

EDITOR'S TABLE.

EDITORIAL CHIT-CHAT.

THE POT CULTURE OF MIGNONETTE.—The mignonette is one of the most universal favorites among all plants admired for their perfume. It is a true ladies' flower, being of the simplest cultivation. It is equally suited for the window-box, the pot, the forecourt, the well-kept garden of the villa, or the humble cottage-plot. It is also one of the hardiest of plants; enduring the roughest treatment with comparative impunity, although in the borders it will not stand frost. In such a position, however, being killed down is of little importance, for there will always be found sufficient self-sown seedlings to supply the place of the victims to the rigors of winter, year after year. For this reason, mignonette has no superior as a surfacing to odd and out-of-the-way corners; as it will grow anywhere, even in the most smoky cities, and as it continues a good time in flower, such spots in the garden as almost defy the skill of the cultivator may be rendered useful, if not beautiful, by supplying a store of fragrant sprigs, always acceptable for bouquets, vases, and similar uses.

The mignonette came originally from North Africa, or from Egypt, as some say; but at the present time, like many other plants and flowers, there are so many new and improved varieties, with which the common kind is not to be compared, that the latter is scarcely worth the purchase. Still it may be used broadcast, or in patches for the rougher work, diffusing its delicious fragrance for a considerable distance from the place in which it grows. It is the inflorescence, of course, from which the perfume proceeds; and this, though so inconspicuous in itself, if thick and even, as it will be in good soil, is not to be altogether despised as an adjunct in color-planting to the range of greenish neutral-grays. In some of the novel kinds, however, a considerable advance has been accomplished in the size and color of the flower, as well as in stontness of growth; and it is to the latter of these fine varieties, and their treatment in pots, pans, and boxes, that the attention of the reader will now be directed. The present month is an excellent time to begin sowing mignonette, to bloom in early summer. Another may be made in July, to be followed again by one in September. These will furnish a succession of bloom, if fairly managed, throughout the year.

Although there is no plant of equal popularity which is less particular as to soil, or which requires less attention, so there is none which will better repay the exercise of high culture and care. It lends itself also readily to various modes of training, such as the tree, the cushion, the spiral, or the bush. The first consideration is to obtain good seed. The soil employed in culture ought to be rich; it may, of course, be lighter for the first raising of the seedlings. One-half loam, one-fourth part manure, one-fourth part leaf-mold, well mixed, and used in as rough a state as possible, will form an excellent compost. Let the worms be carefully picked out before using it. Deep pans will be preferable for the first sowings, out of which the seedlings, when strong enough, may be thinned for potting or for the boxes. Thus two or three pans will suffice to raise many plants for advanced growth.

Tree mignonette may be described as an artificial production, the result of skillful training. It is also a work of time, not to be accomplished in a single year. Nor is this form of growth suited for out-of-doors. The course to be pursued is as follows: Select, first, a young and vigorous

plant of one of the strongest-habited varieties, such as Tall Pyramidal Mignonette, or Crimson Giant. Having selected the particular seedling-plant, take a 32-sized pot to begin with. Let it be filled with one-third of crocks for drainage, and the remaining part with the compost already described nearly up to the rim. In the centre of this let the plant be placed, carefully spreading the roots without injury, and covering them with a little sandy loam and leaf-mold, to encourage them to take kindly to their new position. Press the soil lightly down, and put a stick for supporting the stalk. When the process is completed, the pots should be stood in a warm and shady place till they have become established, when they may be brought gradually into light and air. Water moderately as required with tepid soft water, and permit growth in the ordinary way.

This plan is to be carried out with all seedlings of mignonette, though, except for the "tree," two or three plants are sufficient to be put into the pot or pan; a six-inch pot is sufficient. The first blooms which show must be pinched off to induce a bushy growth, and this may be continued for three weeks or so, after which the natural course of blooming may be allowed. In this way fine cushion-like or pyramidal specimens may be produced, which will flower about five months after sowing, and continue flowering for a considerable time. Now to return to forming the "tree." The flowers are to be taken off as soon as they appear during the first season. The lower shoots must be removed in autumn, and the plants during the winter must be kept in a room, or house, or pit, quite free from frost. The second season it is to be treated in a similar manner, and during the year it may be allowed to bloom, which it will do for a long time, and continue to do so, if taken care of, for several years. Liquid manure may be occasionally given to specimen plants of mignonette, and they must be kept from a damp soil and stagnant atmosphere, and freely exposed when established to light and air.

THE FASHION IN FANS, just now, is for large black ones, and even large white ones, painted with birds. Silk fans, cut out round the edge in undulations, with a chain of large linked roses painted at the edge, and black ostrich feathers, with a wreath of hanging daisies, are among the most popular. At balls and parties, this season, several of the dried palm-leaf fans, with a large spray of choice real flowers and ferns fastened across, and the handle bound and finished off with satin ribbon, have been seen, because it has been much the fashion to send these to young ladies instead of bouquets. A veil of lace sometimes conceals the unadorned side, but not often.

THE LONG TAN GLOVES are not quite as general as they were, but gloves matching the dresses are worn, such as gray with a gray tulle and satin costume, cream with white and cream, lavender with lavender, etc. A few gloves have been seen with a serpent or some other device worked up the backs in colored beads, and some of the black ones, with steel or jet, as simulated bracelets, at the top.

WE GIVE AN EXTRA colored pattern, in this number, in order to show the various styles and patterns of the "Hungarian-stitch." Next month, we shall give a design for a quilt, in "German Linen Work."