

Leichtlini was figured in the FLORAL WORLD for March, 1869. It is a neat-growing plant, well adapted for the open border, but scarcely showy enough for pot culture.

Longiflorum is a lovely species of dwarf growth, the flowers large for the plant, elegant funnel shaped, and of the purest white within and without. Having invariably succeeded with this species when growing it in pots, and invariably failed when it has been planted out, I am bound to recommend pot culture. In the autumn of 1869 I planted out a large stock of *Longiflorum* in beds of peat, and left them undisturbed until the autumn of 1873, when they had dwindled away to about a fifth of their original number. When these remaining few were taken up and potted, they were found to be in a thoroughly thriving state, with abundance of roots and a perfect nest of bulbs, proving that the peat soil suited them. As they never flowered, and became fewer every year, I conclude that the climate is at fault, especially as this lily grows early, and is usually killed back by spring frosts.

Speciosum or *Lancifolium* is one of the most beautiful, and one of the easiest to manage. It is remarkably hardy, and will thrive in peat or loam, and may be grown in beds or pots without any difficulty. I have had a considerable number of the best varieties of *Speciosum* planted out in beds of peat since the autumn of 1869, and they are now flowering finely, and in the fullest possible vigour. Yet they occupy the very beds which were water-logged last winter, and in which *auratums*, *longiflorums*, *testaceums*, and *chalcidonicums* perished. This showy and accommodating species is badly treated by market growers, who purchase imported bulbs, and pot them in small pots and help them with liquid manure. They send them to market looking glorious, but the bulbs are well nigh ruined. An amateur who should happen to buy market plants would do well to plant them out four inches deep, and forget them. After a year or two they would recover, and again flower in the superb style by which this species is characterized. The best varieties are *rubrum*, *album*, and *punctatum*. S. H.

THE WINTER DECORATION OF FLOWER-BEDS.



WITH the aid of the cheap, neat-growing evergreen shrubs, the flower-garden may be made to present such a beautiful appearance throughout the winter, that we are bound to express our surprise that more attention is not paid to the decoration of the flower-garden during the dead season. Yet, throughout the winter months, all the compartments that have been occupied with flowers during the summer, and especially those so situated as to be within view from the windows of the dwelling-house, might be richly furnished at a very trifling expense. In our remarks on the "Plunging System," which have

appeared in the pages of the FLORAL WORLD, we have endeavoured to show that the compartments adjoining the residence, and especially the most highly-dressed portions of a terrace-garden, might be kept gay at all seasons by the employment of plants in pots, systematically grown in quantities for the purpose. To furnish any considerable extent of ground, however, by the plunging system would be so costly, that it is not to be thought of for the parterre *in extenso*; and, indeed, it is only for very select spots—choice entrance-courts, and beds and borders nearest the windows—that we have advocated its adoption. For all the larger spaces, the simple and comparatively inexpensive plan of planting evergreen shrubs is worthy of adoption. While these things are small, they may be planted in tasteful groups in November, or later, and be wholly removed and replanted in the months of March and April following, without being in the least injured by the proceeding. Thus they may be made to do duty in the parterre throughout the winter, and contribute to the beauty of some other portion of the grounds during the summer, or may go to the reserve-garden, and be forgotten till wanted again.

In the selection of shrubs for this purpose, those kinds which may be purchased at a low price in quantities are to be preferred. Two of the most distinct and generally useful kinds are the common *Aucuba* and *Berberis aquifolium*. The common *Euonymus* is peculiarly rich and cheerful in the winter season, and the variegated varieties are simply superb. There are several varieties of *Box*, both green and variegated, that may be employed; and we must not forget the exhaustless variety of the *Holly*. Mere curiosities are of little use; we want distinct, bold, massive plants. The *Irish Yew*, while small, is an admirable subject to intermix with round-headed bushes of cheerful colour. Amongst coniferous trees, the commonest *Junipers* and *Firs* are to be preferred; but, in this great department of the vegetable kingdom, there is ample room for choice.

The *Arbor Vitæ* are also very useful, as they move well, and have a most ornamental appearance. The round-headed *Thuja aurea* is exceedingly valuable. *T. pyramidalis* and *T. Warreana* are also good. The *Golden Yew* is grand for forming distinct margins to masses of shrubs with dark foliage; as also are the variegated *Aucubas*. The green-leaved *Aucubas* have a bright and sparkling appearance, and, like the *Yews*, they can be transplanted without suffering any material check. The *Retinosporas*, which have the appearance of giant *Lycopodiums*, but are far more beautiful than any of the species at present in cultivation. These can all be grown out of pots, provided care is taken to plant them in their summer quarters by the end of March. The tendency of amateurs is to leave them in the flower-beds until May, and a number of the plants perish in consequence of being removed after they have commenced to make new growth. When lifted late, extra attention must be paid to them; but, in every case, a shady situation for their summer quarters should be selected, and, after a liberal application of water, the surface of the soil should be covered with litter of some kind to keep it cool and moist. By systematic cultivation of

suitable plants in pots (which, of course, occasions more labour than plants grown in the open border), a grand system of grouping may be carried out with subjects that are noble and various in aspect, and rich in point of interest for the observant cultivator. From the genus *Hedera* alone we may derive materials for the complete furnishing of a winter garden. The fine chocolate hue of the Shining Ivy; the light green of the Algerian Ivy; the rich dark green of the common Irish and arborescent English Ivy; the solemn blackish tone of Regner's Ivy; and the bright creamy, rosy, and silvery hues of the variegated-leaved Ivies, afford such abundant variety, combined with a delightful freshness of colouring, that we may safely pronounce the cultivation of these plants in pots to be one of the first necessary steps towards rendering our gardens as beautiful during winter as they might be with the wealth of material at our command. But we may add to these many other beautiful subjects, which can only be made available for the winter garden by systematic pot-culture—such, for example, as the *Skimmias*, with their abundance of red berries; the *Cratægus pyracantha*, with its huge bunches of fiery scarlet berries; the yellow-berried tree Ivy; and a host of handsome Japanese shrubs.

It scarcely need be said that a little taste and judgment must be exercised in carrying into effect a suggestion of this kind. In the first instance, if the trees are to be planted in the beds without being prepared for the purpose by pot-culture, the smaller they are, the more likely are they to bear such treatment without injury. But, if potted trees are plunged, they may, of course, be grown on to any size consistent with the wandering life they are to follow; and so long as they can be lifted, they may have larger and larger pots, and grow as freely as they please. But, for temporary planting, trees one to three feet high should be preferred to those of larger size. The planting in the beds should be done with as much care as if they were intended to remain there; and it would be well to plant them rather deep, both to secure the roots against the possibility of injury by frost, and to give them a firm hold, and prevent the stems being loosened by the wind. The transplanting from these beds to the quarters they are to occupy the next summer must be still more carefully performed. In the first place, the trenches and stations they are to be transferred to should be well dug and broken up; and, unless the soil is already of a rich, friable, kindly nature, a liberal allowance of good rotten manure should be afforded for all except coniferous trees, and these should have the aid of leaf-mould. If they are transplanted immediately after the easterly winds that usually blow in March have spent their animosity on the land, they will probably make roots immediately in their new quarters, and require no more care. But if east winds blow for any length of time after their removal, they are likely to be somewhat browned and impoverished. Nevertheless, the risk of injury is extremely small, provided proper care is taken in the management.

S. H.