

Orchard in Clover.

Colman in the *Rural World* replies as follows to an enquiring correspondent:

A great mistake is made by putting young orchards in clover. For trees to thrive, they need a loose, well-cultivated soil in their younger years. The roots of trees cannot run out far in reach of food in dry, hard soil. The trees in consequence become stunted and injured by disease in some form. Many years ago we planted two young orchards, at the same time and from the same block of trees. One of the orchards was cultivated in corn several years, and the trees grew thriftily and came early into bearing. The other was seeded to clover the second year, and remained in clover for four years. At the end of that time the trees in corn were so far ahead of those in clover, that no one would have thought they had been planted the same season and from the same lot of trees. The soil of both orchards was similar. No one, who has not had actual observation, could have any just idea of the benefits of cultivation. By all means plow your ground as soon as the clover is cut, and if you put any crop in it, let it be beans, corn, potatoes, tobacco, or something of the kind, requiring the soil to be frequently stirred. Of course, turnips or peas could be sown, and would not be very bad crops to raise in the orchard, but corn is preferable. You must have a short single-tree, and be sure not to tear off the bark of trees with it.

But really, unless on very rich soil, no crop ought to be raised in an orchard. A crop of trees and fruit is enough. The land should not be too much exhausted by taking off other crops. Fruit raising will tax the land all it can bear in a very few years. Most farmers think all they have to do is to plant trees, and that then they can take care of themselves. Do they plant potatoes or corn, and let them take care of themselves? Do they not plow and hoe, and give them good culture? So should they do the same to fruit trees.

Watering Window Plants.

There is nothing that the cultivator of window plants asks more about than how and when to water plants. There is nothing he or she asks that is more unsatisfactorily answered. The florist tells him to water when the plant needs it. But how is it known when the plant needs water? That is just the point of ignorance. Yet it is very difficult to give the knowledge to any one. It must come of experience, and yet there are a few hints that one may profit by in trying to find out when a plant needs water.

With experience one can soon tell by the weight of the pot. One knows about how an empty pot ought to feel, and how the same pot seems to weigh when filled with dry earth. When very wet the weight is nearly double. A plant never wants water when the pot with the earth is heavier than a pot of dry soil. Then the color of the earth will tell, with very little experience, when it needs water, and one soon learns to distinguish by this. It is almost always much lighter in color when dry than when wet; and if the earth is as dark as it is when fresh watered it wants no more till it gets lighter.

And then experience will soon teach one to know when a plant needs water by the feeling of the earth. When dry the earth will crumble a little when it is touched; on the other hand, it seems to press together and to be smeary when wet. With a very little experience it is so easy to tell when a plant needs water by the feeling alone that a blind man might make a florist in this respect.

Those who wish to know how many times a week to water their window plants can never get an answer. Plants will need more water in a warm room than in a cool one, in a dry atmosphere than in one that is moist, when a plant is growing vigorously than when it is at rest, when it is in good health than when it is somewhat sick, and in light, shady earth, rather than in stiff and heavy ground. Nothing at all but a little experience will help one, but if there is a true love for the helpless little thing, it is astonishing how soon the knowledge comes to one. There is no such one but soon becomes a good "plantsman."—*Worcester Gazette*.

Apples recently sold at five shillings a barrel in Liverpool market.

Small Fruit Growing.

A Western small fruit grower says: "I commenced the business on an income of \$100 a year; now it is \$3,000. My market has been mostly in our small towns near home. And it is astonishing what an amount of fruit can be sold in our small towns of from 500 to 5,000 inhabitants, and at paying prices, too. But as some one who reads this may think he will try the business, too, I will just say 'go slowly' at first. That is good, and remember it requires years to become successfully established in small fruit growing, and then the profits may be light. Your land is to be first put in good condition. Apply the manure liberally, even if you have enough for one acre only. Go slowly. Obtain the best varieties of fruits, as far as in your power, and be satisfied to make a mere living. Beware of setting varieties that are not adapted to your climate. For instance, raspberries that may be very successful in one place may not be worth anything in another locality, and the same is true, in some degree, with strawberries, grapes, etc."

