

BOTANY.

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The new seed catalogues are now arriving, and I trust teachers have them on their desks where they and their pupils can study them. One of the most fascinating parts of gardening is the reading of descriptions of new flowers and planning where you will put them when spring comes.

Things learned by experiment are well learned. It is more economical, however, to profit as largely as possible by other people's experience.

Always consider where the plants are grown that the seedsman offers for sale. Often, a certain plant is described in a New York or Philadelphia catalogue as hardy. In that climate it probably is. But, unless you are acquainted with it, you do not know whether it is hardy in the Maritime Provinces or not. Frequently, some one who believes the seed catalogue buys seeds of a greenhouse plant and expects them to do well in the garden. Through bitter disappointment he learns how tender they are.

Two of the easiest ways to avoid such losses are (1) always plant well-known flowers that you or your neighbor have already proved; or (2) read what others have done in testing new flowers. I advise following both methods. The first gives you little variety. The second will enable you to have almost anything you desire.

To assist you in making selections, it is wise to write to Publications Branch, Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, asking for Bulletin Number 47. This gives a list of trees and shrubs tested in the Prairie Provinces of Canada; and therefore will give you the hardiest shrubs in cultivation. Ask also for the Catalogue of Trees and Shrubs in the Arboretum at the Experimental Farm, Ottawa; and for the List of Perennial Herbaceous Plants at the same Farm.

These lists give you an excellent assortment to select from. Anything that is hardy at Ottawa is surely hardy in the Maritime Provinces.

Very often you may want a plant of a certain *genus*, but don't know which *species* is best. These lists will help you.

Aside from the question of hardiness, the size, color and habit of the plant are important. Some plants spread rapidly. In such cases a

very few plants now would give you an abundance in a few years. The Lilacs and Spireas are very satisfactory for this reason. Such plants are good for back-grounds where there is room to spread.

The proper grouping of colors is an important feature in a good garden. The time of flowering must be considered with this. Plants in the same bed or border *that bloom at the same time* should follow some good color scheme.

One does not want all the flowers to bloom at the same time; for after their blooming season is over there is a long time without any flowers. Select, therefore, early, medium and late blooming varieties.

It is needless to say that tall flowers should not come in front of short ones. Neither should tall ones, in general, be on the south side of short ones. Most plants need good sunlight. Arrange them, therefore, in such a way that they will not shade each other. *Clarkia* is a rather attractive flower that likes a moderately shady place.

The vegetable garden is also worthy of consideration. The catalogues describe new and improved varieties of nearly every vegetable and grain. An experimental school plot where these could be tested is a grand thing. One should not try the new varieties on a large scale, however, until the government or some experimental farm has tested them. It is cheaper for the government to do it than for the individual. Furthermore, the government is likely to do it more scientifically. Read government reports, and know what they are doing each year in this line.

Lengthen the growing season as much as possible by using hot-beds or cold-frames. Any book on gardening will tell you how to make and use them. Girls might be interested in growing tomatoes, onions, cucumbers and cauliflower; and, in the autumn, making pickles from their own garden products.

I have a quantity of circulars giving interesting experiments with fertilizers. These apply to flowerpots, boxes, or garden plots. I also have circulars on school gardening. Anyone interested in such work may have copies of these leaflets free by writing to me at Fruro.

If any teachers have done or are doing any garden work, I should be interested in hearing