

THE SIMPLE LIFE

THE HOME GARDEN

Garden Calendar for January

Plant—Hardy Border Plants, Alpines, Hardy Climbers, Shrubs, Deciduous Trees, Fruit Trees, and especially: Paeonies, Vines for Forcing, Roses, Horse Radish, Forcing Strawberries in pots, Start Begonias, Start Gloxinias.

Sow—A few Cucumbers in heat, Tomatoes in heat, Mushrooms, Early Dwarf Peas in warm border, Early Dwarf Peas in heat, Cyclamen Seed in heat, Mazagan



Pictote Carnations

and Early Long-pod Beans, French Beans in heat, A few Melons in heat, Forcing Carrots in frames, Milan Turnips, Lettuce, Forcing Radish in heat, Mustard and Cress, A little Early Cabbage, A little Early Cauliflower, A little Spinach, Broad Beans.

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.

How to Grow Flowers Indoors

It is a distressing fact that of the thousands of potted plants bought of florists a large percentage soon begin to droop and lose their beauty and have to be thrown away. They are not neglected. They are loved to death. Beginners always want to keep doing something to a plant, and consequently they water it too much. Most house plants that die are drowned. You can easily keep your holiday plants in bloom a month or a fortnight longer than usual if you will read these simple directions and understand the reasons for them. Once you grasp the underlying principles you cannot help following them. It will be a joy to do so. You will get the results like those old ladies do who always have a perfect window garden. You won't have to bother florists with a lot of questions, and you will look with pity upon people who demand arbitrary rules like "Water plants once a day."

The clue to the whole matter is that these plants come from the cool, moisture-laden air of a greenhouse into the hot, draughty air of a house or a city flat. Accustomed to full sunshine, they often suffer from insufficient light. Accustomed to an even temperature, they suffer on a window sill where it is cold at night and hot by day. Draughts kill many, and cause all of them to droop their flowers, leaves or berries sooner than is necessary. Variability in temperature is a thing hothouse plants can't get used to.

Watering to Prolong Bloom

You can make your flowers last longer simply by watering them in the way here described.

Watering is almost always overdone. See a plant looking sick—it must need water. So most people reason. They sprinkle it, and sprinkle it again, as often as the soil in the pot looks dry. This is the way to ruin any house plant, for only the surface is affected and the roots often die of drought.

Rap the side of the pot with your knuckles. If it rings sharp and clear, the soil is dry and needs watering. If there is a dull sound the soil is moist enough. Make the rounds of your plants each day and water those that need it.

The proper way to water plants is to pour on slowly until the water begins to drain out into the saucer below. Don't empty the saucer for an hour, unless you are afraid you will forget and leave it indefinitely. Then let the plant wait until the soil is fairly dry before drenching it again. The best time to water plants is in the morning.

Most people like to conceal the florist's pot by setting it in a fancy jardiniere. Later they may discover that the unhappy plant is stand-

ing with its roots in two or three inches of stagnant water, the excess of zealous over-watering. Perfect drainage is absolutely essential to potted plants. That is what the hole in the bottom of the flower pot is for. That is why the pots are made of porous material. Undrained soil gets sour, grows green slime, and kills the plant potted in it. Moreover, air cannot circulate through saturated soil, and roots need air as much as leaves.

Grow your plants as cool as possible, and the flowers will last longer and have brighter colors. The average living room is kept at seventy degrees. This is too hot for plants. Keep them in a cool room most of the time and move them to the hot rooms only for temporary decoration.

A plant left on a window-sill gets too cold at night; at mid-day the sunshine strikes it like the rays of a burning glass. Back from the window this plant may thrive. Avoid extremes by carrying the pots away from the windows at night to the middle of the room.

American houses are too dry for folk and plants. To make the air moist enough put a pan of water over the register in each room and fill the pans as evaporation exhausts the water. The air in steam-heated houses is particularly dry. There is a false notion abroad that "steam heat" is wetter than that supplied by a hot air furnace.

