peculiar to hollyhocks, and directly the plants look sickly they should be well dusted with powdered sulphur. Carnations suffer just before blooming from the attacks of the green insects which enfold themselves in a mass of froth, and these having been picked off with the gloved hands or with leaves held between the fingers, should be crushed on stones; like snails, they are always found in couples. Afterwards the plants must be thoroughly syringed with Gishurst or soapsuds.

Carnations coming to their full glory this month deserve and require a large amount of attention, which indeed I give them all the year round. There are no flowers to equal them in colour, scent, and form, save roses, which to me are unattainable.

Last year, from about fifty plants of twelve different sorts I gathered over a thousand good blooms during a period of two months.

Some kinds throw up such tall flower-stalks that they now probably need extra sticks and tying up, as half their beauty is lost if they be not kept sufficiently separate. In dry weather

they may be well watered once or twice a week. And, whether it be wet or fine, a little stimulant may be given as often; but in my experience, the soil being perhaps naturally heavy, carnations seem rather to prefer a drought to too much moisture. I do not entirely agree with the thinning out of buds considered necessary for growing large specimen blooms, but where there are a very great number on one root, Nature herself begins the process. And those buds, flabby instead of firm to touch, which are obviously destined never to attain maturity, must be removed as soon as distinguished.

Azaleas, genistas, orange trees and camellias should now be stood out in the open air. The first two can stand a large amount of sunshine; but the others like a little midday shade.

Oleanders, too, which have finished blooming, or show no signs of doing so, may follow them, and like as much sun as they can get; but they also require a proportionate amount of moisture, and the pots should be stood in deep pans of water, or better still, planted in large outer pots of some light soil like peat, which can always be kept saturated. It need hardly be added that this treatment is only necessary or desirable in a high temperature, and during the winter in a moderately-heated greenhouse would certainly result in mildew or damping off. Those that are in bloom keep best under some slight shelter, and are grateful for a liberal supply of nourishment.

Myrtles showing bud can be treated similarly, but others should be stood outside with the azaleas. All these plants ought to be syringed once at least daily with lukewarm water, and the earth must not be allowed to get quite dry.

Now is the time to bud roses; but this is a delicate operation, which, in my opinion, can only be learnt from actual example, so I will make no attempt at teaching it here.

Beds of phlox drummondii and coreopsis will be improved at this stage of their growth by having the centre shoot nipped off, and the side ones pegged down; after which they may grow at their own pleasure, and will form brilliant masses of flower-heads later on in the summer or early autumn. If the coreopsis are preferred tall, they will require tying to stakes.

Nasturtiums will make a better display if the larger leaves be plucked: and by-the-bye a few of these chopped up make a tasty addition to a lettuce salad.

Petunias which have finished blooming in pots should be cut down to within a few inches of the earth, stood in partial shade, and given a moderate amount of moisture to encourage them to throw out shoots of future use as cuttings.

For the gardener there is no season of rest, and as soon as the summer plants have reached perfection, the work begins of increasing our stock for next year; thus, although it was only last month that geraniums were put into their blooming place, no sooner have they recovered the change and begun to grow freely, than cuttings must be taken from them to provide the bedding-out plants of next summer. Pansy and fuchsia cuttings must be struck, carnations, sweet William, and clematis jackmanni layered, and various seeds sown. It is true that the first part of this work can be done equally well in August; but it is so slow and tedious that it is well to make a beginning as soon as possible, while so many people are out of town next month, that it would not do

to leave anything really necessary until then. With regard to geraniums, the ordinary gardener's method is to strike them in pots later on; but I always adopt that taught me by an elderly relative who was a distinguished amateur in his day. That is, to cut off small side shoots of the plants it is desired to propagate as soon as any have grown to the length of three inches, and having trimmed them in the orthodox manner, by cutting the stem slantwise immediately under a joint, remove the leaves from that joint and the one above it and all buds whatsoever, and insert the cuttings in the ground close to the parent plant. The latter will yield sufficient shade, and by watering every other evening for a week or so, one may thus make sure of a good supply of strong, well-rooted young plants before the time comes for potting up. There are very few beds so full that room cannot be found for a few dozen of the tiny slips which before the season is over will themselves give a fair amount of bloom.

Fuchsias for next year's bedding should also be struck now, prepared in the same manner as geraniums, and inserted in pots of light sandy soil, the pots being kept shaded for some little time.

As most pansies produce smaller blossoms during the hotter months, it will not be much loss to take them up now; indeed, in mixed beds it is sometimes necessary, to prevent the long robust shoots from crowding out more fragile things of which the blossom is only just coming on; and where a bed is still making too good a show to be disturbed, the earth should be well dug up and raked over in between the plants, rings of sand strewed round them and the side shoots pegged down into this with hairpins. Tufted pansies or violas grow in close cushions, and are therefore used more for summer bedding-out than for a spring display. The long hollow stalks are of no use for cuttings, but those small ones should be taken which spring out from near the root and often have already fine roots of their own attached. If these have all their flower buds removed, and are inserted to above two joints in a bed of fine leaf mould in a cold frame, they will make nice healthy plants before winter, but the frame, unless in a northern aspect, must be carefully shaded by a mat for a few weeks, the glass kept a little way open night and day, and moisture only given when the earth gets dry. If they are once scorched by the sun, they seldom revive.

With all cuttings these rules must be observed.

Use light soil with a large proportion of rough sand.

Take short sturdy shoots from near the root by preference.

Shade well until growth has commenced.

Cut immediately under a joint, as this is where roots always grow.

Cut off all buds to prevent the plant putting its strength into them instead of making roots.

Never leave any foliage to rot under the surface of the earth.

Do not keep the soil too damp.

Carnations are layered in the following manner:—Select good strong shoots close to the root; cut each of these half way through just below a joint; take away a little earth a few inches distant from the main stem; fill up the hole with coarse sand, and peg the incised piping into this with as long a hairpin as can be obtained. Care is necessary not to cut the stem too far through, and not to break it altogether when pegging down. The layered piece will be assisted by daily watering in dry weather, and perhaps I had better add that flower-bearing stalks cannot possibly root.

Side shoots of sweet Williams and clematis are layered in the same way, except that the stems are not cut at all.

The principal seeds which ought to be sown now for early blooming next summer are German scabious, in boxes in a cold frame; herbaceous calceolarias, tuberous begonias, and early stocks in some gentle heat; while in the open border a winter bed of parsley should be prepared in a shady place by digging in some well rotted manure and leaf mould, raking it smooth, and sowing the seed in drills, which, lightly covered with fine soil, require to be kept fairly damp.

Chinese primulas sown according to directions in April will now be quite large enough to prick out into small pots filled with loam, good leaf mould and sandy peat.

Even though one may not admire topiary work as a whole, and would leave "vegetable sculpture" to a few old-fashioned country gardens where it has existed for centuries, that branch of it which produces only clean, well-clipped hedges is a distinct feature of every carefully kept garden; and during the summer it is very often necessary to cut into shape the box edgings which have probably grown rather ragged since they were done in the spring, and which will have plenty of time now to make fresh growth before the winter.

In all greenhouses and conservatories ought to be grown some climbers up the roof, as well for their beauty as for the sake of the partial shade they give in the hottest weather to the plants beneath. Roses, plumbagos, clematis, abutilons in the unheated structure; hoyas and

stephanotis in addition to them in a regularly warm temperature, are suitable for this purpose; while myrtles, geraniums and fuchsias want only protection from frost to make beautiful roof-coverings—in time. Where none of these are growing, the roof should be either painted inside with green wash, or fitted with proper canvas blinds, the former being, of course, the most economical plan.

Where a conservatory is glazed on three sides and very light, as are many which enter from sitting-rooms, it should certainly have as well a blind on the southern side to pull down during the middle of the day.

