

Planning for Future Flowers

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STANDING in the nursery at the end of a walk, on both sides are a group of the plant commonly called Scotch thistle, botanically *Onopordon acanthifolia*. They are fully six feet high and in full bloom and certainly are showy plants. With silvery gray, prickly leaves, they make good sentinels and guard the path well, for who enters there must be mindful how they pass these Scotch gentlemen, or they will get a prick for their carelessness. These plants are self-sown, a true biennial, and are worthy of a place in any garden for the effect they create.

This leads us to remember how many of the very showiest of our garden flowers may be now sown to grow plants for next summer. It is well said that a gardener's work is always six months ahead of him, rather let us say twelve months in many cases and sometimes years where the best results are aimed at, but the wise flower enthusiast is now getting ready to sow his or her garden favorites.

THE RIGHT TIME

The proper time to raise plants from seeds of both perennials and biennials is as soon as the seeds of this season's flowers ripen. With an almost avaricious pleasure the keen gardener waters the ripening pods of some choice flowers in order that he may be ready to gather and dry them on paper in some safe place to sow at the first opportunity.

Some of the showiest flowers we have are thus easily grown and with so little trouble in the doing that it amounts to a pleasure to the doer. The most prominent varieties which occur to our mind are delphiniums, foxglove, canterbury bells, columbine, gaillardia, lychnis, cyphophila, (baby's breath); arabis, (rock-ress); achillea, Oriental poppy, phlox and hollyhocks. There are many more desirable kinds of the larger flowers, but the foregoing just makes a dozen, let us say, indispensable garden favorites.

SELECT YOUR SOIL

The best soil to sow these in is a sandy loam well enriched, and so situated that it will have, if possible, partial shade at the hottest time of the day. Poppy, foxglove and Canterbury bell seeds are exceedingly fine, and should be covered with but a dusting of fine soil, which should be firmed with the foot or back of the spade. Hollyhock and larkspur seeds, being coarser, can have more covering. The delphiniums grow slowly but the hollyhocks soon come up.

After all the seeds have been properly sown and a neat label with the name and date of sowing has been stuck in the row, water the rows carefully with a fine rose on your watering pot. The only

thing to mind, and it is the main point till the plants appear, is not to allow the surface soil to dry out at any time. Do not keep the bed too wet but just damp.

When your plants are large enough to transplant, have a nice clean bed in which to prick them off in rows at least twenty inches apart and a foot in the rows for plants like foxglove and hollyhocks. Keep the soil loose by frequent hoeings and you will have by fall plenty of plants for next summer's flowering.

A bed, or more properly speaking, a border of flowers I passed frequently this past month, gave me great delight. It consisted, as nearly as I could make out in the limited time the fast speeding trolley allowed me, of purple, white and yellow iris, foxglove, campanulas and one continuous row of valerian. The plants were grouped in masses, but the valerian was a continuous row, and looked fine.

We have just done cutting paeonia blooms, and really the beauty, the size, the color and the perfume of most of the

varieties added to the hardiness of the plant, its easiness of growth in all kinds of soils, its beauty of foliage, and its freedom from insects, entitle the paeony to be designated the "King of Flowers," if the rose is the queen. Again, you can transplant a paeony root any time excepting in winter.

August and September are the months to plant paeonies. If you have old plants and wish to renew and divide them, this is the time of the year to do it. This advice applies also to that other garden favorite, the phlox, in variety. From this on they are the glory of the garden. The phlox particularly needs dividing every three or four years, or else it runs out.

To have the best results from the paeonia and the phlox, the soil should be trenched—a gardening term for digging the soil two feet deep, with liberal manuring—and be sure it is well drained. In fact, all our herbaceous plants may be thus divided and replanted in August and September, particularly the Oriental



The Transfiguration of a City—No. 2

This city garden has transformed an ugly bare spot, with the results here shown. Waste spots in cities should be taxed and forced into use.