Bad air injures plants. You can't grow healthy plants without systematic and thorough ventilation. Coal gas is deadly. Even a trace of it causes some plants to drop flowers or leaves. Illuminating gas is equally poisonous. See that there are no leaks in your gas jets. When you fill the furnace open not only the draught but also the back damper and wait until the fire has caught hold again.

To ventilate rooms where plants are, be sure that no direct currents of cold air strike them. Remove the plants or put up a screen.

Get a package of plant food from a local florist or seed store or order it from any seedsman. Most seedsman catalogue it. The directions are on the package.

Finally, keep a sharp look-out for insect pests on the plants and spray the foliage to free it from dust.

The Baby Rambler rose is the most wonderful of all, for it can be had in bloom for twelve months of the year if put outdoors in summer. You can keep it blooming all the winter if you follow these directions. Give it a sunny window and a temperature of 55 to 65 degrees and keep the air moist. Syringe it occasionally to keep the red spider subdued. If neglected the stems and buds shrivel away.

Azaleas properly cared for are perfect mounds of rich color, even hiding the foliage. To prolong the period of bloom give the plant abundant water and cut out the flowers that fade. Keep it in a temperature of 55 or 60 degrees.

When blooming is done keep out of the sun. A greenhouse is the only place where it can have the special conditions necessary to form an abundance of new flower buds.

Heaths will keep on blooming for four weeks or longer if you keep them in a cool, well ventilated room. The average person cannot keep them till next season, and their summer care is considerable, but if you have a cold frame, cut back the branches severely when the blossoms pass, and put the plants in a cold frame or cellar to rest.

The gorgeous red poinsettia is one of the showiest of winter blooming pot plants, but it is not an economical gift, for it soon drops its lower leaves and it is impractical to keep it another year. The showy part is a circlet of velvety red bracts, or upper leaves. The true flowers are minute.

This plant requires more heat and moisture than a dwelling house can comfortably give. Its leaves fall in spite of us soon after leaving the greenhouse.

Jerusalem cherries will hold their pretty red fruits all winter with good care, but are very susceptible to impure air. A trace of gas will make this plant drop its leaves and fruit. Wash it weekly in soapy water to destroy the red spiders. Keep the air moist. Give the plant a sunny exposure, and water sparingly.

The spear flower, or Japanese Christmas berry (*Ardisia crenulata*), bears clusters of bright red berries, which last two whole years with good greenhouse management. Moreover, the leaves are glossy and crinkly around the edges, almost as beautiful as holly. See if you cannot keep its berries and leaves bright in an ordinary living room until next summer. If possible supply a night temperature of 45 to 50 degrees. Give the soil a sprinkling of bone meal or wood ashes for food every week or two. Tobacco water is a wash that keeps down the big brown scale, its chief insect enemy. Next summer put it outdoors and see if you cannot keep the berries on or raise another crop.

Dwarf orange and lemon trees bearing full sized fruit are charming winter pot plants. The fruit is not edible, but very decorative. These little trees are evergreen and will hold their beauty until the fruit is dead ripe. Water freely and keep near a sunny window. When the fruits drop off, reduce the water given and finally put the tree in a dark corner of the cellar to rest till spring.

The cyclamen will yield its lovely flowers from Christmas till spring if you manage the "bulb" rightly. This fleshy tuber is like a flat turnip, but it lies on the surface of the soil in the pot. Never try to bury this bulbous part. It is not root, but stem. Keep your cyclamen out of direct sunlight, in a cool room. The best night temperature is fifty-five degrees. Do not overwater it, nor let it get dry. Try for the happy medium, which most people fail to strike.

The Chinese primrose and *Primula obconica* are among the cheapest flowers and the easiest to keep in the window garden, for they will thrive in a more variable temperature and blossom longer than the other house plants. Water them about every other day, and keep earth out of the root crown, from which new trusses of the pale blossoms spring.