A bed of double Portulaca is one of the floral treasures of which we never tire and which we never dream of doing without even for a single

most. Nothing is more presumptuous than to return from a ramble in a friend's garden with a bouquet of your own selection, unless requested in an unequivocal manner to help yourself, and even then it requires rare discretion to make a choice satisfactory to all parties. Handle or pinch nothing whatever; even a touch injures some vegetation, and feeling of rose and other buds is almost sure to blast them. The beauty of scented-leaved plants is often ruined from having their foliage pinched by odor-loving friends; better pick the leaf off entirely for a visitor, than for half a dozen to be mutilated by the pressure of fingers, which are seldom satisfied with trying only one. A tender-hearted young friend received a rebuke from a lady that almost brought the tears to her eyes; as she moved her hand toward an unusually fine rose geranium, the pride and pet of its possessor, in sharp alarm its owner exclaimed, "don't pinch it." The young lady's mortified feelings were only soothed by explaining to her that her friend was constantly tormented by the ruinous admiration of acquaintances, and her nerves were too irritated for a gentle remonstrance. Every cultivator of flowers can understand the annoyance of seeing a favorite flower in danger.

Among my acquaintances is one who is welcome everywhere but among flowers. When she approaches them, it is no exaggeration to say that I am in agony. The rarest and most delicate plants are pinched and stripped through her fingers, particularly if the foliage is ornamental. When she discovered my lovely ferns and handled them unmercifully, I should have burst into tears if I had not caught the pitying eye of my husband bent upon me, who with ready tact diverted her attention to something else. When one exhibits a beautiful baby, she does not expect to have its fat limbs pinched till they turn black and blue, its hair pulled because it is soft and silken, or its lustrous eyes examined by curious fingers. Neither will the tender children of the soil endure useless handling. If accompanied by a child, be sure it does not touch the flowers. A little rosy elf with its apron full of choice flowers and broken branches will look very much more bewitching to its mother or some uninterested artist, than to the owner of the depleted flower-beds. Believe one who speaks from experience, and do not rob yourself of a welcome to some friend's garden by trying the experiment.

When an enthusiast in floriculture triumphantly shows some elegant foliage plant, so gorgeously dyed and painted that it is always in blossom, do not ask whether it has a flower. A conspicuous bloom on a plant so lavishly dowered with beauty would be a superfluity which nature is too wise to bestow.



CYCLAMEN PERSICUM GIGANTEUM.

season. To establish one of really double flowers, is a work of several years, and when established, it is necessary to pull up any plant that bears a single or semi-double flower as soon as it opens—else in the place of a few seeds of double flowers, hundreds of those of single flowers will be half-sown and a bed of, for the most part, single Portulaca, will be the disappointing result for the ensuing year. The double flowers last several hours longer than the single, and in dull weather for the whole day. They are matchless little roses, and the brilliancy of their several colors quite bedim those of most other flowers growing near enough for comparison.

Etiquette of the Flower Garden.

There are comparatively few who, either from instinct or education, regard that delicate courtesy which should be observed by all who enter the charmed precincts of a garden. A few suggestions to those who thoughtlessly violate the etiquette of the garden will prevent much mortification and unpleasantness.

If the walks are narrow, a little care will avoid sweeping one's skirts over the beds, to the injury of the flowers and the nerves of the owner as well. Do not pick unbidden a blossom, or even a leaf—it may be the very one its possessor values the

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Cyclamen Persicum Giganteum.

The accompanying cut represents a new and greatly improved variety of Cyclamen, with very broad, beautifully mottled leaves, broad petals of great substance, pure white, with a fine bold violet purple eye. This pretty flower is worthy of a place in every household. It is of the easiest culture, and for a window plant not to be surpassed, giving a greater show of flowers than almost any other plant. Pot in October or November in rich loam, mixing with the soil about a spoonful of soot, which will give brilliancy and size to the flowers. Charcoal broken fine will answer the same purpose. Use a small pot, and place the crown of the bulb just above the surface of the soil. Keep the plants cool till the leaves are well grown. When the flower buds begin to rise on the foot-stalks remove to a sunny shelf, where they will soon show bloom. After the flowering season (which lasts about three months) gradually cease watering, and let the leaves dry down. Seedlings will bloom in about two years.