Abutilons often grow very straggly in a greenhouse, and show no inclination to bloom; where this is the case, they should be cut down short at this season, leaving on the main stem only about three or four shoots, which will then grow rapidly, and probably bloom before the autumn.

It is very gratifying to look round one's garden now that all its summer tenants are in it, and a good deal of time must be spent every day in keeping in order the gorgeous crowd which seem to come into flower all at once.

The earlier perennials, such as peonies larkspurs, lychnis, have mostly perhaps lost their bloom, and should have the dead flower-stalks neatly cut down level with the main clump of leaves; but their place is well supplied by the carnations, *poppies*, *stocks*, summer chrysanthemums, Turk's cap and trumpet lilies; while the more temporary occupants like geraniums, calceolarias, begonias and fuchsias should make a fine show of colour.

The walls are beautiful with the little clusters of starry jasmine; and on sheltered balconies or in airy rooms the myrtle, agapanthus, and graceful oleander form conspicuous ornaments.

Poppies need staking, and their seed-vessels picking off as soon as the petals fall, or where it is desired to save the seed, a little paper label with the colour written on should be slipped over the pod and held round the stalk by means of two parallel slits cut in the paper lengthwise. As a rule, however, poppies do not come true to seed; and among my own the preponderating shade is always purple—a fact for which I was puzzled to account until I watched for an hour one morning the movements of the bumble bees, intent on their business, and noticed their marked preference for the purple flowers, and remembered that they are the chief fertilisers of all the poppy race. But, after all, I am not a scientist, and so these observations may be quite worthless.

OUR SEASIDE COTTAGE, AND HOW WE BUILT IT.

By JAMES AND NANETTE MASON.

PART V.

THE skeleton of the house was now finished, as we told in our last article.

It was a sensible-looking skeleton; not handsome, but calculated to come victorious out of many a stand-up fight with the roughest of rough weather. The builder had done his work thoroughly. We had trusted him, and he had responded by doing his duty. It was to our gratification, though it disappointed the prophecies of some of our knowing friends by whom we had been warned, that builders, of all men, were not angels before their time, and that Mr. Halford would likely enough turn out to be a rogue in bricks and mortar, who would reward our confidence by scamping what he took in hand.

We had reached the inside work which was to make our cottage fit for living in. The joiner was to come on the scene with his flooring-boards, staircases, doors, and window sashes; the plasterer with his plaster and stucco; the glazier with his glass, and the painter with his paintpots and varnish.

It had been agreed that all the woodwork of the house was to be yellow deal, free from large or loose knots, and in the specification it was insisted on that the timber used was to be well seasoned. We did not want after a short time to have the floor shrink so as to leave chinks between the boards, or to have the doors look as if they were falling to pieces.

The floors we had rabated, as it is called, that is to say, the edge of one board was made

to overlap the edge of another. Prevention is better than cure, and we saw that by this method there would be little chance of draughts or dust finding their way up from below. Rabating is also a safeguard when the floor is washed, or when water is spilt accidentally; it prevents any water getting through and damaging the ceiling of the room below.

To have the doors made of well-seasoned wood was a subject of some anxiety, for we had a vivid recollection of living in a house where the doors were seamed with many an unsightly rent, through which the wind used positively to whistle of nights, all due to their having been put together fresh from the forest.

You never can get anything right unless you take trouble, but we found that it needed extra

trembled as the magnificent but somewhat fierce animals fawned on her, but Molly laughed gaily. She carried a whip in her hand, using it freely and pushing aside her canine friends with careless grace. Rowland's uneasiness was so evident that Stewart, standing behind him, said admiringly, "Don't fear for 'My Lady,' Mr. Rowland. The dog don't live that would hurt her for the world!"

The wilful blue eyes, flashing at the squire's anxious cry, "Marjorie, have a care!" showed her to be the same Marjorie as of old; but the loving look that answered the old man's caress, as he came to her side, betokened that the maid had found her heart, and that she was at last giving back some of the love of which she had so long been the recipient.

Perhaps her nature was still of the shallowest, but it certainly grew deeper

and sweeter as time went on. Her devotion to Mistress Pierce was a pretty sight to see, and was the source of much happiness to that good woman.

On the wedding-day, no hand but Mistress Pierce's must touch "My Lady's" dress, and she chose to walk to church with her simple friends at the farm, with the good farmer to lead her to the altar and give her away at last to the Manor folks.

"My very own daughter at last!" cried the squire, as he caught her to his breast when the ceremony was over.

The wedding-feast was held at the Manor, and, according to the custom of the times, an ox was roasted whole and dispensed amongst the villagers.

* * * * *

Long, long afterward! Mistress Pierce sits in her porch, watching the children who invade the sunny garden. Gentle boys and girls there are of Christopher's

and Susan's, but none so well loved as the golden-haired beauty who rules them all with her imperious will.

"Little Marjorie the second is her mother over again!" says the proud old squire.

But the sands of Time are flying. A mist rises over the Heath; the farmhouse, the Manor, the simple village folk, disappear. We see them no longer, though we fain would linger in their happy haunts. The dense wall shuts us out.

In vain we peer now into the depths of gloom that spread from the earth to the heavens. Yet seems it to our listening ears that the clear voice of the majestic Duchess pierces the curtain that hides our view. "It grows dusk, Marjorie, child! Close the shutters and stir the fire to a blaze. I'm tired to-night!"

[THE END.]

AMATEUR GARDENING FOR

TOWN GIRLS.

AUGUST.

By CONSTANCE JACOB.



THERE is perhaps not much variety in this month's gardening, but plenty to do if one be at home, for besides the weeding and watering, which of themselves will occupy, even in a small garden, an hour or so daily, there is the work of striking cuttings from some plants and layering others, which I described last month, to be proceeded with without delay and finished before August is out.

Some too luxurious vegetation will need checking; and many annuals, such as corn-flowers and poppies, as they go out of bloom, had better be pulled up altogether. The blank spaces which they leave can be advantageously filled up with cuttings of geraniums, or with young biennials for next spring. All others which are still in good condition should have the seed vessels removed as quickly as formed to ensure continuous blooming for some time yet.

But the most important work is planting bulbs to force for Christmas, although it may wait till the end of this month or beginning of next, supposing that the gardener be now out of town.

Bulb growers send out their catalogues then, but as a matter of fact they are quite ready to execute orders some few weeks earlier.

Good freesias are difficult to obtain as yet, but as they will bloom in pots for some years in succession, those who had bulbs last year can recommence the forcing process now. Their delicate beauty and fragrance, doubly welcome when all flowers are scarce, make them well worth the very small amount of trouble involved in their culture. I grow them by choice in boxes, because they seldom all come into bloom at the same time, and therefore out of a number two or three can be selected in the same stage of growth for the same ultimate pot group; but the orthodox way is to grow about seven in a five-inch pot. The boxes must be at least six inches deep, and covered at the bottom with crock and ashes; over this should be spread pieces of half-rotted manure and leaves, sprinkled with soot or, still better, with the treasured-up ashes of burnt garden rubbish. Over this comes a mixture of light leaf mould, peat and sand, in which, when it reaches to within an inch of the brim, holes should be indented and nearly filled with sand, to receive the bulbs. The boxes must then be stood on a layer of ashes in a cold frame, greenhouse, warm cupboard, or indeed, any place where frost cannot penetrate, and

covered well over with cocoa-nut fibre. If only a few pots are filled with bulbs, they can be stood in a large box of fibre.

