

THE SIMPLE LIFE



THE HOME GARDEN

GARDEN CALENDAR FOR JULY

Plant: Many Hardy Border Plants if weather is suitable. And especially, Pyrethrum, Delphinium (cut back for late flowering), Gaillardia, Narcissus, Iris reticulata, Winter Greens.

Sow: Cabbage for Spring, Colewort, Peas, quick growing kinds, Carrot, Cauliflower, Mustard and Cress, Dwarf Beans, Lettuce, Coo and Cabbage, Onion, Turnip, Endive, Early Horn Carrot in shade, Radishes in shade, Parsley, Prickly Spinach, Black Spanish Radish, Calceolaria, if not sown, Brompton Stock, Queen Stock, Antirrhinum, Cucumber.

TO OUR READERS



OME months ago, when considering ways and means whereby the Sunday Supplement and the Semi-Weekly Colonist could be improved and made more educational and interesting, it was decided to inaugurate a Simple Life department, devoted to the interests of Horticulture and Agriculture in British Columbia. It was thought that the most thorough and appropriate manner to do this was to publish reliable information regarding the propagation and cultivation of the different varieties of fruits and flowers which are adapted to this climate, together with articles on the different methods of scientific agriculture and the raising of live stock and poultry. We have from time to time printed illustrations showing specimens of fruit and flowers, and some of the beautiful gardens and farm scenes reproduced from photographs kindly contributed by some of our readers.

That this department is appreciated is shown by the numerous letters received during the past year, not only from our British Columbia readers, but from Eastern Canada and far-away England.

This appreciation spurs us on to better efforts, and we can promise that everything that can be done will be done to make "The Simple Life" a welcome visitor in every home.

We do not hold these columns open to controversial matters, but we do cordially invite contributions having a direct bearing on the various subjects under discussion. Send in your experiences. It may help others. If you have produced some extra fine specimens of flowers or fruit, send it along, and if it is worthy, and arrives in fresh condition, we will photograph and reproduce it, and let the world know what can be produced in our fair land. Photographs of gardens and farm scenes are requested. We will, however, not guarantee to return photographs, as it is often necessary to re-touch them in order to obtain a proper picture.

THREE MONTHS OF IRIS BLOOM

The iris is the poor man's orchid. Like the orchids, there are many kinds which can be grown with comparative ease, while, on the other hand, there are a number of kinds which are interesting from the amateur's point of view, because they are either rare or their exacting requirements tax the enthusiast's ingenuity to its utmost in furnishing conditions under which they will thrive.

Unlike the orchids, however, their cost is moderate. Bulbs or roots of the commoner kinds can be bought for a few cents apiece, while the possession of some of the rarer kinds will necessitate an outlay of, perhaps, two or three dollars for only a small root.

By a selection of species and varieties, an almost unbroken succession of iris bloom can be had from early spring until July.

The earliest-flowering irises belong to the reticulata group, of which *Iris reticulata* is the most common. These are bulbous irises, and they are dwarf, growing from six to eighteen inches high and blooming in March. They have flowers of a purple shade and are showy. These are best grown in sheltered, sunny situations, or in rockeries, but in some localities it is best to protect the flowers by a frame, as the dampness stains the flowers. There are several varieties of this species. The best forms are Krelagei, which blooms just before, and histrioides, which blooms just after, the type.

An even earlier-flowering iris, but not so showy, is *Bakeriana*, which is blue, with purple and orange markings.

Mr. J. N. Girard, of Elizabeth, N. J., who has grown more irises than any one else in this country, finds that those of this group prefer a peaty, sandy soil, and will not tolerate the existence of any organic manure; and that, for the best success, they must be planted where they can be kept dry during the summer. He has also found it necessary, frequently, to change the position of the bulbs until a suitable environment has been found. If the plants commence to increase the second year they may be left where they are, but if not, they should be removed to another locality in the garden.

The June group flower in late March and April. They are also bulbous and prefer a well-drained soil, which is rather stiff, and it is essential to their success that the situation be one which will permit the bulbs being kept dry and baked by the sun during the summer, or resting period.

After these bulbs have flowered, the season of bloom may be continued in late April and May by some of the dwarf rhizomatous kinds. These grow from six to nine inches high, and are much more easily cultivated than those which I have already described.

The best known is *pumila*, which has, as a rule, a lilac-colored flower, but is very variable, so that the flowers may be had in all shades of purple and blue. There is also a yellow and a white variety. This is an extremely useful

species to grow as an edging for beds, along walks or similar situations.