Heliotrope, geraniums and *Marguerite* daisies grow and bloom for anybody in the window garden. From the greenhouse these plants need more warmth and moisture, but



Single and Double-Flowered Paeonies

they adapt themselves easily to the strange conditions.

The pelargoniums are the "showy" geraniums. "Lady Washington" is a familiar type. The wonderful crimson pink begonia, *Gloire de Lorraine*, thrives if given reasonable care, and, unlike most house plants, rests in summer.

The Christmas cactus will give you red flowers all winter in return for the most casual treatment. It needs free drainage, but not much water, plenty of light and warmth.

The florists' forced bulbs, *Duc van Thol*, tulips, narcissus and Roman hyacinths soon crumple for their substance is largely water, but next year I hope you will grow some of them. These "housebroken" bulbs should stay in flower longer and will give more satisfaction than store bought plants.

Instead of being dependent upon the florist, the flower-lover seeks the woods or old fence-row for leaf-mold, the barn-yard for fertilizer, the brook or hillside for sand, and the neighboring swamp for peat, varying the proportions of these to suit the caprices of his wards.

Leaf-mold is unquestionably the best general soil for house plants, rich garden soil being a close second. Heating it before using is effectual in destroying insect life; but it seems also to impair the life of the soil, and, on the whole, better results are obtained by using it in the fresh state and combating insects, as they appear, with the proper insecticide.

The cow-stable furnishes the best natural fertilizer, but it must be thoroughly decomposed, otherwise it is almost sure to breed insects. Besides, if it comes into direct contact with a bulb, fatal rot is induced in the plant. Many advocate the use of liquid manure once a week, easily prepared by placing the fertilizer in a cloth bag and pouring water over it. Droppings of sheep, poultry and pigeons, being highly concentrated, produce a luxuriant growth when used with caution, but are ob-

jectionable for house plants because liable to breed insects. The attendant odor, too, is unpleasant for a short time after each application. A teaspoonful of ammonia in a quart of water, once a week, maintains thrifty growth without the objectionable features cited. This works surprising results upon geraniums and several other highly colored plants, bringing out the tints to perfection, besides increasing the size of the leaves. Soot tea is used advantageously once in two or three weeks, especially on roses and cacti.

Thorough culture is the best insecticide. The vigorous plant is the last one sought by insect pests. But alertness and care are constant requisites, for all insect life multiplies with alarming rapidity, and remedies, to avail, must be applied with promptness and persistence.

One of the most common foes of house plants is the red spider, microscopic in size and resembling brick dust, yet speedily sapping the life from its host unless routed. Fine webs on the plant disclose its presence, and a pocket lens at once leads to its identification. It abhors moisture, multiplying with great rapidity in a dry atmosphere. Daily spraying with cold or tepid water will soon dislodge it.

The aphid, green fly, or green lice, are found on almost all varieties of window plants, but have a special fondness for the rose, chrysanthemum and cineraria. They increase at an enormous rate; and as the young—which take refuge in the downy part of the plant, the leaf axils and buds—are not visible to the naked eye, several applications of insecticide may be necessary to eradicate them. They scatter from plant to plant, and a single insect may thus soon establish a flourishing colony.

Where only a few plants are infested, the hot-water remedy is a convenient one. Cover the top of the pot with cloth to prevent the soil from coming out, and immerse the entire plant in water, heated to 125 degrees. Let it stay in the hot bath two seconds; remove for a minute, then invert and return to the hot water a second and a third time, as before. This seems like rough treatment, yet, if directions are followed explicitly, it will not injure the plant.

But with a large collection, this process is too laborious. In the greenhouse, fumigation with tobacco is a common remedy, though attended with more or less injury to such plants as heliotrope, smilax, and calla. For the conservatory or window-garden, spraying with tobacco-water is a less objectional form of treatment. Dusting with insect-powder, and spraying with whale-oil, or carbolic soap, followed by clear water, are useful remedies. Kerosene emulsion, prepared according to the following formula, will not injure the foliage if the plants are thoroughly rinsed with clear water.