It is only fair to remark here that some authorities recommend plunging freesias in the garden for a few weeks instead of indoors, but I have never tried this plan, and do not fancy that it would be safe in London, where for several reasons everything certainly needs a little more coddling than in the country. Anyhow the former course must be taken with Roman hyacinths, narcisses, and scillas, which I grow every year to my satisfaction; and Van Thol tulips, with which I must confess I have been less successful, although I cannot account for the partial failure except by the supposition that the bulbs I bought for the purpose were of inferior quality or insufficiently ripened.

Now is the time to imitate nature and make the experiment of autumn seed-sowing; an experiment which I have in most cases found successful. When the seed has ripened on the plant without interference, the pod either opens or falls of its own accord and scatters the seed on the surface of the earth in its vicinity, or else the seeds develop wings, and themselves fly away on the wind to a greater distance.

In some cases they germinate and come up while the warm weather still lingers, but, being cut down by the frost before they have been able to develop flower-buds, will remain dormant during the winter, and probably reappear as strong young plants early in the spring.

Others, whose period of germination is longer, will not be seen again at all before that season, and if we had the means of counting, we should probably find that only a very few out of the thousands annually scattered in one garden survive at all the attacks of their many enemies; but then those few will, in the nature of things, be exceptionally robust, and make a much better show of bloom than can their kindred who have their whole life history forced into a few weeks mostly passed under quite artificial conditions.

If, however, we elect to make an ally of nature in growing annuals, and take some of her risks, it is easy to avoid others, especially that of the seed being disturbed after it is once in the ground. For this reason the pods must be gathered just before they are ready to burst, for instance with poppies immediately the little holes open round the scalloped disc at the top, and with sweet peas when the two shells are hard and brown, but have not begun to curl apart.

I may here remark that I have only once found self-sown sweet peas, although scores must have fallen every autumn, and attribute their destruction to their large size, which prevents them getting sufficiently buried to be protected from frost. Smaller seeds do not incur this danger to the same extent, but they also will be the safer for being well-covered with earth.

When we have decided where to make our sowing, any necessary manure should be well dug into the ground, straight or circular drills made, and when the seed has been thinly scattered and well-covered with fine soil, the place should be indicated by a label. For this purpose of course the best are of tin, written on with the indelible fluid sold for them; but my less extravagant plan is to split firewood into suitable pieces and write on the smooth side of each with a hard lead pencil. I find this remains legible during many months, whereas ink soon washes off.

For sweet peas and nasturtiums trenches should be dug at least eight inches deep, and half-filled with rotted manure, this being lightly covered with fine mould, in which the seeds must be placed at intervals of an inch or so, and then filled to the level of the ground.

Such autumn sowings need not entail bare patches in our gardens if we dig the trenches close behind or between plants which will be in full bloom or foliage for some weeks yet.

In this way forget-me-nots, candytuft, nemophila and Virginian stock can be brought on for spring blooming, or the first-named may be sown now in boxes under slight shelter to plant out quite early in the year.

If one wish to experiment in rearing carnations, two or three strong plants of different form and colours in close proximity should be allowed each to bring a seed pod to maturity, and if the seeds be well ripened and sown, as I advised in April, it is just possible that one plant of a kind as yet unnamed may be the happy result; many, of course, will be single, or of poor colouring. I always prefer to cut off all flowers before they begin to fade until the end of the season, only allowing a few of the latest to go to seed.

When sufficient carnations have been layered, some of the centre pieces, and those which grow too high up the stalk for that purpose, can be utilised as cuttings and struck in pots of sandy soil as I have before described.

Hydrangea cuttings should be struck this month by taking the small shoots off the parent stem when they are about two inches long, and dibbling them in round the sides of pots of sandy loam which have been previously well saturated; afterwards they must, as usual, be kept closely shaded and not too damp.

Hollyhocks can be propagated in the same way, and all kinds of evergreens struck in a cool border as soon as this year's growth has become firm.

Late chrysanthemums in pots ought now to be showing buds about the size of small peas, and must have extra nourishment once or twice a week, either soot water or liquid manure made from an old hot-bed, or indeed, as they like variety, they may have both in turns. Gardeners who desire to grow very large blooms proceed now to nip out all buds but one or two of the best; but I have never brought myself thus to sacrifice number for size, although I always pick off all side shoots, and those from the roots, until the flowers are over and cuttings are required.

Herbaceous calceolaria seedlings, if big enough to handle, should now be pricked out into a cold frame, and must be shaded from strong sunlight until they have quite recovered the change.

The cold frame plays such an important part in raising half-hardy plants for town gardens, that it may be as well here to mention that my own contains at this season a good stock of young wallflowers, pricked out about six inches apart, and for the present exposed to full light and air; all the pansy cuttings I shall require, which are carefully shaded by a mat over the tilted glass; a few herbaceous calceolarias and early stocks just pricked out, and some boxes of seedling columbines, sweet sultans and German scabious, for which there is not yet room in the borders. In the hot-bed the cucumbers are still flourishing. And when they go off in a month or two, their places will be gradually filled up by delicate cuttings and seeds.

Roses for blooming in pots should now be repotted; more space may not be necessary unless the roots have very greatly increased; but the compost will need renewing, and should be of rather heavy loam mixed with a little leaf mould and coarse sand. Care must be taken not to injure the finer root fibres, only the loose earth well shaken away from them and the fresh pressed down tightly round with the hand.

As this is the time when our neighbours are mostly out of town, it is a good opportunity for another bonfire, as a quantity of

rubbish will have accumulated since the spring, and ought to be got rid of before the leaves begin to fall; when if the plan be followed of manufacturing leaf mould on the premises, a new heap must be begun.

Those who have conservatories attached to sitting-rooms or hall, with *no means of heating* them artificially, or a sort of glass extension to the landing which seems to demand filling with plants of some kind, should now begin to consider what are most likely to flourish under such conditions. If, as unfortunately sometimes happens, the structure face due north, the only things at all likely to grow in them are ferns, and these will not thrive where the fumes of gas burnt in the house can penetrate. Where there is a dividing door, however, the hardier kinds can be easily grown, and many of them will keep green all through the winter, especially the holly, hartstongue and ribbon varieties. In such a building, the peculiarly shaped pots made for hanging on the wall, shown in an illustration of a "wall-garden" in last year's GIRL'S OWN PAPER, add greatly to the picturesque effect, but demand extra care in the watering, ferns naturally requiring in such an elevated position a quantity of water, whereas during the colder months any superfluous moisture becoming frozen would kill them. Obviously too, such pots could not be hung on a staircase or the damp would injure the walls. As a matter of fact, however, even if a glass structure faced north it must get a little morning and evening sunshine in at the sides. So that by careful arrangement other plants besides ferns could be grown there, or perhaps it would be better to say instead of ferns, for the moist atmosphere necessary to start their new growth in the spring would cause many other half-hardy things to mildew off. Roses, for instance, especially the hybrid, perpetual and tea varieties would do very well in such a situation, but need not be bought as yet. So would Christmas roses, and, among creepers, the yellow winter jasmine and the scarlet pyrus japonica, all of which should be planted at once in pots of rich soil about a third larger all round than their ball of roots, and would be bright just at the dulllest season for flowers.

The bulbs I mentioned above could very well be slightly forced in such a place, and if carefully treated later on would be in bloom certainly before February; while others, plunged in October would give a good succession.

Pansies taken up out of the ground and cut back to the middle shoots; wallflowers planted now in boxes or pots of loam; hepaticas, auriculas, hardy primulas, polyanthus and common primrose; small shrubs of azalea, mollis, rhododendrons and lilac would make a good spring show, besides many others which could be brought in a month or so hence. Small fruit trees in pots are pretty for foliage, even if they do not bloom for some time, and stones should be set in pots of good earth now, such as peach, apricot, almond and plum, or rather the kernels out of the stones, as they will thus germinate much more quickly, also the pips of apples and pears.

