



OUR GARDEN IN MARCH.



ARCH is, generally speaking, the first month of the year in which we are really conscious that winter is at length left behind us; and if the blaze of crocuses and early hyacinths in our open flower-beds tells us that we have actually begun to enjoy the spring, the advance is still more perceptible when we take a survey under our glass. And here in our greenhouse

our bulb display by this time should be good. All plants of the bulb class should now be kept well watered, while there are other flowers which we shall select to say a few words about before passing on to work outside.

It may sound a melancholy idea to talk early in the year about chrysanthemums; nevertheless, there is something to do to them this month. We gardeners must work by routine, or everything will go wrong. We begin, then, preparing them for autumn flowering by taking off, and then potting singly, the best of the off-sets or suckers from the base, or what we may call the old stool of the plant. It matters little if we take them off with hardly any roots attached to them, but they must then be planted in a good, but moderate, heat until they get thoroughly rooted and established. After this they must be potted

off singly, and in the pots in which they are to blow in the autumn, but they must not be nursed up, but grown quite hardy when once they have made a start.

We have on a former occasion spoken of the general management of camellias. Their flowering time over, let them be re-potted, while of those that do not require re-potting you ought at least to examine the drainage, and make perfect there anything you find amiss. The surface of the soil, too, should be renewed. Some, however, have recommended potting in autumn, but it is now most generally done in the early spring, after the flowering is over, and just previous to the start of the new wood.

Akin to our small greenhouse is our window garden. All the plants in our windows this month require as much light as you can give them, but only a very moderate watering. When fresh air, too, is given to your window plants—and this, it is needless to say, should be daily—it is far safer to put your plants entirely outside for a time than by opening your window, having the plants still just inside the room, to expose them thus suddenly to all the cutting draught of a March wind. And as for ferns, hardy ones can be successfully reared in a window, but the more delicate ones should have glass over them, for anything like a smoky atmosphere would certainly affect them.

Another important and necessary operation this month is the pruning of the standard roses; and this should be done some time during the first ten days of the month. Some considerable care, too, is required with the pruning-knife. First of all should be removed all those long, thin, and spindly branches, pretty close to the very point from which they spring, as they are certain to be of little use—we might say of no use—for after-bloom or growth, and only exhaust the roots.