

The Ingle Nook.

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Flowers and Vegetables.

Dear Ingle Nook Friends.—I think I promised you a practical article on gardening this time. After all, we must get right down to choosing seeds, and considering manures, and delving in the soil, if we are to have results, but don't think for a moment that any of this spells drudgery. Every moment of it may be pleasure. Even though you be poetically minded, you can think poetically as you work, for, it seems to me, sheer joy, mingled with love of beautiful things, is always poetry.—There you are, out under a blue spring sky, in the "time when lilies blow, and clouds are highest up in air"; the sweet breeze is upon you; you see everywhere greenening fields, and, away beyond there, the red-stemmed marsh all bursting into leafage above the masses of golden marsh-marigolds; you listen to the noisy chorus of far-away frogs; you describe the song of meadow-lark, and bobolink, and song-sparrow; you rejoice, and lift up your face, and feel that in all, and through all, and above all the All-Good reigns. Then, are you not a poet, even though you be unable to scan a line or devise a rhyme?

Oh, the beauty of the country in spring-time! The sights of it! The pure, sweet odors of it!

And how your imagination is at work! As you potter with the soil, and cast in the queer little seed—black, and brown, and yellow, and infinite in variety of shape and size—you are looking into the future and seeing your garden as it will be when the miracle of germination and growth has been accomplished.—Lilies here, sweet mignonette there, banks of crimson, and gold, and snowy white! Vegetables, too, beautiful as well as nourishing and health-giving! You see the finished story, the fruit of the labor of your hands and your intellect.—For it takes intellect to make plants grow as they should grow.

That the full joy of the garden may be yours, navigate so that there will be as little unadulterated drudgery as possible connected with it. Choose a spot that is mellow and easily worked, not one that is hard, and bakes on every excuse. If there isn't a favorable spot anywhere within reach, have one made. Plenty of old manure, with some sand (if needed), will transform very hard and forbidding soil.—Please note that word "old" manure, and remember this, that new manure should NEVER be put on a garden in spring. It is almost sure to burn the seedlings and tender roots, and do more harm than good. If the fertilizer has not been applied in winter, so to be subjected to the mellowing influences of wind and weather, procure some so old that it is almost, or quite, resolved into rich, black soil, and put that on; the borders of the barnyard may supply just what is needed.

Then, don't try to dig over the whole garden plot yourself. . . . Yes, yes,—the men are in the fields, and every hour counts, but think of the money's worth of food, and more than money's worth of pleasure, that are to be derived from that garden. It really takes very little time for any man to plough, harrow, and roll a garden, and the benefit, later, is inestimable. Indeed, very wise folk nowadays often have the plot long enough so that the seed may be put in in long rows that may be cultivated with a horse off and on all summer. This greatly reduces the worry of laborious weeding. . . . Don't make high beds, and don't run to drills. They dry out quickly, and make watering, when needed, an operation of exasperation. Plant on the flat; hollows about the stems are preferable to mounds. . . . And remember always that constant cultivation—fairly shallow surface cultivation—is the price of good growth. It keeps down weeds, and it forms a dust-mulch that conserves

the moisture about the roots. It is a true saying that "tillage is as good as a rain." This holds good except in time of extreme drought, and for a few days after transplanting, when plants need an unusual amount of moisture.

If you are anxious for extra early vegetables and flowers you have probably started a few of the seeds in boxes in the house, or in a hot-bed, early in March. Some more may be started in April, and so a succession may be kept up. To "harden" them and have them sturdy, the seedlings are usually transplanted from the house or hot-bed to a

Corn, cucumbers, squash—anything especially tender—may be planted out of doors, in rich, mellow soil, early in June. Melons may be started somewhat earlier in the bottom of sods, placed, upturned, on a manure-pile, which will supply under heat. When transplanting, move sods and all.

—May one emphasize the need of richness of the growing-bed for nearly all plants? Tomatoes, it is true, when planted in soil that is too rich, have a tendency to run to tops rather than fruit; beans, too, will do fairly well on rather poor land,—like other members of the leguminosae order, they possess the power of extracting nitrogen from the

soil for tall vases, tall antirrhinum, and even zinnias if of rich color; but the list may be greatly extended. Sweet peas are beautiful just after being cut, but very soon lose their color.

For bright color in the garden, phlox drummondii and scarlet phlox may be added to the above list, with plenty of white nicotine, candytuft and sweet alyssum as separators, to prevent clashes in effect, and mignonette and heliotrope for perfume.

For very early spring flowering, bulbs, and perennials, must, of course, be depended upon, the bulbs, with the exception of montbretias, gladioli and summer-flowering hyacinths, being set out chiefly in fall. Perennials and biennials (roots) may be set out in spring, but cannot be greatly depended upon for effect until another year. In this list may be recommended: (1) Bulbs—Snowdrops, crocuses, scillas, grape hyacinths, hyacinths, daffodils, narcissus, tulips. (2) Perennials, roots and tubers—Peonies, Sweet William, perennial phlox, perennial larkspur, Oriental and Iceland poppies, bleeding heart, anemones, meadowsweet, golden glow. (3) Biennials—Hollyhocks, foxgloves, antirrhinum.

Many plants which self-sow, really annuals, biennials, and perennials, e. g., foxglove, hollyhocks, and poppies, are practically perennial.

Most shrubs and vines do best when set out in spring, as they have not then the rigors of winter to contend against before becoming established.

Popular shrubs are: Forsythia or golden bells, japonica, weigelia, the lilacs, syringa, barberry, smoke tree, flowering plum, red-bud or Judas tree, almond bush, magnolia stellata, and the spiraeas. Among vines may be mentioned: The various species of clematis, climbing roses (the hardy varieties), wistaria, trumpet vine, and Boston ivy. Among quickly-growing vines, invaluable for screening unsightly objects and views, are morning-glories (some of the new varieties are very beautiful), Alleghany vine, canary vine, scarlet runner, coccinea scandens, aristolochia, Japanese hops, and wild cucumber.