In the garden the summer flowers are gradually giving place to those of autumn, especially to tall things most suited for the back or centre of a mixed bed; among the most successful in London suburbs being dahlias, sunflowers, herbaceous phlox, Japanese anemones, and nicotiana affinis, while in addition to the white jasmine, the purple jackmanni, small white clematis, and grey plumbago form handsome masses of bloom on sunny walls or trellises. The smaller "bedding" plants, too, are still at their best and are joined during the month by phlox drummondii, and the brilliant, if somewhat vulgar asters.

Where window boxes are getting shabby,

by-the-bye, the latter flowers are extremely useful to fill up blanks left by faded earlier annuals, but in the name of good taste, I would beg that the three shades of purple, white and magenta be not joined together too nearly; in fact I do not think the pink is pleasant in any combination, but some of the newer tones of claret, grey, blue, and purple, mixed with white, go very well with yellow flowers like calceolarias or foliage plants like coleus and beet.

Even if away from home we need not entirely forget our gardens; indeed, on visits to country friends, the subject must necessarily be often recalled to our minds, and if the superior growth of their flowers sometimes arouse our envy, and tend to discourage our efforts, it may, on the other hand, stimulate to further exertions by giving us a higher ideal. Then, too, it is generally easy to beg seeds or cuttings of anything which strikes one's fancy, and although these will not invariably survive the change, those that do will become in future summers loving reminiscences of pleasant idle rambles on sunny mornings, or cool dewy evenings in some old-fashioned garden, where the soil is rich with centuries of cultivation,

and where all kinds of flowers seem only to need planting to flourish in a luxuriant tangle.

Many of my best plants have been obtained in this way, and I have a fancy for labelling them with the name of the donor or their original home, and thus, as it were, affixing the proper associations to them for their lifetime.

But not only from gardens can such mementoes be gathered; from moor, mountain, or hedgerow, or even the seaside cliffs, seeds and roots brought home to a little London enclosure will sometimes flourish surprisingly.

Thus every year bloom in my greenhouse little purple cyclamen bulbs brought from the Alps; several varieties of ferns recall holidays in Scotland, Wales, Devonshire and Cumberland; and one particular plant of the hybrid horned poppy is blooming now in its London home with even greater freedom than in the sheltered spot where I gathered its seeds on the south coast. That is a triumph of which I am very proud, for the striking plants with their grey leaves, yellow blossoms, and long horn-like seeds fascinated me greatly, growing as they did on a shelving bank of chalk, in shape like a glacier, sheltered on three sides

by the cliffs, and faced on the south by the sea. Certainly the natural circumstances of pure salt air, chalky soil and warm aspect could not be entirely repeated anywhere else, but by dint of mixing a quantity of rough, broken chalk with the soil of a sunny bank, and sowing the seed there when I returned to town in October I succeeded in raising a few little seedlings, one of which showed buds in the following September, but was unfortunately nipped off by the frost before they could come fully out. The ensuing hard winter killed them all off but the one which I have mentioned, which is a truly handsome example of the survival of the fittest, taller by many inches than any I have seen growing wild (thanks, perhaps, to stable manure), and bearing a number of good-sized perfectly-formed flowers.

On the other hand I have little sympathy with those travellers who wish to grub up by the roots everything they admire, or encourage hawkers to do so for them; heedless afterwards of whether the poor things are to live or die, and often throwing them down again to wither and be trodden underfoot. Taking seeds home is a far more interesting and kinder experiment.

A MODEL MENU FOR AUGUST.

By PHYLLIS BROWNE.

MENU.

Italian Salad.

Sole au Gratin.

Braised Fillet of Veal, with Vegetables.
Stewed Potatoes.

Grouse.

Sheldon Pudding.
Plum Tart. Cream.

Cheese.



In the middle of summer, when the weather is very hot, soup is often at a discount, and a well-mixed salad is, with the majority of diners, more acceptable at the commencement of a dinner than any other dish. Under these

circumstances housewives will occasionally do well to venture on a new departure, to dispense with soup altogether, and to put Italian salad or a similar dainty in its place. It must be understood, however, that unless the family has been educated to appreciate salads mixed with oil, this change will most likely not be approved.

Italian Salad.—An Italian salad may be made with almost every kind of vegetable, but this does not mean that all kinds may be put together indiscriminately; on the contrary, those only should be used which go well together. Amongst the vegetables usually used are green peas, heads of asparagus, sprigs of cauliflower, French beans, mushrooms, celery, and *haricot beans*. It is evident that only one or two of these varieties could be used, as they must be cooked beforehand; an Italian salad is frequently made from vegetables that have been left from a previous meal and carefully preserved. In any case

they must be cut into neat fancy shapes of an equal size, and equal proportions of each variety must be taken. If there is in the larder a little cold fowl or game or ham, these can be shred small and added; and hard-boiled eggs cut into quarters, filleted anchovies cut into strips and rolled in parsley, chopped capers, etc., may be used as a garnish.

As general directions are rather vague, it may be well to give a detailed recipe for a typical Italian salad.

Take the bowl or dish in which the salad is to be served and make it as cold as possible by putting ice round it, or in any other way, but it must be made cold. Take two boiled potatoes, half a small beetroot, a cupful of boiled green peas, and a sound firm cos lettuce that has been stripped of the outer leaves. Cleanse the lettuce and make it perfectly dry by tossing it in a napkin, then break it into pieces about the size of a shilling. Cut the beetroot and potatoes also into neat shapes. Boil four eggs hard, and when cold cut them into quarters. Fillet four anchovies, cut them into thin strips and roll these in parsley, chop also a tablespoonful of capers, and stone five or six olives by peeling them round and round close to the stone.

To make the sauce beat the yolk of an egg till it is thick, then add oil very gradually, beating well between every addition until the sauce is very thick. This point being reached, thin it with tarragon vinegar, and add a little salt. The sauce should look like thick yellow cream.

Do not dish the salad until just before dinner.

Arrange the prepared vegetables in separate layers on the cold dish, and sprinkle a little salt and a few drops of tarragon vinegar over them; but they must not be made at all moist, merely flavoured. Pile them in the shape of a dome with a small cavity in the centre, and take great pains to contrast the colours, so as to make the salad look attractive. Garnish with the beetroot, the hard-boiled-eggs, etc., and pour the sauce into the cavity at the last moment. Send the salad to table unmixed, but toss it well with the sauce just before serving it.

Sole au Gratin.—A large thick sole will be wanted for this dish, small soles are not suitable for it. If a good-sized sole cannot be obtained, it will be better to cook the sole another way. It is desirable also to send the sole to table in the same dish in which it is cooked. By rights, therefore, an oval earthenware dish that will stand the fire should be used for cooking it. If this is not at hand an ordinary baking dish will have to be used, and the sole will have to be taken up with a slice, and transferred to a china dish.

Wash the sole and dry it well with a cloth. Cut off the fins with a sharp knife and nick through the skin of the tail and the head. Push the little finger under the white skin and draw it off.

Prepare a savoury mixture as follows:

Wash a sprig of parsley, wring it dry, pick off the leaves and chop them finely. Chop also a quarter of a shalot, and four button mushrooms which have been washed and peeled. Mix these ingredients together, and add pepper and salt. Butter the dish well, and sprinkle one-half of the mixture upon it, and add a few drops of lemon juice. Nick the sole on the white side in two or three places, and lay it with the nicked side up upon the dish. Sprinkle the rest of the mixture over it, and add a little more lemon juice. Take a wire sieve, and rub some stale bread through it, put the crumbs on a baking tin, and set them in the oven for a few minutes. When the crumbs are brown, sprinkle them on the fish to cover it, and put half an ounce of butter divided into little pieces on the top, and round it two tablespoonfuls of glaze or of stock that is so strong that it will jelly when cold. Bake in a moderate oven for about twenty minutes. The sole is cooked when a steel knife will go through it quite easily. It should be brown, moist, and tasty. If through any mischance the gravy should boil away, a little more may be put round the fish. The earthenware dish in which it is baked should be placed upon another one covered with a napkin.

