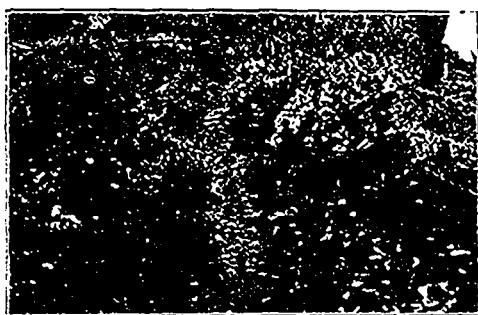


Fall Preparation for the Perennial Border

A. J. Elliott, Aylmer, Ont.

IT will be generally conceded that the perennial flower is fast coming into its true position in the affections of flower growers, and that never before was there greater demand for it than at the present. Everyone who has a flower garden to-day must have a border of perennials, not single specimens dotted here and there, but a whole border, to get the very best effects of these excellent plants. This is only a matter of a few dollars, the will to spend them and enough land to make the affair a satisfactory success.



Perennials in Mr. Elliott's Garden

More than ever are experts writing about the perennial or herbaceous plant and more and more are their writings read and copied and their instructions filled. There is so much more pleasure from very early spring to late fall through all the phases of the peeping appearance out of the ground in the spring till the sere and yellow of autumn that it pays far more than the gaudiest bed of annuals in this short summer season. Foot for foot, I do not contend that the border is grander than, say, a bed of asters. But as a whole if properly planted with a view to continuity of bloom, the tout ensemble is far better.

It is claimed by some that the border should be of uneven width to give what is called an "undulating" appearance. If for a border of shrubs, to a fine stretch of lawn, all right, but if for a garden with walks around, my plan is to make the border geometrically straight. It is always best to place it along a fence or division line behind or at the side of the house, and if two neighbors can agree as to procedure and expense the effect is delightful, no fence then being needed. The tallest plants would be set in the centre and each could do as he liked on his own side.

PREPARING FOR THE BORDER

Having decided, however, to have a border, dig it four feet wide, good and deep now. If it was well manured last spring, you need not heavily manure it. I do not like fresh manure around roots. Then, after raking it down to a fine

bed, set your line a foot from the fence and plant in this, the back row, any of the following. Hollyhocks, golden glow, tiger lilies, tea larkspur, hibiscus, rambler, thousand beauties or Dorothy roses, planting nothing closer than three feet.

This done, come in with your line eighteen inches, and set as before, but do as a carpenter says in shingling a roof "break joints"; that is, do not let any two plants be directly opposite across the bed. Also do not let the hollyhocks and phloxes be any closer than possible, because the former will rust the latter.

In the second row, plant perennial phlox, paeonies, lilies, coreopsis, sweet rocket, foxgloves, iris, chalcydonica, yucca and poppies. Do not plant anything closer than two feet in the row.

Now come in with your line another sixteen inches, and plant the final row of columbine, galliardi, Sweet William, platycodon, pinks, and so forth.

MULCHING THE BED

This having been done you will have nothing more to do till frost comes. As soon as the ground is frozen cover the whole with four or five inches of rough manure or leaves, and you can pat yourself on the head with thoughts of the flowers you will have next year. I have given a list of desirable plants, but there are many others, perhaps, that the reader would prefer. All can be reasonably procured at our nurserymen.

One thing I might add is that if there is no tulip or bulb bed near the border a few dropped in here and there, but enough to show well, might be done. For my part, as my bulbs are only across a path, I do not put any in the border.

When spring at length arrives, in the latter part of March, take your rake and pull off the mulch, and let the border lie. A red spike here and a yellow one there and signs of life everywhere push up through the ground in quick succession. About

the middle of April put on some good rotted manure, and dig in, always remembering that one of these borders devours a pile of food. This done, you will find several spaces left which latter should be filled, not crowded, with gladioli, asters, zinnias, and plants. These instructions followed you will have a joy garden all summer and will never regret the pains and expense taken to secure it.

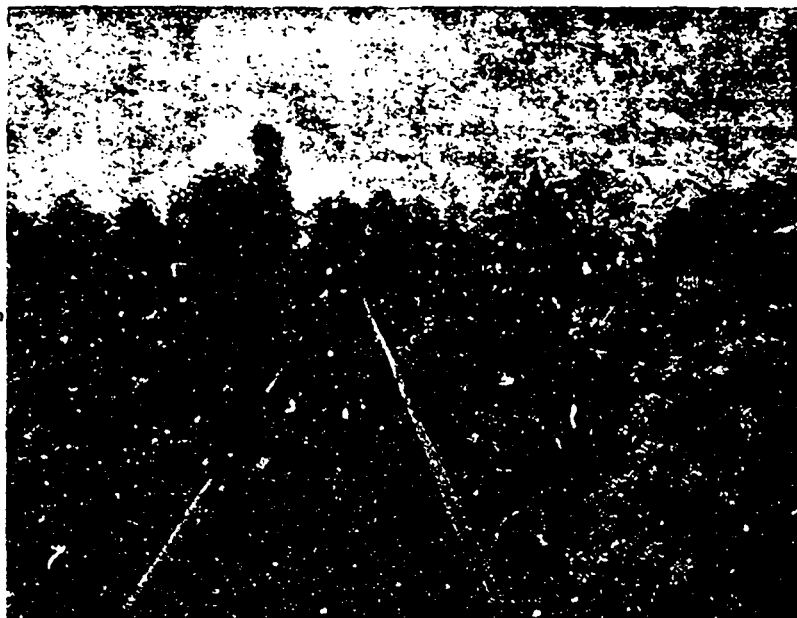
The Care of Dahlia Roots

J. McP. Ross, Toronto, Ont.

Saving the tubers of dahlias from frost is not difficult. Any place where you can keep potatoes will keep dahlias. After the frost has cut the foliage down leave the plants stay so for a week as it helps to ripen the tubers. Then on a sunny morning dig them up with the earth sticking to them as much as it will.

Cut the stalks back to six or eight inches, and let them stay out in the sun all day. If there is no danger from frost leave them out two days. Be sure and fasten the names by wire labels on the stalks and then pile them in a heap in some dry spot in the cellar out of the draft. If the cellar is hot and dry it will cause the tubers to shrivel; a liberal sprinkling of water will restore them. Packing them in boxes with dry sand over them is a good plan. Too much wet causes them to rot. My usual practice is to pile them in a corner on top of one another, and then forget about them till spring approaches when I overhaul them and put them in shape.

"The best is none too good." This old saying applies most forcibly to the selection of bulbs and flower seeds.—D. W. Marden, Pilot Mound, Man.



Border of Shrubs and Perennials in the Garden of Sir H. M. Pollatt, Toronto, Ont.