

THE SIMPLE LIFE

THE HOME GARDEN

Garden Calendar for March

Dig and Manure Flower Borders which have not yet been prepared:

Plant—Hardy border plants, Alpines, hardy climbing shrubs, deciduous trees, fruit trees, pot greenhouse plants, vegetable roots, Gladioli, and especially: Paeonies, Delphiniums, phloxes, Pentstemons, Hollyhocks, rock plants, Michaelmas Daisies, Pyrethrum, Gaillardias, Carnation layers, Pink layers, Pansies, Violets, Sweet Williams, Roses (if not done), evergreen shrubs, Pot Cannas, strawberries, Shalots, artichokes, garlic, sea kale, cabbage plants, lettuce, cress and cabbage, potato onion, asparagus, early and main crop potatoes in warm border, start Begonias, start Achimenes, start Gloxinias, Pansies, Sow—Sorts that have failed, peas (early and second early), broad beans, Milan turnip, radish, grass seed, various kale, celery under glass, a little cabbage, mushrooms, a little broccoli, lettuce, cress and cabbage, mustard and cress, beets, parsley, early carrot, Couve Troncon, savy, leek, brussels sprouts, onions, melon in heat, cauliflower, cross herbs, spinach, parsnip, cucumber in heat, tomato in heat, aster in frames, Stock in frames, Godetia in frames, Begonia in heat, Celosia in heat, Cockscomb in heat, Gloxinia in heat, Petunia in heat, Lobelia in heat, hardy annuals under glass, artichoke, Jerusalem artichoke, Cardon, rhubarb, sea kale, half-hardy annuals in frames.

Note—Some of the above sowings are probably a little early in some localities, but it is worth while to risk sowing a little seed in order to obtain an early crop of delicious spring vegetables.

GROWING TREES LIKE VINES

DWARF fruit trees trained like vines, occupy practically no space in the garden, and permit the growing of another crop, such as vegetables or flowers, on the same ground. The advantage of growing dwarf fruit trees, rather than standard trees, are:

They fruit much quicker. I have some trees which bore fruit the same year they were planted, and nearly all of them fruited the following year.

Dwarf trees are much more easily pruned and sprayed, which is no small item, and it is easier to pick the fruit.

Larger and better fruit can be grown on these dwarf trees than on the standard trees. I have grown them so large and perfect that they seemed artificial.

Dwarf trees do not demand any more detail in their culture than other fruit trees, except the training; and this must not be counted as extra labor, for the returns more than balance the outlay. To get the quickest results, buy trained trees. They come in several different forms—cordons, single and double, and upright, diagonal and horizontal; palmetto and fan-shaped. These cost anywhere from two and a half dollars apiece up, according to the form.

Select the varieties with care, and get such as are hardy; don't go in too much on these so-called fancy varieties until you have proof of their hardiness.

One trellis will answer for all forms of dwarf fruit trees, except the single cordon, which consists of one shoot trained horizontally on a wire one foot above the ground. A trellis two feet high will answer for a double cordon, but I prefer a trellis about four feet high, built with iron posts about ten feet apart, with wires about nine inches apart, the lower wire being one foot from the ground. Such a trellis will answer for any kind of trained trees, and will always look neat. A trellis is not an absolute necessity, as these trees can be grown on the side of a building or other perpendicular object.

The trees must be planted close up to the trellis. Any money spent in properly preparing the soil will be well expended. I would suggest trenching the ground two and one-half to three feet deep, adding about one-quarter well-rotted manure. If you cannot do this, dig a hole two and one-half or three feet square, and as much deep, putting stones in the bottom to insure good drainage, and adding manure to the soil.

Plant dwarf fruit trees, which are to be trained horizontally, about ten feet apart, and when they have closed up, take out every other tree; that is, when they encroach upon each other. For fan, palmetto or diagonal cordon, about twelve feet is the proper distance. The trees may be planted either in spring or fall. Spring is preferable, and the earlier it is done in either season, the better. When planting, prune rather heavily to offset the shock of transplanting, and, if the trees show any fruit the first season, don't let it all mature. Remove half of it, as it is too much of a strain on a newly planted tree to ripen a large crop of fruit.