One tablespoonful kerosene, one-half teacupful of milk, stir rapidly together, then mix with two gallons of water. Apply with as much force as possible. Small black flies are not infrequent among house plants, and can readily be detected by jarring a pot containing them, when they emerge. Dry soil favors their increase, especially if containing fertilizer from the barn-yard. The larva is a tiny thread-like worm which destroys the plant roots. A standard remedy is lime-water. Prepare by placing a lump of unslaked lime, twice as large as the fist, in a pail of water. Let it stand twenty-four hours, and carefully pour off the clear water, rejecting the sediment. Let the plants get thoroughly dry, and then literally soak the soil with this water. Copperas water, soot tea, and sprinkling the surface of the soil with black pepper, are also efficient remedies.

The scale is particularly fond of woody plants like the oleander, orange and lemon, but is not averse to the juices of the calla and cactus, and other herbaceous plants. Though incapable of voluntary motion, its rapid multiplication renders it a formidable enemy; and if undisturbed, stems and leaf veins will quickly become encrusted with the pest. If only a few are present, hand-picking will suffice, loosening the insects with an ordinary toothpick.

The mealy bug is similar in habits to the scale, but, owing to the mealy powder with which it is covered and which successfully resists many insecticides, it is much more difficult to eradicate. It closely resembles a small tuft of cotton, and frequently takes refuge in the cracks about the window or in hiding-places about the plant itself. A toothpick is useful in dislodging where hand-picking is employed. A touch of alcohol or chloroform, whiskey, or camphor applied with a straw or brush is fatal. Kerosene emulsion is a good remedy.

New plants, received either from the greenhouse or a friend, should be carefully scrutin-

ized to guard against the introduction of new pests, and all not identified as beneficial destroyed; but spare the beautiful little ladybug, readily recognized by its scarlet wings spotted with black; it feeds upon aphides.

Propagating Oriental Poppy

The best time to divide the Oriental poppy (*Papaver orientale*) is in the summer, late July or August, after the plants have finished blooming. These late summer divided plants will bloom the following summer, but if the work is done in the spring, the plants do not sufficiently recover from the shock to bloom the following summer. More plants can be gotten by taking root cuttings. Cut the roots into sections an inch or so long, and handle them exactly as though they were seeds.

Vines Flat Against a Wall

I have a Lantana at the corner of my house which I wished to spread over the two walls and flatten against them. I nailed loops of cloth to the wall, rove a piece of white grocer's twine through it, hitched one end to a branch of the vine and the other to an old horse shoe—not too heavy, as the vine is very fragile. I have several of these slings in use, and they slowly, gently and continuously train the vine to the desired position.—W. C. Woolworth, California.

Garden Reminders

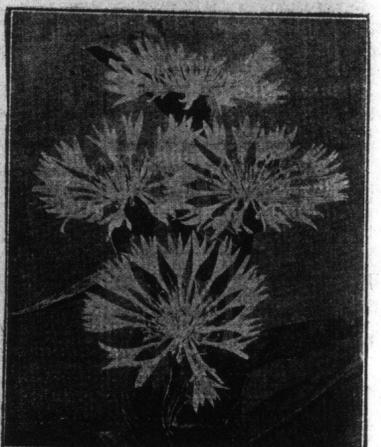
Keep all your wood ashes in a dry place and use them to fertilize your flowers. They help to control some diseases and insect troubles.

Save your tools. If they rust they will break. Get them out now, clean, oil and sharpen them, and they will do more work with less effort and in less time.

Save all the nitrogen in stable manure. It is worth \$300.00 a ton. Keep it covered, so the nitrogen will not wash away. Don't allow manure to accumulate unless it can be forked over twice a week or often enough to prevent the escape of ammonia. Haul it out to the vegetable garden as fast as it accumulates, unless the ground is so soft as to be damaged by traveling over it.