There are two native irises—*cristata* and *verna*—which are also grown for bloom at this same time. *Cristata* is the gem of the dwarf irises. It increases rapidly and bears an abundance of light blue flowers, and is very good for naturalizing. *Verna* will succeed in partial shade.

An iris confounded with the *pumila*, and blooming about the same time, is *chamaeiris*. This has yellow flowers, but it has a variety, the *italiana*, with flowers of a dark violet hue.

In May, the taller kinds known as the German iris begin to bloom. Probably the true *Germanica* is not in cultivation at the present time; at least, it is seldom met with in gardens. The *Germanica* of the gardens are hybrids of *I. Florentina*, *I. pallida*, *I. variegata*, *I. neglecta* and *I. plicata*, and some of the other closely allied species.

The first of all these in bloom is the species *Florentina*, the roots of which is the orris-root of commerce. It has pearly white flowers which are produced in abundance, and the flowers grow from one and one-half to two feet high. There are several named varieties of this species, but the best one is the *Prince*

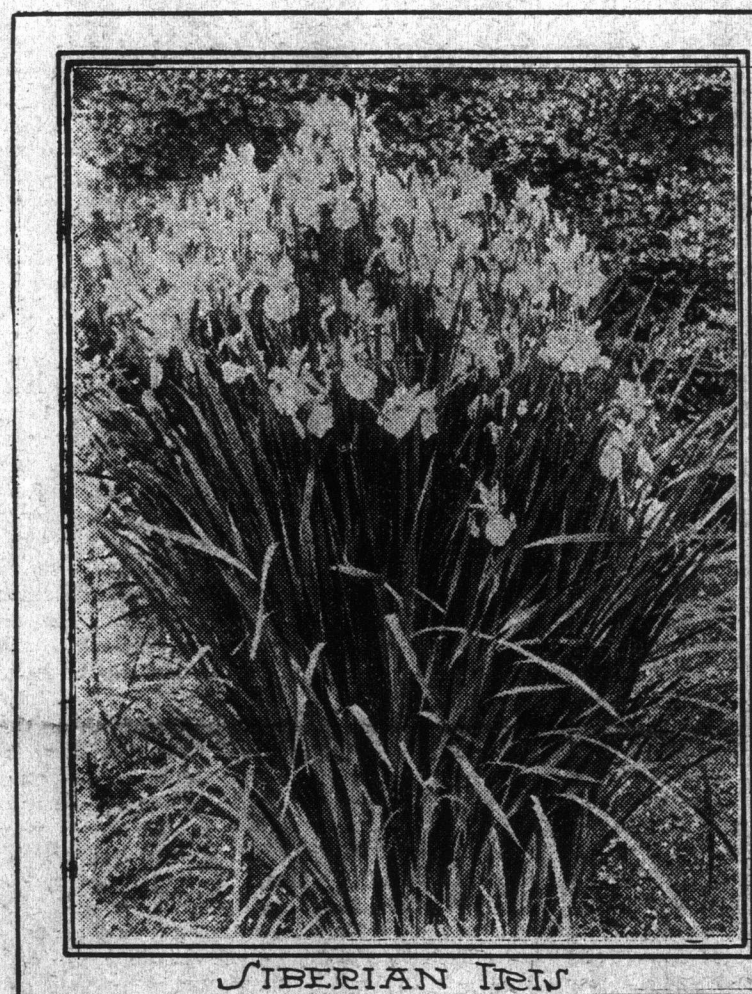
THE WORTH OF GARDENING

The people of our country should see to it that the grounds around and about their homes, their schools, their parks and all private and public places are made as beautiful as it is possible to make them within the bounds of good taste and economy, says the Canadian Horticulturist. To a great extent, travelers and tourists estimate the prosperity and civilization of a country or community by the homes and public places of its people as these things betray our ideals of comfort and beauty. It is important, therefore, to make the appearance of our homes attractive and impressive. Compare a residence in the town or country that stands bleak and alone on a bare plain or stark and cold against the sky, with one backed by a grove and surrounded with well-chosen shrubbery and flowers, tastefully arranged. The contrast is obvious. The first is nothing more than a "house," the latter may be fittingly termed a "home."