Sometime in June, carefully remove all weak, thin shoots. Leave just enough wood to cover the trellis nicely. They will not require any further attention until training time, which is usually about August first; but it may vary a week or ten days, earlier, or later, according to the season. Don't train too early, or the shoot will break off at the base; on the other hand, if left too long, the wood will harden, and there is danger of your breaking the shoot.

In tying the branches down into position, if you come across any that are very stiff, pull them down half way, and then, after a couple

of weeks, pull them into position. Use raffia for tying; it is very cheap, and it will not cut the branches.

While training the plants, cut out any superfluous wood there may be, as it is detrimental to the trees, but be careful not to remove any spurs with fruit buds on. These can be easily identified in apples and pears by their stubby, short, pointed appearance. With the small fruits—peaches, plums, apricots and cherries—the buds are usually along with the best growth, and the straggling, short, jointed wood is best removed.

The training of the trees will not require any further attention until the following spring, when pruning time comes. February and March are the best months for pruning. I don't believe in fall pruning. Dwarf fruit trees will stand a lot of top pruning because of their inclination to grow up, and one must always work with the idea to keep them down. The shoots which are growing out horizontally must not be cut under any circumstances, except to remove the tip, in case it has been winter-killed; in such cases, cut back to live wood. The idea is to let them grow until they have closed the intervening space and made a solid wall. The shoots which are filling in can be cut back, leaving about four or six inches of the previous season's growth. This applies to horizontal training. For other training, let the shoots that have been selected as the groundwork of the form grow until they have completed the desired form or reached the top of the trellis, where they can be stopped. This pruning answers for apples and pears, but the small fruits must be handled differently. The aim should always be to cut out all old and hard wood, and replace it with young wood, which is the kind that fruits the best with this class of trees.

If you are willing to wait four or five years for the first fruit, you will have more satisfaction in training your fruit trees yourself. I will give you my experience as to the best way to grow them.

Buy from your nurseryman trees that have been grafted on paradise stock and that have but one season's growth. Such trees usually have one shoot about four feet long. These cost about fifty cents apiece. Plant these along your trellis, about ten feet apart, and cut them off about three eyes above the lowest wire. When they start to grow, train one shoot up straight, the other upright shoot about three eyes above the second wire and train as before; taking one shoot up straight, the other horizontally along the second wire. The third season repeat, again, training along the wire; and so on, until you have reached the top of the trellis.

By the fourth or fifth season, you will have a flourishing tree that will bear plenty of fruit. In this way you can also secure a selection of varieties which are hardy and better adapted to our climate. Buying trained trees means buying foreign varieties with unfamiliar names, as few, if any, of our nurserymen train them. But all the trained trees which nurserymen in this country offer will give good satisfaction. At the present time, if you wish to get varieties with which you are familiar, such as Red Astrachan, Northern Spy or Twenty-ounce, it will be necessary in most instances to buy the one-year old trees already described.

These small trees can be planted quite close together for quick effect, and thinned out as occasion demands. One of these trees trained horizontally should cover a space of twenty feet of trellis in from five to eight years with pears and apples, but peaches and the small fruits will do it in a year or two less. These trees will all fruit the third or fourth season, except the apples, which will take a year or so longer. I would suggest the following list of varieties.

Apples.—Early: Duchess of Oldenburg, Astrachan Red, Gravenstein, Maiden's Blush, Late: Baldwin, Ben Davis, Bismarck, Northern Spy, Spitzenburg, Twenty-Ounce.

Pears.—Early: Bartlett, Clapp's Favorite, Duchesse D'Angouleme, Howell, Sheldon, Worden-Seckel. Late: Beurre D'Anjou, Lawrence, Winter Nelis.