Braised Fillet of Veal.—Procure about three pounds of the fillet of veal and a small block of fat bacon an inch and a quarter long,

AMATEUR GARDENING FOR TOWN GIRLS.

SEPTEMBER.

By CONSTANCE JACOB.



UCH of this month's gardening work is a repetition of August's; or, rather, may be done

equally well now, if time and opportunity serve better; but if we want flowers for our rooms at Christmas, no time must be lost in getting bulbs potted and plunged as already described, or, if it has been once done, the operation may be repeated at intervals with fresh bulbs to form a succession.

In the usual way, I imagine that few people are in London during both months, and those that are now returning from their holidays will find work, even in a small garden, for nearly every day.

It is to be presumed that where there is a green-house some one will have been left in charge of the opening, shutting, and watering; but a garden does not generally take much harm at this time of the year from being left to itself, although growth will be more luxuriant than consistent with perfect neatness; many tall plants will have broken from their supports, perhaps our neighbours will have smashed a few more in jumping over the wall to hunt for tennis balls, and some will be showing more seed than flowers.

As a rule, too, one's first impression on returning to a garden given over for some time to its own resources, is that there is only one, or perhaps two kinds of plants remaining in it, in consequence of some robust-growers, like sunflowers or nasturtiums, having flourished so overmuch as to send everything else into the background. On the whole, however, such an effect is more picturesque than unpleasant, and we ought not surely to complain of too much opulence, while a careful search will invariably make manifest the more modest flowers, and a few mornings' cutting, tying, and trimming, bring the others to within their proper bounds.

Dahlias are especially given to throwing out strong side shoots of no flower-bearing value, which should be closely cut back, leaving only those stems on which the buds are plentiful.

Many things require potting up and bringing into shelter, if they are to be saved for future decoration; among them, arums and spiræas. If planted out in a border, as was advised in May, they should be now carefully lifted, if possible, without destroying any of the roots, and each clump put into a pot not very much

larger than its own bulk. Arums look so handsome in big masses, that I generally think it a pity to divide them, but, of course, that becomes necessary sometimes for the convenience of moving them. Spiræas, on the other hand, do better for division, and if they have been bought in the spring, and in full bloom, have probably been too much forced to yield a very good result this season; they will, however, throw up a few flower heads, and will be gathering strength for a finer show the year after. For both plants good drainage should be placed at the bottom of the pot, then a lump of half-rotted manure and some leaves, and these being sprinkled with soot or wood ashes, the roots must be placed on them, and the space round filled tightly in with a mixture of loam, leaf-mould, and sand, all being kneaded firmly down as it is put in, and about an inch down the pot being left unfilled to allow for future irrigation. After this, they must be thoroughly soaked and stood in a shady part of the green-house until new growth has fairly started. If the plants have been stood out in their pots during the summer, they will need shifting in the same manner, not so much for the sake of more room, as because they will have exhausted all the nourishment of the old soil.

In Devonshire, I have seen arums, or callas, as they are also called, blooming in April, which have been planted and left out of doors all the winter, but they will not answer to any such treatment with us, and are, indeed, of no use even for the unheated green-house; as, unless a regular temperature of at least fifty degrees be maintained throughout the winter, I find that they do not make any attempt to bloom.

The bleeding heart (*Dielytra spectabilis*) is on the contrary an extremely reliable ornament to the cold-house, and plants of it can now be divided and potted up in good light earth, and the pots, for the present, may be plunged in the open border.

Eupatoria can be transplanted now in the same way, and do very well with me in a fair amount of heat, but they are terrible things for attracting green-fly, and I do not consider them particularly pretty at their best.

Deutsias, treated like the dielytra, intended for the cold-house, answer the same purpose admirably; and a few marguerites, white and yellow, are useful if potted up before the frosts begin; others may be cut up for forming a stock of young plants for next year. For them and for coleus, of which cuttings must be taken before the cold weather, I use pans of light sandy soil, otherwise treating them the same as geraniums. The pans proper to this purpose, by-the-bye, have a large hole, or several holes, at the bottom for drainage, and are about four inches deep; but grocers' boxes would do nearly as well.

Azaleas, oleanders, and camellias, stood outside for the summer months, must now be taken in again; and if they have received proper attention should be showing firm, nicely-set buds. Those on my camellia are nearly the size of hazel nuts, those of the oleanders are only just visible as groups of little reddish-green points in the midst of the topmost leaves; while it is only possible to know that the azaleas are formed by feeling a hard thickening of the youngest growth. When they have been moved in they will all be grateful for some weak stimulant about once a week, and, during the warm weather, for a daily syringe; but, naturally, do not

need anything like the amount of moisture as when it could be quickly dried off by the fresh outside air. Camellias are given to dropping their buds immediately they have too much water or are left a little while without enough, so that the most difficult part of their culture now begins. The usual rule here holds good: Never to give water when the earth in the pot sticks to the fingers, nor to withhold it when it does not. Syringing, too, should only be done in the morning, and not then unless the temperature is high enough to dry up the moisture from the leaves within an hour or so. I believe I have said all this before, but it is too important not to bear repetition.

Palms and orange-trees should also be brought in, but myrtles, dracenas, and aralias can stay out a little longer in a moderately mild season. From myrtles which have finished blooming, cuttings should be taken and struck either in pots of peat or cocoanut fibre, or in a bottle of water; taking young shoots, cutting them immediately below a joint, and inserting them above two.

Rhododendrons may also be struck in either way, and roses, in pots of sandy loam, but I will not promise any great measure of success with either.

Hydrangeas that have finished blooming should be cut well back and stood in a shady place until new growth has commenced, then repotted in a mixture of two-thirds loam, and one-third old manure. These plants are useful for the unheated green-house, as they need only protection from frost.

A good deal of attention must now be given to autumn and winter-flowering chrysanthemums, on which we shall have to rely a little later on for our chief supply of blossoms. Those in the ground will need tying up if that has not already been sufficiently done; and where they grow, as mine do, in front of a wall, the simplest plan is to drive two or three long iron nails into it at a distance of about two feet from the ground, and fasten to those a length of strong wire, which will keep all the plants firmly between it and the wall, and at the same time give individuals more freedom, forming a kind of fence, in fact. Like their relatives in pots, they will be grateful for alternative doses of soot-water and liquid manure; or even, when the buds have swollen to a fair size, a little blood-manure soaked into the roots, but they do not need so much watering. On all alike blight must be carefully watched for, and instantly destroyed; while, at the first appearance of mildew, powdered sulphur should be dusted on out of a box with a perforated lid. All suckers should be cut off from the base, and from the pot-plants all side-shoots up the stem: It is seldom necessary to give them any protection before next month, but preparations for doing so ought to be already fairly complete, in case of winter setting in abnormally early; and where there is a cold as well as a heated house, it must not be forgotten that the former is the more suitable abode for them.

In my own green-house, at the present moment, the greatest ornament, besides the ferns and a few large-leaved begonias, is the Scarborough lily (*Vallota purpurea*), whose scarlet blossoms and glossy blade-like leaves are so handsome that I intend to grow more of them in future. Mine is a young specimen which I potted in rich soil mixed with sand, nearly a year ago, and have paid no attention to since, except to give it sufficient water and

a sunny situation. Just now it requires an extra supply of moisture, and when the flowers are over will have a little stimulant for a while, but will not be repotted for some years, as this class of lily is never really dormant, and does not like change. If a plant show no sign of bloom at this season, water should be given very sparingly, and then, perhaps, it will throw up a bud in the course of a few weeks.

