

each alternate tree may be removed and replanted, thus making the original plantation twice its former size; they will then stand at three feet apart. The same operation may be repeated in ten or twelve years, when the original plantation will be increased to four times its former size, having the trees six feet apart—that is, if one-fourth of an acre was commenced with, it would take one acre to contain all the trees after ten or twelve years.

DWARF BUSH formed trees, either on the surface-rooting Crabs, *Doucin*, or *Pommier de Paradis*, are easily formed, and for small gardens are much to be preferred to any other form, as they are easily managed, bear abundantly, and the fruit are not subject to be blown down by storms. The trees may be planted exactly as we plant Gooseberry or Currant bushes, from one and a half to six feet apart, according to the kind of stock upon which they are worked. Keep the young shoots thin and regular, stopping them once in the season, say in June, and regulate them by the knife in winter. I am averse to too much summer pruning, as tending to check the flow of the sap too much, and thus causing the tree cells to be over-gorged with juice, which they have no means of evaporating. I have often received trees that have undergone frequent pinching during the summer, and have uniformly found them hide-bound and checked in their health—so much so, that no after care could cure them or ever make them healthy trees. I refer especially to trees sent out by a *great advocate* of repeated summer pinching; they now stand in my nursery, a monument of the man's physiological acumen, and never will be anything but scrubs. Unless great care be taken to avoid depriving a tree too much of its leaves, its health, and the quality and size of the fruit, will be deteriorated; for if we consider the great use of the leaves, we should hesitate to deprive a tree too much of them by repeated summer pinching, and take care to keep up a just equilibrium between the roots and branches. If you wish to keep your trees healthy, pray study the extending system a little. Without leaves you cannot have roots, and without roots your trees will perish. In my next I hope to give a well selected list of the best and most profitable sorts of apples to grow in the Villa Garden.

FLOWER BASKETS FOR THE DRAWING-ROOM.



I AM induced to say a few words in favour of the above for three reasons: first they look so charming if properly filled and arranged, secondly because they last so long in bloom, and thirdly because they cost but little money, a reason by no means to be despised. I have three at present fitted up in the drawing-room; one is high and forms a centre-piece, and the other two are not so high, and form a pair right and left of the centre or taller one, which in the evening is taken into the dining-room and forms a pretty stand for the centre of the table. The advantage of stands of growing flowers over those

of cut ones, is that with cut flowers of course they will take some time to arrange, and will not last fresh more at the most than a few days, whereas the growing ones only require the first arranging, and will last for a wonderfully long time; those I have in use at present have been fitted up more than a month, and are only now beginning to look the least bit shabby. I shall describe those I have at present, as they may form a guide to be improved upon for any who may think of adopting this style of decoration.

The centre stand is of the following shape:—the bottom is a round basket about six inches high and a foot across, round the edge of which is an open plait of basket-work, out of this rise three rods about two feet high, which are tied in at about six inches from the top and form a kind of tripod; on the top of this, resting on the rods, is a small basket the same shape as the bottom, but not more than six inches across; the whole of the wicker work is done with brown varnish, which preserves it; if it were left white it would soon become soiled. The rods or tripod being so high, afford room to see through them, which is a great matter when it is to be used on the dinner-table. The other two stands are of a similar shape to the above, only they are not so large at the base nor nearly so high. The centre stand is filled as follows:—in the top a mauve-coloured cyclamen, round which are four tulips of a pinky mauve and white striped. In the centre of the bottom is a nice plant of *Cyperus alternifolius*, next four hyacinths, two pink and two flesh-coloured, and between these four tulips the same colour as those at the top. The two smaller stands I have made to match. In the top of each a white cyclamen, and in the bottom four pink tulips and four plants of *Echeveria secunda* placed alternately.

I shall now explain how the roots of the plants and soil should be managed, as if this is not done properly the soil will keep running through the baskets, and, moreover, clay to be seen at the roots of the flowers would quite spoil the effect. The baskets should first be lined with moss, such as grows on the trunks of trees and old walls, next place some broken crocks, and then fill in with light soil and plant your flowers in it (in full bloom of course). When you have done this take some more moss of the same kind with which you have lined the basket, only pick out the freshest and nicest-looking pieces, and with these cover the soil quite over, so as to give the effect of the flowers growing in the moss. Water whenever you feel the soil become dry, but do not let the water fall on the blooms. It is best to lift the baskets out on some balcony or on the floor of the conservatory when you are going to water them, and if put on an inverted flower-pot or anything of that kind they will drain through much quicker than they otherwise would do. Thus by taking a little trouble one can have flowers in the sitting-rooms all the year round; those who have greenhouses for the trouble of fitting up the baskets, and those who have not at a very trifling cost.

A. H.

Upper Norwood.