Plums.—Imperial, Gage, Abundance, Burbank, Satsuma.

Apricots.—Early Rivers, Alexander, Harris.

Cherries.—Black Tartarian, Downer's Late, Napoleon, Trädscant's.

Peaches.—Alexander, Crawford's Early, Crawford's Late, Elberta, Early Rivers.

Dwarf trees come in other forms for planting in the open. They are very effective as they have been adapted by some commercial fruit-growers. They come in standard and pyramidal forms.—W. M. Cable, in Suburban Life.

PLANTS WORTH GROWING

A Bed of Succulents.—For an uncommon effect, and with an interesting feature, a bed planted with succulents or succulents and castuses mixed is hard to beat. Such beds always attract attention, and are as easily filled and

kept going as are those filled with more ordinary subjects, in fact the labor is considerably less, as the plants remain from season to season, and are less trouble to winter and get into order in spring.

Succulents and cacti cannot be put out into the garden until frosts are in the past, a sunny position should be chosen, and the plants lifted and potted before frosts can do damage in October. The plants are not injured by planting out for the summer, in fact they relish a spell of open air treatment, and are all the more vigorous for it.

A New Jasmine.—The showy and beautiful new jasmine (*Jasminum primulinum*) comes from China. In many respects it is not unlike our old friend the winter jasmine (*Jasminum nudiflorum*), but it has larger flowers of a brighter color, which are inclined to be semi-double, and blooms in spring instead of winter.

So far sufficient time has not elapsed to prove its complete hardiness. It has, however, been tried in some districts, and in each case has shown a decided inclination to flourish in the open air. Whether it will prove hardy in gardens in general remains to be proved. In any case, it should be grown against a south or southwest wall, in well-drained loam and leaf mould.

Those who have cold greenhouses and want something easy to grow, and that will flower freely in spring, should certainly give the plant a trial. It has a bushy habit of growth, a great point in its favor for pot culture. This jasmine is undoubtedly a showy and distinct species, and will in time become a popular cool greenhouse, if not a hardy, plant.



Coreopsis Grandiflora

Arabis, single and double, the latter quite the most desirable edging plant we have; yellow alyssum, straggling, it may be, but with flowers of a glorious golden hue; and Aubretia graeca, almost blue. These are three spring-flowering plants worthy of a place in every garden. The double arabis makes a rare carpet for the tall late tulips; the alyssum serves as a fine setting for Narcissus poeticus; and the aubretia is seen at its best, when growing between trumpet daffodils, such as Emperor or Horsefield. Tulips growing amidst the double arabis presented a combination which it would be hard to beat.

Nasturtiums (Tropaeolums).

An exceedingly brilliant and valuable class of annuals of very easy culture. Sown in spring on rather poor soil in the open ground, in an exposed sunny situation, they will continue in bloom for a long period. The Tom Thumb varieties are very showy, and excellent for beds or edgings either in separate colors or mixed, whilst the climbing sorts are very useful for training on trellis-work, vases, or for covering fences, sunny banks, etc.

Fuchsias

Sow in February or March in a gentle heat, and treat as recommended for tender annuals. These beautiful free-flowering plants will bloom well the first year from seed, and plants raised from a first-class strain will produce the most satisfactory results. The single varieties are all handsome in flower and elegant in growth of plant; and the double-flowered, with white or purple corollas, are very fine and desirable.

Pelargoniums—Geraniums.

Sow in February or March in pots or pans of light rich soil, covering the seeds to the depth of about a quarter of an inch, and place in a heat of about sixty-five or seventy degrees. Pot off the young plants singly into small pots, and shift into larger as these fill with roots. With liberal treatment these will bloom the first year, and, although many will not be up to the standard of first-class florists' flowers, some really beautiful varieties may be expected from a good strain of seed, and all will be found well worth the small amount of time and trouble expended. Seeds may also be sown in July and August for blooming the following spring, mostly grown from cuttings, however.