Those who grow their own stock of lobelia, should sow the seed now, scattering it on the surface of well-drained boxes nearly filled with good leaf-mould and sand; which boxes should be placed on ashes in a cold frame, and shaded with paper until the seedlings are up.

Iceland poppies, sown thinly out of doors now, in the place where they are to bloom, and in the way suggested last month for other seeds, will be both stronger and earlier than if spring sown.

As a matter of necessity, much of this month's work lies in the preparation for next spring, indeed we cannot now hope for any fresh supply of flowers, except from chrysanthemums, and Christmas roses, this side of the New Year. So our efforts must be directed to ensuring as much variety as possible for the spring show.

I always select for this purpose a bed which, being at the end of the garden, opposite the house, is most easily seen from the windows; for in the early months no one but myself cares to walk in the garden, while everyone is pleased to look out at a nicely grouped flower-bed. The border as a matter of fact has permanent rows of auriculas, polyanthus and various bulbs, and as a rule it is left fairly undisturbed; but, about once in three years, at this time, I take up everything out of it, except some Michaelmas daisies and nicotiana, now in full bloom; have it well dug over, and the suckers from the neighbouring lilac hedge rooted out and cut back to the parent stem; then a good quantity of manure dug in, the earth raked over and replanted. The latter is my part, for I have sometimes allowed the jobbing gardener to do the digging, rather to his discontent, as he always objects to that work at any time but November, which of course would be too late for the replanting.

Next to the trees are some big ferns which do very well there, and get sufficient shade when they want it in the summer; in front of

them I am putting now alternate iris and seedling foxgloves (self-sown last autumn): the former are not likely to give much bloom for a year or so, but their leaves form a picturesque accompaniment to other plants. The foxgloves always do well in the partial shade, and when grown tall are very effective seen against the purple and brown shadows of the lower stems. At any rate the admixture is a suitable one, as both plants thrive in a similar situation, and form successive periods in the cycle of bloom which I try to obtain in every part of the garden.

Next come a few autumn blooming things, like the daisies and Japanese anemones, with which in March I shall intersperse wallflowers, to be succeeded by bedding-out plants, or asters, if I have any.

In front again will come groups of various bulbs, also to be succeeded by summer bedders, and then are alternate polyanthus and auriculas, some of them being old plants now divided, and the remainder seedlings which have passed the summer, pricked out in more shady positions, for this part of the border gets a good deal of sun.

In front of all will be a thick border of yellow crocuses, but for the present I replant the golden feather which has taken their place during the summer.

This being the time to shift all members of the primula and auricula family, some of the best specimens should be planted in very rich soil in pots not exceeding four and a half inches diameter, and brought into the cold-house, where for the present they must stand out of direct sunlight. For this purpose a few plants of auricula, primula sieboldii, P. fimbriata oculata, P. lascianata marginata, bought from a first-class grower, would prove a good investment for an amateur who has not any plants of her own.

Bulbs of the earlier blooming lilies, such as the Turk's cap, Madonna, and tiger varieties, will have many of them ripened by now, which will be indicated by the flower stalks and leaves turning quite yellow; and, in the case of the Madonna, a crown of fresh green foliage growing up close to the ground. Where this is the case they may be safely transplanted; but the trumpet and lancifolium will not be ready until next month, and all will move quite as well then.

Even if one's garden has not run riot in the manner I pictured above, there is never much need to complain of bare patches during

this latest month of summer, or as one may sometimes call it, our only month of real summer; everything tends to luxuriant, even coarse growth under the genial influences of warm days and dewy nights, until the early frosts come and nip off all but the most robust.

Phlox drummondii, asters, zinnias, fuchsias, geraniums, and calceolarias, still form a mass of gay colour on a low level: but the most conspicuous flowers are on taller plants, sun-flowers, dahlias, Michaelmas daisies, Japanese anemones, African marigolds and chrysanthemums; none are more handsome, nor with me, more hardy than the pink lancifolium lily, of which I have three splendid plants, each five feet high, and bearing a profusion of large blooms.

The dwarf nasturtiums are mostly over, and if cuttings of them are required, they should be potted up, cut well back, and placed in a cool shelter, until the young growth is long enough for that purpose, but the climbers and the canariensis will go on blooming until killed by frost, if the seeds be carefully picked off; taken as soon as formed, these can be picked and make very good substitutes for capers.

A little plant which has done fairly well with me is the echemocarpus, which, with its bunches of little orange and yellow bells, is very much prettier than its name. I sowed the seeds last spring twelvemonth in heat, but, presumably, not early enough, for although it is described as an annual, the plants did not grow to blooming size during the summer; so I potted them up again for the winter, and planting them in a sunny position this spring, am reaping the reward of patience. I have learnt my lesson too, and intend sowing fresh seed immediately for next year's blooming.

The creepers of the clematis and jasmine families are still in good condition, but perhaps the prettiest autumnal picture in nearly every garden, town or country, is a fading Virginia creeper, with its many gorgeous tints of red, yellow, purple, bronze, and green. I have two different species, of which one always drops its leaves, without their turning anything but a more dingy green; and I mention this so that if any of my readers intend buying a plant, they may make quite certain that they get the right sort, and be not robbed of what, with the varied loveliness of chrysanthemums, forms the brightest consolation offered us by approaching winter for its months of monochrome dreariness.

A PLEASANT REMEMBRANCE.

It was long since I had had such delightful news. Here was I, a devoted admirer of all that I knew to be good in the divine art of music, actually in the same house with Jenny Lind! Put it to yourselves, all you young enthusiasts, what would your feelings have been, and what would have roused your interest more than to have been told, on arriving at your destination after a long and tedious journey, that Jenny Lind was to be one of your fellow *pensionnaires* in the Villa Marie-Hélène?

Little had I thought on leaving home for a lengthened stay in a small town on the shores of the Mediterranean that I should have the good fortune to live under the same roof with one of the most famous artistes of modern times. Fellow *pensionnaire* I can hardly call her though, as, to my regret, all that I saw of the great songstress for many days was perhaps when she would rarely appear on her balcony, or take a quiet walk in the garden, when I am afraid I must confess to many

peepings from behind window curtains in the endeavour to catch a glimpse of her. Oh! that I could meet her, and that she would speak to me! That I should ever hear a sound of the voice that had moved thousands of eager listeners in days gone by, seemed too delightful an idea ever to come true. That she did afterwards speak to me and that I had also the happiness to hear her sing, will always be among my most pleasant remembrances. In the meantime her pale face and the power of her wonderful eyes haunted me, and it was towards the close of the year, late in the afternoon of a bright November day, that the desire of my heart was to be fulfilled.

It was a pleasant hour in the Villa Marie-Hélène, that between afternoon tea and dinner; all was quiet, although the *pensionnaires* must have been within doors, as the sun had set long since—a signal for all health-seekers in the "Sunny South" to turn their steps homewards. Lamps and candles were already lit,

the wood fire was crackling merrily in the hearth, and our *Dolce far niente* was undisturbed. What was that sound though upstairs? Surely it must be someone singing. It was as if a singer, after a period of rest, was trying the power of her voice again. Long slow notes—quicker now—*arpeggio* passages—part of some melody now, surely. Beautiful rich notes ringing out, one after another, and at last all fading into silence. What a lovely voice! What a divine gift! Did that large, sonorous, living sound proceed from the lips of the pale, delicate-looking old lady upstairs, one who nevertheless had been queen of a hundred festivals in the days of her power, and to hear whom men and women had almost risked their lives, in the endeavour to force their way into many an overcrowded concert-hall? Yes; the power was still hers, and surely never had it been given forth to a more grateful hearer. Alas! they were the last notes that I ever heard from the lips of the "Swedish Nightingale."

