

## January Notes for Amateur Flower Growers

Frank Wise, Peterboro, Ont.

January is the month when both the professional and amateur gardener can take a little time to review their work of the past year and lay plans for another. No matter how successful the gardener is he can always see where he has made mistakes and lay plans to avoid them in the future. Then, also, no gardener, however small, can get along without experimenting to some extent. We can benefit partially by other people's experience, but conditions vary. This is especially noticeable in the different kinds of soil. Fertilizers that will help a crop in one field will act the very opposite in another, producing the same kind of crop. Especially is this the case in the heavy clay soil. Sandy and loamy soils are not so susceptible to an overdose of manure. Being porous, they can cast off any surplus matter contained in it.

If you are going to make any changes to your home grounds now is the time to make a plan, as it is far easier to work when you have a sketch before you. This is especially true if there are more than one employed in the work. It will then not be necessary to leave such constant instructions with your workmen, which oftentimes are misunderstood or forgotten, as a reference to the plan will ensure against mistakes.

You can also draw a diagram of your kitchen garden, assigning the position for your separate crops, leaving space for new varieties. This you will find very convenient as then you will not have all your garden planted and find that you have forgotten some particular crop and have to sow it between the rows of some other crop, or sacrifice some of what has been sown.

Do not forget to take the advice given in last month's issue of *The Canadian Horticulturist*, regarding repairing and replacing all tools.

### HOUSE PLANTS

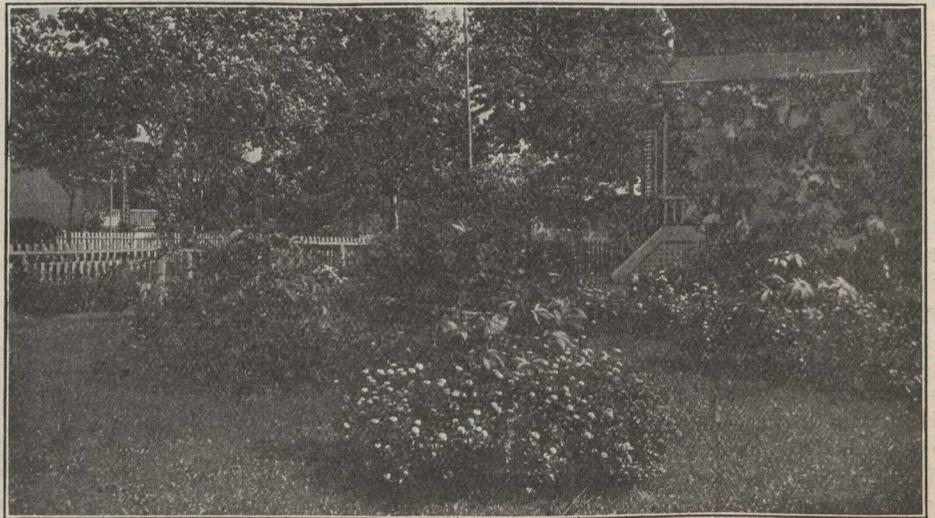
Your house plants will require attention to keep them from going back. It will be necessary to watch the watering very closely and not to overdo it. Some of the readers of *The Canadian Horticulturist* will have received plants for Christmas presents. Most of these plants come from the florists and will require special care as greenhouse and house conditions are as a rule entirely different. Greenhouse plants are used to a moist atmosphere, which gives the foliage a soft tender appearance. This is especially so with a great many plants at this time, as the florist has been using a little more heat and moisture to get the plant as near perfection as possible, so as to demand the highest price obtainable.

A good way to treat such plants is to give them as nearly as possible the same

treatment they have been getting in the greenhouse. Syringe them with tepid water once a day. This is better done in the morning as it allows them time to dry off before night. Do not subject them to too great a change in temperature, but give them as near 60 or 65 degrees of heat as possible. Last, but not least, do not water them until the earth will crumble in your fingers, then moisten them thoroughly. Do not allow the water to stand continually in the saucer. If these instructions are followed, you will be more likely to keep your plant alive instead of consigning it to the ash-heap in the back yard in a week or two.

ened twice a week for a few weeks, after which once a week will do. A good plan is to take it to the sink and give it a shower bath with a small watering can. A frequent sponging with soapy water will be beneficial.

Do not water until the plant becomes dry. Most palms do not dry out very quickly owing to having been fresh potted or having poor drainage. If when watering the water should remain on the top of the pot, the earth has either become baked or the drainage clogged. To overcome this, take a pointed stick and loosen the top earth in the pot. Turn up your pot and clean out the hole left for drainage by pushing your stick two or three inches up into the pot. If this should not remedy the trouble it will be



A Silver Trophy Flower and Vegetable Garden, at Montreal West, Quebec

This garden owned by A. P. Horner, of Montreal West, now of Calgary, Alberta, won the first prize in 1909, in a garden competition conducted by the local horticultural society.

Examine your palms and ferns for scale. A little soapy water applied once a week will prevent the attack of this insect, and will also be beneficial to the health of the plant.

Most house plants will be benefited by a little fertilizer in some form at this time as it will encourage bloom in flowering and growth in foliage plants. Should you not have any of the plant foods advertised, a mixture of one part of nitrate of soda pulverized, three parts bone flour, and six parts Harris' Blood and Bone can be used, giving a tablespoonful to a four-inch pot and stirring it into the top half inch of soil with a pointed stick.

### TREATMENT OF PALMS

The house treatment of palms is very simple and takes but little time. If you have received some palms as a gift, you must consider where your plants came from. A palm house is kept at a humid temperature of from 60 to 70 degrees, and the plant receives a syringing every bright day. This need not be done to your palm until it has become accustomed to its surroundings. It must be moist-

as well to turn out the plant and take the old drainage material out (if it has any). Wash it and place it back again. Palms should not be repotted too frequently. They will often remain in one pot and thrive for years if given frequent watering with manure water or a little concentrated plant food.

Look over your winter bulbs that were potted and placed in your cellar. Some of them may require watering. Bring up any that are making growth and treat them as advised in the last issue of *The Canadian Horticulturist*.

### Treatment of Narcissus

What would you recommend to do with a giant white narcissus bulb that has been grown in pebbles and water since last fall and that flowered at Christmas? How long should it be kept in water?—R. McL., Stratford.

Narcissi bulbs which have been grown in pebbles and water as mentioned are of very little use for flowering purposes again, as this method of growing weakens the vitality of the bulb. If allowed