of watering, which is a subject of the utmost importance, and in the administration of which mistakes are made than in almost any other department. The window gardener should thoroughly understand when and how to water, a knowledge by experience better than any hard and fast rule laid down. The principal thing is to keep a regular system in your watering. Look over your watering-pots in summer, and every alternate morning. The soil of the garden is of the first importance. No dirty plant will thrive. The fine dust always floating about settles on the leaves and chokes up the powers of the plants. After the leaves are smooth (or shiny) this may be easily removed by washing with a small sponge; but where the soil is coarse and with small hair greater caution should be used in the washing of them, lest they become injured in the process. Dirt must never be allowed to become incrustated on the leaves, which are to the plants what our lungs are to us. Nothing is so refreshing to them as a natural shower bath. Never therefore lose the power of giving them this gift, and turn them out without fear in the summer time whenever a gentle warm rain is falling. Spraying will in some measure be of service, but it should be laid on its side, so as to prevent the water running down into the flower-pot.

A great point to be kept in view is, that in winter the warmer the better. The longer life, whereas in summer, when growth is active, enough must be given, not only to supply waste, but to allow of the formation of new tissues. The higher the temperature, the faster the work must be done, as the pot is well-drained no bad results need be feared. In a good soil the water passes rapidly away. A pot therefore that contains a layer of earth which requires water the most frequently, as it shows that the roots are assimilating the nourishment afforded them. Do not water a plant that is already wet, but wait until it dries, and then give it sufficient water to moisten the ball thoroughly. A little water in a dangerous thing, as it excites the roots without nourishing them; it is better to water much and seldom than little and often.

Be careful to empty the saucers in which flowers stand directly the water has passed through the ball of earth. No one (except seen by some people) do pour the water from the saucer back again on the plant. The general practice is to fill the saucer with the soil, and feeling it with the fingers, allow it to come to earth. The amateur when plants require water. Soil, when moist, is much heavier than when dry; you will therefore in time be able to tell the state of the earth in the pot by lifting it and testing its weight.

Now, as regards the water to be used:

1. Always use soft water in preference to that drawn from wells or springs. And—2 (which is most important of all), never use cold water. From October to May the water should be heated to a temperature of 70° F. Before being poured on the plants.

The thermometer should be taken at once to the room, and the air ought to be as close to the light as possible, as thereby there is less danger of their becoming drawn.

Air.—Ventilation is quite as necessary in winter as in summer, and there are very few days in the year on which the window should not be opened. A light breeze is healthful.

But when you open the window mind and shut the door, for a draught is most prejudicial to plants, as well as to human beings. The more hearty our flowers are, the more will they require the renovating effects of fresh air in the morning. Night will not do, as the air, the free admission of which will render the plants strong and hardy.

Water.—We now come to the consideration

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WINDOW GARDENING.

By CYPRIESE DICK.

There are many people who love flowers, yet have neither garden nor greenhouse of their own to grow flowers in. The question how to grow plants successfully in windows is therefore of great interest. With them it is the case of Mahomet going up the mountain. The gardener won't come to them out of doors, and yet the flowers will come to them in the window-box, if there is one, or on a stand in the room. Certainly that is not a difficult thing to do, but that is only the beginning; for if you have brought the plants indoors, you must treat them properly, much as you would treat yourself; even more carefully, for a plant in a pot is at least for less in an unnatural condition, and demands the greatest solicitude. Plants have not the same power of resistance in adverse circumstances that humans have; they are not strong enough to sit for some hours in a room the air of which is vitiated by gas with only the effect of a slight headache, a condition of atmosphere which would be lethal to a cyclone. Hence some men or a maiden-hair fern were these plants placed therein for any length of time.

Light, air, and water are the three principal agents which help to nourish flowers and keep them in a healthy condition. Let us consider each in turn.

Light plays a most important part in vegetable existence. Plants are almost entirely composed of water and carbon. When the sap is spread out on the leaves it discharges by evaporation about two-thirds of its water; but the remaining third is reduced to vapor by the light, for darkness stops it. The leaves then inhale a portion of oxygen, which unites with the carbon in the air to form carbonic acid. The light here again is called upon to help the plants, and has the effect by its continued action of decomposing the carbonic acid thus formed, and forming carbon in the sap. Carbon, it is said, is of a very deep blue colour, and being seen through the thin yellowish outer covering or bark of the leaves, causes them to appear green. Hence when there is deficiency of light the deep blue carbon is not formed, plants appear no longer green, but sickly. Now although all this may seem pretty dry and far removed from the strange words, yet if you read it over two or three times carefully, and talk about it, you will soon learn what it means. You will also see the reason why plants should not be allowed to remain in bedrooms at night, as in the dark they absorb the oxygen and do not give it out again. Thus they are taking away from the human being, who may be sleeping in the same room, all the life-giving property of the air. Some invalids are very prone to fill their rooms with powerfully scented flowers, which are removed as soon as it becomes dark. If you have plants on a stand in the window they should be so arrange that each one gets its full complemen of light, the leaves being turned half round each morning, otherwise they will grow one-sided; the part which is always to the light being fuller and stronger than that which is turned towards the room; but by constantly shifting the pots this will be avoided. A deep bow-window facing south is the best exposure, where the morning sun can come in on the east, and the light of the setting sun on the west, especially in winter. If the choice is between an easterly or westerly window, choose the easterly, as being better than that of the afternoon. The plants should be as close to the light as possible, as thereby there is less danger of their becoming drawn.