AMATEUR GARDENING FOR TOWN GIRLS.

OCTOBER.

By CONSTANCE JACOB.



HOWEVER mildly this month may open, the gardener must not therefore be beguiled into delaying the commencement of preparations for winter; and among other necessary duties, the bulb lists of various firms should be closely studied, and our selections arranged, if not already ordered. It is hardly necessary to repeat here the directions for growing bulbs, which I have already given once or twice; but I may perhaps be excused for reiterating the fact that nearly all bulbous plants can be grown almost as well in town as in the country, if provided with the proper conditions of protection from frost, a warm covering during the first few weeks of root-growth, and sufficient air and moisture after the flower spikes have appeared. Perfectly pure air and sunshine seem less essential to their welfare than to that of most plants; although of course they show appreciation of them to a large extent. I have, at various times, derived great satisfaction from growing in pots members of the hyacinth, tulip, crocus, narcissus, jonquil, lily, scilla, freesia, amaryllis, ixia and agapanthus families; in the open border the seven first-named in addition to lilies of the valley, daffodils, snowdrops, iris, winter aconites, gladioli, crown imperials, and Solomon's seals; and all of them are suitable for rearing in an unheated house (except the amaryllis), provided that, when the flower buds appear, they can have a sunny situation near the glass.

It is time to stock a cold-house completely, if we wish for a show throughout the winter months, and besides the above-named bulbs, which of themselves ensure a good succession right up to June, and many plants mentioned last month, there are numerous others to which such slight protection is all they require. For instance, seedling forget-me-nots, musk and canterbury bells; rooted carnation cuttings, or old plants of the latter; calceolarias, clematis Jackmanni, and hardy cyclamens, potted up now in loam mixed with a little leaf-mould and sand, will be quite safe through the winter, and come into flower a little sooner than they would do out of doors.

It must be understood, nevertheless, that all plants in pots run more danger of frost than others whose roots are well buried in the earth, the temperature a few inches below the surface being always considerably higher than that above ground. Therefore, although the stems

and foliage may be sufficiently protected by a glass covering, the roots may perish from inadequate warmth; and to prevent this, wherever possible, the unheated green-house should possess a well-drained border of good mould, into which its permanent inhabitants can be planted out and others plunged in their pots. In many cases this is not possible, as, for instance, where the floor is concreted to prevent the moisture soaking through into a room below; and then large boxes should be obtained and filled with cocoanut fibre in which to plunge the more tender plants. These boxes, painted a pleasing shade of colour, or covered with lincrusta, or Japanese paper, need not be unsightly; while by their aid abutilons agapanthi, tree peonies, hydrangeas, fuchsias and myrtles will pass the winter more safely than could otherwise be the case, the fibre supplying quite enough warmth and moisture without danger of mildew or damping off. As many of these will present a bare appearance during part of the winter, they should be supplemented by ivy trained up the walls, and small plants of laurel, bay, laurustinus, arbutus, or pyrocanthus, which will continue ornamental always, if planted in pots of good peaty earth, and these again plunged in larger pots or small tubs of fibre.

Chrysanthemums, of course, ought to be a great feature of such a house, and if provided with sufficient air night and day through the hotter months, might have been reared there from the beginning; but it is a safe precaution to cover up the cuttings inserted in November with the bell glass. Of the earlier blooming varieties slips should be put in now, taking by preference the shoots from the base with heels attached, and proceeding exactly as I described in the first paper of this series.

Those which have been brought up for blooming in pots, and have hitherto stood out of doors, must certainly come into shelter now; but as these plants are more injured by damp heat than by anything else, it should be into a cool house, where they can have the temperature to their liking for awhile; where there is only one green-house, it is better to do without artificial heat as long as possible, or, if early frosts threaten injury to more delicate things like azaleas, arums or oleanders, the air must be kept quite dry.

Geranium cuttings struck in August out of doors will now have well rooted, and must be taken up, planted in small pots of good earth, and put on a high shelf in the green-house, or into a well protected frame, slightly heated by half-spent manure, where they should have a weekly inspection during the winter, and water only when required. If more cuttings be wanted they should be taken now from the old plants and inserted in sandy loam, about five round the edge of a five-inch pot, and treated in the same way as the rooted slips.

The old plants should also be potted up in good soil and cut back rather severely if they are to make fine bloomers for next spring. They will be safe even in a cupboard or cellar from which frost is excluded; but if the custom be followed of saving only young plants the poor old things may be left in the ground until killed by frost. Calceolaria cuttings must be taken now, after a bed has been prepared for them of old manure covered with a thick layer of fine leaf-mould and sand in a cold frame, of which the glass should be shaded for awhile, and opened for a few hours every fine day. In such a bed pansies can also be struck, should any of the stock taken in August have failed. Old roots of these and layers which have rooted out

of doors should be dug up and planted deeper, and the tops cut off, which treatment will save the majority for early blooming in the spring.

A careful inspection of the layered carnations ought to show most of them to have thrown out fine roots, at the slit portion, and these should now be detached from the old clumps, and planted in the places destined for them, either in the borders or in pots for the cool house, as they do not take kindly to heat. In either case they require a sandy soil, mixed with some wood ashes or soot and, if obtainable, crushed mortar rubbish. If not rooted the layers should be left where they are until the spring, but any old plants which are too much out of the ground must be dug up and replanted more deeply.

Lobelia should be taken up before the frost and all the longer shoots cut off and struck in boxes placed in a cold frame; the roots should then be potted up in good earth, and set in the same place until February, when they can be divided into small pieces for growing into neat little cushions. Golden feather clumps can be treated in the same way, but are, I think, hardly worth the room they take up, seedlings answering the same purpose quite as well.

Clematis and all other creepers which flower on new summer growth should now be pruned sharply back; and this being the best time to move them, one or two young plants potted now in good earth would be found very useful, either plunged in the cold-house, as before described, or in a frame, to use next summer for the centres of vases, or as creepers on a balcony, or in a window-box.

Autumn-flowering gladioli should be taken up as soon as the leaves are yellow, and stored on a dry shelf until the spring. I was ignorant of the necessity for this the first year I grew gladioli, and having left the bulbs in the ground during the winter, was delighted to find them coming up in the spring in greatly increased numbers. I was not so pleased, however, when all the flowers came out a very unpleasant magenta, instead of the white, pink, and scarlet of the previous year; and for this curious effect I have never been able to account, although it invariably recurs to bulbs left in my garden by accident.

Dahlias and begonias may be left out until touched by frost, and then should be dug up and stored in cocoanut fibre. Begonias in pots had better be brought in, for fear of the frost injuring the tubers, placed in a cool (not cold) position, and given gradually less and less water, until they die off naturally, after which pots may be stood anywhere out of reach of the frost, and kept fairly dry until March.

Roses which were repotted in August should now be brought into the shelter of a cool house or frame, not into heat.

Now is the best time to plant English peonies, red, white and pink, which are so hardy. They do best in a position which the sun does not reach much before noon, and demand a quantity of rotten manure, dug into the ground before planting, and more laid above ground afterwards.

Rhododendrons also move best at this season, and like a partially-shaded situation with plenty of sand and peat in the soil. Professionals recommend mingling lilies with both these plants, to which they form a good succession; but in my experience lilies will only grow satisfactorily in the warmest positions of the garden, wanting probably all the sun they can get in London.

Lilies to remain in their present situation

should be treated with sand and soot as recommended in November. Where new ones are to be planted the earth should be first well enriched with rotten manure, and a quantity of the latter ought to be laid now on old beds of lily of the valley.

