



## TIMELY TOPICS FOR THE AMATEUR—VII.

**S**EPTEMBER is usually a time of uncertainty and uneasiness to those who have tender plants to care for, especially after the first week or two of the month has passed. Alternate periods of summer or chilly autumn weather, the mercury often rising or falling very rapidly in even a few hours, compels the plant lover to watch closely any indication of the approach of the first frost of autumn.

The change from summer heat to cold, even to freezing point, is often so sudden, that it is well to have the greenhouse and conservatory in readiness to receive the more tender plants early in September.

Plants in tubs or pots standing outside may be protected from early frosts by removing them to the shelter of a tree near at hand, a fence or building, or the more certain protection of a verandah. For beds of foliage or tender plants, a covering of cotton, or even a few newspapers, will often be sufficient protection to ward off slight frosts. The covering should be secured by means of stakes or wires, as close to the plant as possible without actually touching them. If the first few frosts of early autumn can be prevented from nipping foliage plants, they will often retain their rich coloring, and brighten

up the lawn and its surroundings, until the more gorgeous and resplendent tints of late autumn foliage appear to warn us to prepare for winter frost and storm.

Should any plants be unfortunately nipped by frost, keep them covered until the sun and heat of the following day has passed, as immediate exposure to sun and air is very disastrous to plants, even if only slightly frost-bitten. I have found this method of excluding light and air for a time from plants touched by frost, more successful in restoring them than syringing or plunging them in cold water. To be successful with either method, it is essential that frost-bitten plants under any circumstances, should at once have a gradually rising temperature to a few degrees above freezing point to recover in. This condition comes naturally during the increasing heat of the day, to plants exposed at night to early autumn frosts.

If you have a few choice tender plants, and feel doubtful whether there will be frost or not, it is always best to be on the safe side, and place them, if only for a single night, where they are safe. Many fine specimen plants have been ruined by leaving them outside just one night too long.