The traveling public recognize the force of the contrast and are impressed by it. Such an impression is not temporary, especially when it is not a pleasant one. The critical tourist is more apt to retain and speak about the bad

night. The object in placing it at the top of the water is that, as it dissolves, the material will sink and expose fresh surfaces of the crystals to the action of the water. Should the vitrol be placed immediately at the bottom of the barrel, it would not all dissolve as when it goes into solution it is heavier than water and would remain at the bottom, and after a certain point, the water would have no action. At the time of placing the vitrol in the barrel, slack in a separate receptacle, 4 lbs. of lime in water just sufficient to do the work. The following morning fill the barrel to within a measurement of the top that will be equal to the quantity of slacked lime that is to be put in. Then stir the whole vigorously. The chief secret in preparing the mixture is to have at least one of the solutions thoroughly diluted before the other is added. If a concentrated solution of vitrol comes in contact with a strong solution of lime, a compound will be produced chemically that will injure the trees.

The foregoing is the fungicide. To make it of insecticidal value as well, add four ounces of Paris green. First place the four ounces in a small can and make a paste of it and add it to the Bordeaux as a paste rather than dry.



SIBERIAN IRIS



SPANISH IRIS



JAPANESE IRIS

Every time that a quantity of the solution is taken from the barrel, it must be stirred well as Paris green does not go into solution and must be kept in suspension by constant agitation.

GARDEN NOTES

The Yellow Paeony

Paeonia lutea was introduced from the mountains of Yunnan in China about twenty years ago, but it has not yet found much favor as a garden plant, although it appears to be hardy enough to bear outdoor cultivation, in the warmer parts of this country at any rate, and its bright yellow semi-double flowers, 4 in. across, are as charming as a yellow rose. The rootstock is fleshy and the short stem decidedly woody, which places it among what are known as tree paeonies. The leaves are deciduous, glabrous, pinnatifid, glaucous beneath, bright green above, with reddish nerves. The first plants flowered had uniformly yellow flowers, but an improved form has been raised which has been named *Superba*. It is characterized by larger leaves and flowers than the type, and the petals are blotched at the base with crimson.

The Laburnum

It is a fortunate thing that lilac, hawthorn, and laburnum have long been thoroughly accepted and extensively planted by the suburban gardener; consequently the most uninteresting of roads are now ablaze with a profusion of color, and for a little while the passerby can hardly feel but gay. The great merit of the laburnum is that it will thrive anywhere, and is rarely out of place, but in its case familiarity has bred contempt to the extent that it is rarely afforded a good position, or much utilized. Again, inferior varieties are very often planted; indeed, probably very many people are not aware that there is more than one species and a considerable number of varieties, and would be astonished if they were shown the difference between the flowers of *L. vulgare* and the best varieties of the superior (but later flowering) *L. alpinum*, the Scotch or Alpine laburnum, or the hybrid kinds. These include *grandiflorum*, *parkii*, *vossi*, *watereri*, and *autumnalis*, but the best laburnum with which we are acquainted is a little known one called *Latest* and *Longest*. This has racemes which rival those of a wistaria in size. *L. adamii* is a remarkable hybrid resulting from the grafting of *Cytisus purpureus* on *L. alpinum*, which occasionally bears yellow and purple flowers and *Cytisus* and laburnum leaves upon the

features of the country then he is to applaud the points of excellence. To obviate bad impressions, it is necessary to make the good features prominent and striking. All patriotic citizens should do their part in stimulating this means of national advertising.

BORDEAUX MIXTURE

The best general mixture for spraying fruit trees and bushes is Bordeaux mixture and Paris green; the former a fungicide and the second an insecticide. A combination of these materials will hold in check most diseases and insects that trouble such plants.

To be effective and to prevent injury to the leaves, Bordeaux mixture must be prepared in a particular way. The formula is as follows: Four lbs. copper sulphate (blue vitriol) and four lbs. lime, to 40 gallons of water. This will make one barrel. To prepare a small quantity, fill a 40-gallon barrel about one-third full of water, place the four lbs. of vitriol in a coarse sack and suspend it in the centre of the barrel, low enough to be just covered with the water. This may be done by placing a stick across the top of the barrel and tying the sack to it. Do this in the evening so that the vitriol will dissolve during the

same branch. These colors do not, however, combine at all well, and we consider it to be more curious than beautiful.