Aids To Slower Eating

Horsemen very generally recommend that in some way horses should be made to eat slowly, for obvious reasons. One is that the food should be masticated well before it is swallowed by the horse, as digestion and assimilation of the nutritious qualities of the food are involved. One suggests that there are many ways in which horses that are inclined to eat too rapidly can be controlled, and



Centaurea Montana Alba

perhaps the simplest plan is to put into the feed box several smooth stones, about the size of a man's fist. In working the feed out from around these, more time will be consumed in chewing what is already in the mouth. The same effect will be secured by boring a few holes in the bottom of the box and driving in pegs several inches long. The larger the feed boxes the better, as this will allow the grain to spread out thinly over the bottom, and it will not be possible for the horse to take up the grain in such large mouthfuls.—Horseman.

Cows, as well as horses, may be blanketed on cold nights, but too much coddling will tend to make the animals tender. In a warm stable the blanket used upon the horse during the day should be a very light one, but a blanket of some sort, even one made of burlap, is an advantage, because it keeps the coat smooth and shiny.

Earl



ARL GREY, the Canadian statesman, has been welcomed to the Plain by the thousands of Canadian residents having approved the project so well. Successful issue, says the appeal to the British public, should such ready response be assured. Lord Strathcona, high commissioner for Canada, and the people of the Governor-General with a representative Lord Strathcona said: "Canadians will welcome anything that applies to the Dominion, whether the people's descent. There is not the racial feeling being raised by the scheme, and it is shown their appreciation of the contribution by the monument to Wolfe and will afford great delight and if anything were needed British and French birth accomplish it."

The P

RIS CHEETHAM tea in the drawl her fiancée's perfume. "Iris" said reaching for her and seeking some "how did Mr. N on Monday?"

Miss Cheetham was too Had she been on her guai pleasantly, replied, nonchalant believe, and passed on to Mrs. Hanbury's baby. Ta merely exclaimed, with a "Motor ride? I never!" "Ah, then, perhaps I sh about it. But Mr. Newto himself so much that I ma you."

It was useless to pass pairs of eyes—and all fem ing her. "Where did you see hin was going down in a tra me. It was the Dodson's c Dodson and Mr. Newton in "No chatter" inquir "Oh, of course, there v sat in front. I didn't ree Highgate Hill," said ir of hill one likes to walk u But that did not settle h her. Two questions were was Alfred Newton in the Hill at all. Also, why we Dodson's motor-car, te-a pretty Milly Dodson?"

The Abernethy Road, Cheethams both reside, is a fare. No one in it keeps les ably half-a-dozen (at the Dodsons are the only peop and luxury of owning a m a local garage, is at once other inhabitants of the roo deed, it is a veritable thorn ham girls—there is a youn lege—have publicly given o Cheetham, is too devoted o motorizing. To his intense M Major is made to hire a h months in order to give a statement.

Now, that explanation i it is necessary. You unde Iris Cheetham's father sh been seen with the Dodson tor.

That night Alfred New Cheetham's house. Iris re drumming a little with h soft, he asked bluntly wh "I don't think, Alfred," s ought to be any secrets bet "My dear girl, I have no "Oh, yes, you have. You ride in the Dodson's moto His laughed.

"Who told you?" "Never mind. You were nent, and there's a dreadd I must say I do think it fa "Fast! Why, their char the pace of a hearse. But need for being teased. W "Only—who was the oth "Oh, I say, don't be jeal cause. Shall I tell you ho "If you promise to tell "Of course! There's no! Miss Dodson drove into tow She often goes that, I believ ence is next door to mine. "Indeed!" "I can't help it, of cour there's no getting over that ness for the day, and came route for the railway stati rom's car standing by the sl son in it, and her father, w her. I bowed, and was p me by the arm. "Newton," like to drive home in our r catch me, but I've an impo and can't possibly leave fo earliest. Do jump in—the take my place." Well, of tump in and—that's all." Iris looked stoutly in fro ing a word.

"Haven't you anything t "Only this! Suppose t alone in the car, would yo "Certainly! Look here, I jealous. There's not the s "Can't think how you ca pe "Small? I?"