Heliotropes in Baskets

We do not always regard the heliotrope as being suitable for baskets, but plants properly prepared give a deal of beauty and fragrance.

But plants for blooming need care and attention, and it has been found to be the best plan to get quite young-struck cuttings, and then, when the basket has been nicely lined with fresh green moss, and a compost of loam and leaf-mould and a little old manure has been placed therein, several of the young plants should be planted, and after they have become established the leading shoot should be nipped from each. If possible, plants that have already been stopped should be placed in the basket, as then time is gained.

The advantage of stopping the plants is obvious; it encourages the growth of side shoots, and these, as they grow, should be tied very carefully to the sides of the baskets, so that when in bloom the basket itself shows a wealth of both flowers and foliage. To let plants go their own way without attempting to stop them is not always satisfactory, and before long the base of the stems are bare, and detract from the appearance of baskets.

Ceanothus

These shrubs have most certainly come to stay, and add greatly to the beauty of the garden. In most places they do best as wall plants, and will grow as much as ten or twelve feet up a wall, blooming almost continuously nearly all the summer. Ceanothus azureus was the first introduced, with small dark green foliage and greyish-blue flowers in short panicles. Ceanothus Veitchii is an improved form with very close fine foliage and clustered heads of bloom, and it flowers again later on, besides always having a certain amount of bloom on it. It is a little less hardy than Ceanothus azureus, but a mat nailed over it during the winter, makes it quite safe, and it is a most attractive plant. Ceanothus Gloire de Versailles has long, free panicles of blossom, and much larger foliage. It varies very much in color from a soft pale blue to a rich deep ultramarine tone, and is a vigorous bloomer. It is particularly fond of the sea, and near the coast is better colored and more free flowering than anywhere else. All ceanothuses strike easily from cuttings and grow with astonishing rapidity. Planted against a south wall, your plant, which was a six-inch cutting when you put it out, will be three feet high at the end of its first season, and amount of covering in winter is desirable, if not absolutely necessary, but soil does not seem to matter. They will grow in any garden that is not too bleak or draughty.

NOTES ON WINDOW PLANTS

A Pretty Plant for a China Egg
The window gardener's egg and that deposited in varying numbers during the year by the farmyard fowl differs not only in degree, but in size. To the window gardener, an egg is a china affair, somewhat egg-shaped, and suspended by chains, which he hangs in his window and fills more or less successfully with plant life. For such an egg I would beseech a trial of a very pretty and useful grass, a grass that will grow in sun and shade alike, and be attractive all the year through. Its chief and almost only requirement is water, and this it must have plenty all through the warm weather. The best way of supplying its wants in this direction is to immerse it in water, foliage and all, about twice a week now, and three times weekly later on. The nurseryman will supply this excellent egg plant for a few pence if asked for *Isolepis gracilis*; the botanist has long since called it something else; but then, what window gardener wants to bother about a botanist!

How Often to Water

Mention of watering in the preceding paragraph recalls this perplexing problem, which I always find awaiting solution at all seasons. Just now, and onwards till the end of September, watering need puzzle nobody; the thing is to be sure and do it sufficiently often. In a large collection, some of the plants will want water every day; some of those which had it yesterday will want it again today, and again tomorrow. If good, porous soil is used over properly arranged drainage, and the pots are pretty full of roots, it is not easy to give a healthy plant in a sunny window too much water during the summer. Fill the pots to the brim every time that water is given, and once a week stand each pot in a foot-bath or washing tray of water, and leave it there until bubbles cease to rise to the surface of the water. It will then be well soaked.