All of these may be obtained from any dealer in seeds and plants.

It is quite possible, however, to have a very attractive garden by calling upon the plants of our own woods. Indeed, many people nowadays are making a fad of so protecting and developing our native flora, and a very beautiful bulletin has been issued in Illinois which strongly advocates doing this very thing. "The Illinois way," it says, "is to have ninety per cent. of the planting composed of trees and shrubs that grow wild in Illinois"—a method that may be extended indefinitely, of course, far beyond the borders of that Prairie State.

The advantages of the plan are not far to seek. The expense is less; the planting, especially when massed, as in nature, is sure to be effective and harmonious; and, lastly, indigenous plants and trees may be transplanted more rapidly and are much more likely to grow than those brought in from a distance and native to a very different soil and climate.

In the matter of such planting, it is only necessary to specify a few examples to suggest endless possibilities. Trees—Elms, maples, beech, oak, native spruce for windbreaks. If the house is small, have smaller trees about it; apple and crab-apple trees are as good as any.

Vines—Wild grape, wild clematis, bitter-sweet.

Shrubs—High bush cranberry, dogwood, wild cherry, wild crab-apple, wild rose, red elder, common barberry, sumach, Juneberry or shad bush, witch-hazel.

Flowers—Hepatica, dog's-tooth violet, spring beauty, trillium, Indian turnip, bloodroot, Solomon's seal, wild phlox, wild columbine (aquilegia), cardinal flower, blue lobelia, meadow rue, herb Robert, violets, wild asters, Joe Pye weed, boneset, ferns, mandrake, cone flower.

In making use of any of these for the home garden, study first the conditions under which they grow naturally, then supply the same conditions as far as possible. The presence of shade trees, and a damp spot in any part of the garden, will usually supply a habitat in



One Should Love to Enter Here.

cold frame, which can be covered at nights, then, finally, to the garden.

Seeds for later vegetables and flowers may be sown in the open ground—in a rich, deep, mellow, finely-worked up root-bed—early in May, and even up to the 24th of May, for tender, easily-frozen plants. Peas, lettuce, beets, carrots, parsnips, parsley, salsify and onions are among those that may be sown thus out of doors; directions will be found on all the packages.

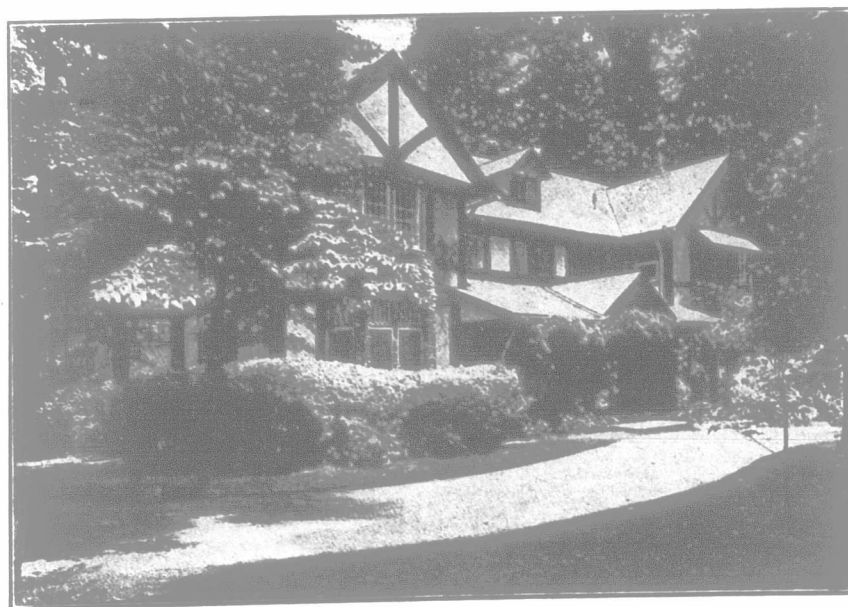
Tomatoes, eggplant, asters, etc., have to be started in-doors. If you have not so started them, better buy the plants from a grower. When setting plants out, first make a hole for each large

air and confining it in tubercles on their roots, actually enriching the ground they grow in,—but most plants do better in rich soil. If you want to be convinced of the truth of this, put a few seeds in poor soil and watch the difference.

At all events, have a vegetable garden, and train the family to like vegetables of all kinds. They are at once food and medicine, and, by their variety, provide endless possibilities for dinners and suppers for the whole year.

THE FLOWER GARDEN.

Many people have a few rows of flowers for cutting, in the vegetable garden,



Shrubby Conceals the Foundations of the House.

enough so that the roots may be extended gently (it is better if they have been left with a solid ball of soil about them) in all directions, sift in the soil, firm it down, water thoroughly, and finally cover the whole surface that has been moistened with a dust-mulch of dry soil to conserve the moisture. Setting out should be done in the evening, or on a damp, cloudy day. Should the sun be bright and hot, a shelter of shingles or other protection, left on for a day or two, will be greatly appreciated by the plants.

where they may be cultivated with the horse whenever the rest is being done. Others, however, choose to have them in the back yard, where their bright faces may be seen every time one steps out of the kitchen door or peeps out of the kitchen window.

Fewer flowers are needed for the front lawn, where flowering shrubs and perennials in borders may be depended upon for a touch of color.

Among the very best species for cutting are the following: Nasturtiums, asters, coreopsis, gaillardia, gypsophila, lark-