

PRUNING OF FLOWERING SHRUBS.

IN the winter season much of the pruning of flowering shrubs is performed, and usually the operation takes with it all the flower buds that should clothe the plant with a mass of bloom during the spring and early summer. This is because gardeners do not consider the flowering habit of the various shrubs with which they have to deal. To prune away in winter the young wood from a weigela, deutzia, mock orange, lilac or bush honeysuckle, takes with it all the bloom of the following spring. This is usually the case, however, when indiscriminate pruning is practiced.

There are very few shrubs that may be severely cut in winter. The hardy hydrangea, althæa, and some smaller shrubs, like the hypericum, form their flower buds on the young growths made in the summer of the same year they bloom, but nearly all other shrubs make their flower buds on the young growth made the season previous to their expanding.

The proper system of pruning is one that will induce an abundance of young wood, and this can only be accomplished by the trimming out of much of the two-year-old growth—that which has already flowered—cutting out the old shoots close to the ground, so that the new growth will push out from the root of the plant. If the bush makes too strong and rank a growth, a moderate amount of pruning in winter will not lessen the bloom to any extent, especially as the extreme ends of the young wood do not flower.

Summer pruning of flowering shrubs is practiced by some gardeners with success, after the plants have done blooming, but in this case it must be done with great care, as the cutting away of much wood when in full leaf tends to weaken the plant, while the object to be gained is to foster a strong and vigorous growth. It is an excellent time, however, for a moderate pruning. — Thomas Meehan, in *New Eng. Florist*.

RE-POTTING HOUSE PLANTS.

THE best way to determine whether or not a plant needs re-potting is to carefully remove it, holding the hand over the surface and hitting the edge of the crock a light blow by bringing it down upon a table. Examine the roots, and if they are matted about the sides and bottom of the ball, the plant evidently requires fresh potting. Then carefully reduce the ball of earth to about a third of its original bulk; single out the matted roots and trim away all that are moldy and decayed. Probably the same pot may then be large enough, but if it requires a larger one it should be about two inches broader for a middle-sized plant, three

or four for a large plant. If the roots are not matted, but the pots are filled with fibers, keep the ball entire, and carefully plant it in a larger pot. At the top of a large pot, an inch, and of a small one, half an inch, should be left for reception of water, without danger of overflow. A little gravel, charcoal or pieces of broken pots should always be placed at the bottom for drainage. A plant newly potted must never be exposed to a strong sun. It should be watered and placed in the shade immediately and there remain till it is rooted, which may be known by its starting to grow.—*Farm and Home*.