Geraniums for Autumn Flowering

To be sure of a good show of geranium blooms in autumn the plants which are now finishing, or have finished, flowering should be repotted. If they are in five-inch pots, rub away as much of the old surface soil as pos-

sible between the fingers and thumbs, and repot into six-inch pots. If the drainage is all right leave the crocks alone, and drop the ball of the plant, just as it is, into the larger pot; this will allow of a good addition of soil. The added soil should be well firmed, especially round the sides of the pot. Stand the plants outdoors in a sunny spot—on no account in a shady one—and water them well with clear water for a few weeks. As the flower buds form, pick them off until six weeks before flowers are wanted. When the flower buds are retained, feed the plants on alternate days with liquid manure. Take the plants indoors to flower, and a splendid display should result.

Shading Flowering Plants.

Every observant gardener knows that the life of individual blossoms in a sunny window in summer is very brief. The aggregate of bloom produced may last over some time, but separate blooms will be found very short-lived in a hot, sunny window; and yet many plants will not bloom without plenty of sun. This quandary may be met in many ways, all centering round one main point, viz., to shade the blooms while the sun is shining strongly. A very ingenious way I have seen practised is to make a framework of wire to fit the lower part of the window, and cover it with an old muslin curtain. This is interposed between the glass and the plants during sunshine, and has been found of great service in prolonging the floral display. A newspaper lightly laid on the plants is a simple shade, and, of course, a sunblind may be used, either outside or inside.

Potting and Dividing Aspidistras.

If an aspidistra only wants moving into a larger pot the work can be done with safety at any time from the end of March till the end of September; but if the plant is to be split up and divided into several portions, the present is an excellent time to do the work. There is considerable warmth at this season, even in a shady room, and as a split up aspidistra requires both shade and warmth to assist in its re-establishment, the reason for choosing the present season is obvious. Do not bury the thick, creeping rootstock too deeply. See that the soil is placed in close contact with the fibrous roots and that no soil cavities exist. Keep sun from the plants for six weeks after splitting them up, and sprinkle the leaves occasionally with water. Do not give more water than will keep the soil moist until the leaves grow again.

The Rose Garden

Some New English Roses.—It is rather a severe test for a new rose to expect it to be "perpetual blooming, decorative as a garden plant, yielding good cut flowers, and such as can be grown big enough for show blooms if required." New Roses would be very scarce if they were expected to be good garden roses as well as good for exhibition. Taking the roses in the order named, an excellent sort is:

Mme. Constant Souppert.—It grows well, the coloring is exquisite, and it is excellent for either show or garden decoration.

Queen of Spain.—This, we think, will be chiefly an exhibitor's rose. It may even be a good garden rose, for Antoine Rivoire, one of its parents, is charming in the garden.

Mrs. Peter Blair is golden yellow and a good grower, rather too thin for exhibition, though very useful when "caught-right"; but it is a grand novelty for garden decoration, as it supplies a color none too plentiful.

Lady Helen Vincent is intermediate between Dean Hole and Mrs. E. Mawley. It is a very fine show bloom and probably a good garden sort.

Marquis de Sinety is a marvellous color; the flower is rather thin, but may be had good enough for exhibition in a cool season. Unfortunately, it has the characteristics of many of the golden and orange-colored roses of bleaching in the sun, but for all that it is the most beautiful of all the orange-shaded novelties. Sooner or later it will be in every garden. We agree that there is a wide field open to raisers, but it will be a long time before we obtain a golden, orange or crimson rose having the superb form and substance of White Manman Cochet. Undoubtedly, Hugh Dickson and George Laing Paul are both excellent crimson roses, the first-named being, considering all points, the best crimson in cultivation, and it has given great satisfaction this year.—C. F. C.

Rose Mme. Berard.—This is one of the strongest growers we have in the Tea-scented section; it is an ideal variety for growing on a pergola, the flowers being rich fawn, tinted salmon, and very double; but in order to secure a medium growth and plenty of blooms the rooting area should be restricted. It is a mistake to plant the tree in an open border where the roots may ramble at will, as flowers would not be produced in proportion to branch growth. Confine the roots in a space about 3 feet square and 18 inches deep by fixing slates on edge. A fairly light loam, well enriched with rotted farmyard manure, suits this variety, and, indeed, all Tea-scented roses, best