Air.—Ventilation is quite as necessary in winter as in summer, and there are very few days in the year on which the window should not be opened. The air is, in fact, a breath of health. But when you open the window mind and shut the door, for a draught is most prejudicial to plants, as well as to human beings. The more hearty our flowers are, the more will they require the renovating effects of fresh air in the morning. Night will not do, as the air, the free admission of which will render the plants strong and hardy.

Water.—We now come to the consideration
THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER.

water. Pure water (still tepid) should be given to them, as nothing of the nature of nursery water can contact the delicate fibres; also the leaves must not be syringed when the sun is shining upon them, or they will turn brown. You may water the roots of plants; but not the foliage (although not advisable to do so), but never the leaves.

Now let us consider the treatment of your window-garden, first in winter, and then in summer. The moist and light soil will be kept in a dry position like a window-sill, exposed to the air on every side; quickly get dry in summer, and unless constantly watered too often become waterlogged and soft. If placed in a south window, the pots get so hot that the tender roots inside are scorched and much injured. So that it is better, if you still desire to have flowers by the hearth, to have them in some way, and the best means of so doing is to have a suitable box made to fit the window-sill, in which your pots can be sunk, surrounded with moss or compost, and then kept steady, and retain moisture. This box should be as large and as wide as possible, and can be painted over by any carpenter for a trifling sum. About a dozen holes should be made in the bottom, and three or four cross strips about half an inch thick be nailed on the bottom as a bottom to them to run away as freely. A coat of green paint outside will give it a finish. Much enjoyment can be obtained from window-gardening in summer if, instead of planting in a box, you plant them out in soil. Some flowering plants do better in the soil, released from their pots, but, on the other hand, they cannot be so easily changed as to accommodate them to the various uses to which I have referred, the east, and you will be sure to succeed, and in February you may look for results. Secondly, flowering plants, which if you buy you must obtain as thick and bushy as possible, not long and lanky, and turn the plants gently out of the pots before you purchase them, so that they have plenty of roots. Your choice will lie among the pansy, the English pansy, or the violet, the oxalis, primulas, the yellow cornuilla (a capital window-plant), heaths, and the beautiful and sweet-scented Daphne indica. I consider the cyclamen or the Persian violet, and the touchias in winter, as they are sure to get Saragoy and leafless. Thirdly, you can as a background for your flower-stand some foliage-plants, which do well in a room, viz., a dracaena, aucuba japonica, conyza, cimicifuga, a yucca (if you have room for it), and a hardy palm, like chamomiles herbs. A judicious selection from the above will make any room look gay, and afford you the greatest interest all the winter.

The following novel method of cultivating bysyx in winter—Place at the bottom of a large china bowl several lumps of charcoal, then a layer of nice green moss without soil. Place the bulbs here in the moss, and top it with more corker moss. Water about twice a week with tepid water. The bulbs should be planted in a circle, and the bowl placed in the light. I cannot but highly recommend the window ornament, which, however, seems worth trying.—Soak a round piece of coarse sponge in warm water until it is thoroughly expanded, and place it securely in the openings rice, hemp, red clover, and cannary-grass seeds. Hang the sponge in a window above a corner of the room, and add a little daily, and sprinkle it lightly with Luke-warm water every morning for a week. Soon tender

leaves will shoot out, and, growing rapidly, will form a mass of green. If regularly sprinkled the blossoms of the clover will appear.

We now come to speak of summer window-gardening; and I think that nothing answers so well to this as the dwarf chrysanthemums. A few shady spots in the rockery, near some stone steps, or a few pots of chrysanths will make a capital effect. They are quite hardy, and the best varieties are the Chrysanthemum medium and Chrysanthemum flavescens. They bloom in July, August, and September, and are lovely when given a space to spread about in the garden. They can be propagated from cuttings, and the plants are easily transplanted. The flowers are of a rich golden yellow, and the foliage is dark green. When the flowers are fully open, they are quite hardy, and the best varieties are the Chrysanthemum medium and Chrysanthemum flavescens. They bloom in July, August, and September, and are lovely when given a space to spread about in the garden. They can be propagated from cuttings, and the plants are easily transplanted. The flowers are of a rich golden yellow, and the foliage is dark green. When the flowers are fully open, they are

SEASONABLE DRESS AND HOW TO MAKE IT.