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THE BALSAM.

The beautiful colored plate which adorns this August number will illustrate much better than any description the improvement that has been made in the form and coloring of this beautiful flower.

It is a tender annual; hence in our climate it is desirable to get the plants well started in the house or in a frame, so that they can be planted in the open border when all danger from late frosts is over, and come into bloom early enough to enable us to enjoy their flowers before the autumn frosts come and ruin their beauty. As soon as the plants are up and nicely started, they should be transplanted either into small pots or into the frame, and as soon as the roots fill the pots be shifted into larger pots, or, if set out in the frame, moved as often as they begin to become crowded. The soil should be made light and rich, kept free from weeds, and frequently stirred, to secure a strong, healthy growth and abundant bloom. They may be flowered in pots if desired, and grown in this way they make handsome window plants or ornaments for the verandah. Our hot

summer weather is much better suited to the cultivation of this popular flower than the cool, moist climate of England, so that with suitable soil and little care we can grow them in the greatest perfection.

The plants can be pruned to any desired form, either to a single, straight stalk, or with three or four branches. Sometimes they incline to throw out so many branches that if all are allowed to grow the flowers would be hidden. It is better to cut away the superfluous branches as they start into growth, and leave only enough to display the flowers to the best advantage. Thus grown, the plant, when in full bloom, is in itself a beautiful bouquet. The cut blooms show to best advantage when arranged in a saucer of water, or of moistened sand, and in this way make an attractive table ornament. Florists find these double flowers, and especially the double white, very useful in the formation of crosses, wreaths and other floral designs. These double flowers have attained to such perfection of form that seedsmen have named them rose-flowered and camellia-flow-