Lawns should no longer be cut, but otherwise will possibly require a good deal of attention. During "soft" weather they may still be rolled daily, and a careful, systematic search should be made for weeds. The best way to make sure that all these are really eradicated is to stretch a string across about six inches from one end, and work along one side of this line with a strong short-bladed knife, then move the string another six inches forward and proceed in the same way. Some weeds, like daisies and dandelions, will each come clearly out of one hole; but others are much more complicated, having rhizomes like strawberries, which go along under the turf for some distance, and throw up young offshoots at frequent intervals. In their case it is important to make sure that we reach the end of the runners. When the whole lawn has been gone over, a work probably of many days, or even weeks, the bare patches left by the weeds ought to be slightly forked up, sown with seed sold on purpose for tennis lawns by first class seedsmen, and then covered with fine sifted earth, formed equally of old manure and loam, with a little charcoal dust mixed in. Should the patches be very large, it may be better to cut out a square altogether and to insert new turf. I always take the opportunity of making a few holes, filling with sand and planting therein a few crocuses,

snowdrops, or scillas before sewing the seed or laying new turf. The latter operation is rather difficult, and is perhaps better left to professionals, as amateur work is apt to result in holes or lumps, marring the level surface which is one of the beauties of a good lawn. Nevertheless, by taking care to first nearly fill the hole with earth, smooth that down quite evenly, cut the new turf to within half an inch of the length required, unroll it perfectly straight, beat it well with a spade (failing the proper wooden tool), and roll constantly over the patch subsequently, a workmanlike girl ought to manage it.

There are two or three points which I should like to impress on anyone who may contemplate starting a heated greenhouse, the first being, that as far as is consistent with a warm aspect it should be built close to the house, and if possible with a door entering from it, otherwise the poor plants may be left to starve or freeze when bad weather cools their mistress's enthusiasm, and makes her hesitate about catching cold for their sake. For similar reasons, the stove, whether heated by coal, gas, or oil, should be under cover and well within a girl's powers of management. The arrangement of stages, etc., is another important consideration, and I am inclined to think the most convenient plan is to have a tiled path down the centre parallel with the length, with a rack shelf on either side, just high enough to stand at without stooping, and not too wide to be easily reached over; at the end opposite the door three or four narrow shelves above each other. A narrow shelf should also go all round the

building about a foot from the roof; and underneath the stages should be borders of good earth, which would be found extremely useful for planting climbers for walls and roof, growing ferns or other plants which require shade, or plunging many things in pots for greater warmth. In stocking such a house, whether heated or not, starting only with such plants as require similarity of treatment will save an immense amount of trouble in rearing them, and ensure them all being fairly healthy. It requires infinite care to make stove plants flourish in a temperature suited to hardier things like carnations, or soft-wooded plants like geraniums in the moist warmth liked by ferns. The best way of all to keep a greenhouse bright continually with a little trouble is to begin with very few sorts and many specimens of each, rather than one or two each of widely different species.

It has been a great pleasure to me to gather up my scattered experiences and gardening memories into these papers, and it would be a still greater to know that they had induced any of the readers of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER to follow flower growing as a daily amusement. For if undertaken at all, it certainly must be followed daily for the plants to have a fair chance, therefore it is distinctly unsuited to girls of weak constitution, incapable of fatigue, and sensitive to cold; on the other hand to those obliged to stay much at home and subject to neuralgia and kindred complaints it will prove, I am sure, one of the best possible tonics, and it is astonishing how soon one becomes inured to the slight amount of exposure necessary.

THE GREAT JAVA ERUPTION.

By LADY MARY WOOD.

"DURING the closing days of the month of August, 1883, the telegraph-cable from Batavia carried to Singapore, and thence to every part of the civilised world, the news of a terrible subterranean convulsion—one which, in its destructive results to life and property, and in the startling character of the world-wide effects to which it gave rise, is perhaps without a parallel in historic times."

Such are the opening words of the Report of the Committee appointed by the Royal Society (January, 1884), to collect evidence and enquire into the extraordinary phenomena connected with the eruption of Krakatoa, which report was only completed in 1887.

More than five years have gone by since this report was laid before the Royal Society; and though nowadays most great events pass and are forgotten in the light of newer and more startling ones, yet with regard to one which, by its magnitude, may fairly be said to belong not to a month or to a nation, but the century and the world, five years is, as it were, nothing; more especially as it is not impossible that some of my readers may have never even heard of a convulsion of nature so vast that Professor Judd characterises it as perhaps one without parallel in historic times.

In any case, to most people this eruption of Krakatoa was a mere matter of passing interest, principally impressed on the mind in connection with the glorious after-glow of the sunsets during the winter of 1883-4, which it was difficult to believe possible could arise from so apparently remote a cause. A short time ago, however, having come across this deeply-interesting volume, full of the most curious details and startling facts and observations, the desire arose in my mind to put down, within the compass of a short article, a few of the most striking points, for the benefit

of those who, like myself, have no scientific knowledge, but who cannot fail to listen with wonder and astonishment to the evidence collected by the Commissioners and published by them. The following account consists almost entirely of extracts from the Report, put together and abridged, and I have only ventured to copy out those portions of general interest which seemed suitable for the purpose.

Krakatoa, the greatest focus of volcanic activity upon the globe, is a small island in the Straits of Sunda, not far distant from Java. The first reports of the eruption were apparently misleading. And this was not astonishing, considering the effect produced on the inhabitants of the towns and villages along the shores of the Sunda Straits by the thick darkness which spread over the land, the awful booming roar, the succession of overwhelming sea-waves, which swept away thousands of lives; while overhead balls of fire rushing through the air, incessant flashes of lightning alone illuminating the darkness, and reports as of a thousand guns firing into space, must have led people to imagine that the end of the world had indeed come.

For some time after the eruption the Sunda Strait was almost impassable. Lighthouses had been swept away, all the old familiar landmarks on the shores were obscured by a vast deposit of volcanic dust; the sea itself was encumbered with enormous masses of floating pumice, in many places of such thickness that no vessel could force its way through them (some pieces falling on deck were the size of a pumpkin); and it was only by slow degrees that authentic information was collected and obtained.

The spectacle of the burning mountain itself must have been one never to be forgotten by those who witnessed it. The first explosion was heard by Captain Thomson, of

the *Medea*, at 2 p.m. on August 26th; and he saw a column of dust, like a black mass, rise up like smoke into the clouds, to an altitude which has been estimated as being no less than 17 miles. When one considers that during the eruption of Vesuvius, in 1872, it only reached the altitude of from 4 to 5 miles, some idea of the violence of the eruption of Krakatoa may be gathered by comparison.

Viewing the volcano from the north-east at sunset, Captain Woolridge describes the sky as "of a most terrible appearance; the dense mass of clouds being covered with a murky tinge, with fierce flashes of lightning." At 7 p.m., when the dense vapour and dust-clouds rendered it intensely dark, the whole scene was lighted up from time to time by the electrical discharge; and at one time the cloud above the mountain presented the appearance of an immense pine-tree, with the stem and branches formed with volcanic lightning. The air was loaded with excessively fine ashes, and there was a strong sulphureous smell; bursts of lightning, at times like large serpents, rushed through the air; the immense wall (of cloud and vaporous smoke), resembling after sunset a blood-red curtain, with the edges of all shades of yellow. And another describes chains of fire, appearing to ascend between the volcano and the sky; while on the south-west side there seemed to be a continual roll of balls of white fire.

Captain Samson describes these balls of fire, at a distance of 40 miles from the volcano, as resting on the mast-heads and the extremities of the yard-arms. Others describe a mud rain, which covered masts, rigging, and decks, and was phosphorescent, like St. Elmo's fire. The natives busily employed themselves in putting it out with their hands, stokers and all. The Europeans had to drive the machinery themselves; for the natives thought