The Sorrels

It is remarkable that whilst the rhubarb is a most popular vegetable in this country and of comparatively little account in France, Belgium, Italy, etc., its near relations, the sorrels, are largely grown for salading, etc., in those countries, whilst the Britisher leaves such things to his sheep. And yet there is no question of the wholesomeness of sorrels, nor, when they are made up by some one who understands them, are sorrel salads in any way inferior to those in which lettuce and endive are principal ingredients. Sorrels are easily cultivated, and no plant pays better for cultivation, the crispness and flavor of the leaves being largely influenced by the soil and water they grow upon. There is little variety among them, indeed, all that one requires is to collect ripe seeds from wild plants and sow them in the garden where they can develop. Or plants may be dug up and transferred from the meadow to the garden in spring. (The French gardeners sow the seeds in drills in a good deep soil where there is moisture and the seedlings are thinned early to a distance of 6 in. apart. Seeds sown in May will produce plants which in July will bear leaves fit to use. These leaves are gathered singly, only those that are just matured being taken. The plants continue to yield a supply for three or four years. In addition to the common or sheep sorrel, the French use several others, i.e., maiden sorrel, the leaves of which are spotted with red; French sorrel, which has glaucous, heart-shaped leaves and withstands drought well; and the Pyrenean sorrel which has soft wrinkled leaves.

Crusted Rockfoils

The flowering period of the various members of the saxifrage family, which commenced in January with the white *S. Burseriana* and the yellow *S. sancta*, may be said to attain to its greatest development early in June, when the larger crusted leaved species are in bloom. One of the finest of them is the Pyrenean *S. longifolia*, which grows in the crevices of perpendicular rocks, forming large silver-edged rosettes often a foot in diameter. The plants are exceedingly handsome even without the flowers, which are produced in beautiful, cone-shaped panicles reaching to a length of 2 ft. The rosettes take several years to attain flowering proportions, and after they flower they die. Seeds, however, are freely produced and plants are readily obtained in this way. Another fine species is *S. cotyledon* with its rosettes of broad strap-shaped leaves and arching panicles of white flowers. As a pot plant this is the more useful of the two, as it produces an abundance of off-sets, which should be removed, as they appear and the plant kept to a single crown. There are several varieties of this, some with the white flowers spotted with pink, while the Iceland form often attains a height of 3 ft. in favoured situations. Among others in flower at this time is *S. lantescens*, from the Maritime Alps. It is smaller growing than the others, and forms a mat of silvery rosettes, from which are produced wreath-like panicles of pure white flowers. Neat-growing kinds include the several varieties of *S. aizoon*, with white, pale yellow and white spotted with rose flowers and *S. cochlearis*, with light, graceful panicles. These are all easy to grow in a sunny position in the rock garden, with the plants in crevices, so that the roots may be cool, or on rocky ledges, where there is no fear of stagnant soil.

Meconopsis

These are handsome plants of the poppy family, the most familiar being the Welsh poppy, *M. cambricum*, with its single double yellow or orange flowers. With the exception of the Californian *M. heterophylla*, all the rest are natives of the Himalayas, extending into Tibet and China. One of the oldest and best known is the blue Himalayan poppy, *M. wallichii*, a handsome pyramidal plant, 4 ft. or 5 ft. high, the upper half of which is covered with handsome pale blue drooping flowers. It is an ideal plant for a moist, shady situation in the wild garden or in a damp wood. Being a biennial, plants of it should be raised every spring from seeds, which are freely borne by cultivated plants in many parts of this country. It is advisable to grow the young plants in pots for the first year, planting them out when they are a year old. While perfectly hardy, they suffer much from damp in winter, which settles in the crowns of hairy leaves, and rots the centre. The recently introduced *M. integrifolia* from Tibet is now bearing its large yellow flowers. A well grown specimen of this is really very striking, as it will bear as many as ten flowers, each from 6 in. to 8 in. across. Owing probably to the high elevation (never below 11,000 ft.) at which it is found on the mountains of Tibet, few people have been very successful in its cultivation in this country. From the same region comes the beautiful *M. punicea*, with its solitary drooping crimson flowers, on a stem about 18 in. high, which bears a general resemblance to the flower of a *sarracenia*. Others now in flower include the little Himalayan *M. aculeata*, with blue or purplish flowers, having a ring of yellow stamens, and *M. simplicifolia* from Sikkim and Tibet, which has entire leaves and solitary violet-purple flowers. The Californian *M. heterophylla* should be sown now in a sunny border, and it will soon grow about a foot high and bear an abundance of brick-red, dark-eyed flowers.