

The Garden.

FLOWERS IN THE WINDOW.

With the return of winter will come the desire to have a few flowers in the window, something bright and beautiful to look at, when all without looks cold, and bleak, and dreary. To be p our readers in the pleasant task of caring for the plants in the window, and to guide them in the selection of those that are of easy culture and likely to afford them the most pleasure, we now present a few suggestions.

Select, if possible, an east or south window. Our days are short, plants need light, and as we can give them at best only a few hours of light, it is important that there should be as much of brightness and warmth in it as we can furnish. If an east or south window cannot be had, then a west window is better than a north.

The room should be one where the night temperature does not fall below 40, and, if possible, is not maintained much above 70 by day; also, it should be one not usually occupied by the family in the evening, for at night we draw the curtains, stir up the fire, light the lamps or gas, and increase the temperature several degrees above the average temperature of the day. But plants require that when the daylight fades the temperature should decline. Night is their time for rest, but they cannot rest if the temperature be as high or higher than it was during the day. The effect is similar to that produced upon a human being by depriving him of his wonted sleep.

The room should not be one that is heated by a furnace; the air from it is apt to be too dry and too hot. If it must be heated by a furnace, set a pail of water in the register, and at night shut off the heat so that the temperature may fall gradually to about 45° before morning. Again, gas-lighted rooms are bad for plants. Enough gas escapes in the evening, uncousumed, though the flames seem never so perfect to kill delicate plants, and to injure materially the most robust. If they can not be kept out of such an atmosphere, by closing a glazed door or sash so as to shut them out from the air of the room, then better not try to keep plants in the window at all.

Arrangements should be made for giving the fresh air whenever practicable. The most convenient way is to have the upper sash movable, and let it down at the top, taking care that the plants do not stand in a draught of cold air, and admitting it in quantity, proportioned to the weather outside; when it is very cold and frosty, very little or none at all, and more when the weather is moderate.

The leaves of plants need washing in order to remove the dust that gathers on them and fills up the pores. Geraniums, and like hairy and soft leaved plants, are best washed by taking them to the sink, and syringing them thoroughly through a fine rose. Glossy leaved plants, such as Camellias, require to have the leaves sponged off one by one. In all cases soft and tepid water should be used. This washing should be done often, say once a week.

In watering, use tepid water, and learn the requirements of the plants, so as to adapt the amount

to their need. An Ethiopian Lily will rejoice in watering that would kill a Cactus.

The drainage of the pots should be perfect, so that surface water can escape through the hole in the bottom of the pot. If the pots stand in saucers, pour off the water that runs into them, and not let it be soaked up into the pot again. Yet this rule, though of very general application, need not be observed in the case of aquatic plants.

A very common error in window gardening is that of attempting too much. Too many plants are crowded into the little space at command, so that it is impossible to give each the air and light it should have. Again, plants of too diverse character are brought together. It is no uncommon thing to see tropical plants that require stove heat, and plants from the temperate zone, if not even Alpine plants, all crowded into the same window, and subjected to the same temperature and treatment. Better far to have one healthy, well grown plant, that will yield its flowers in perfection, than dozen sickly feeble, wretched plants, that have no beauty either of leaf or blossom.

We subjoin the names of a few flowering shrubs and plants that are suitable for window culture, with a few hints on the treatment peculiar to each.

THE DAPHNE makes a charming window plant, and if any will thrive in a west window, this will. It is an evergreen shrub, producing bunches of sweetly fragrant white or pinkish flowers on the ends of the branches. The pot in which it is grown should be filled one-third full of broken crocks, so as to secure perfect drainage. The leaves should be kept perfectly clean. While the plant is growing it should be freely watered, and the temperature maintained at about 70 by day to about 45° at night.

THE HELIOTROPE is a very great favourite, on account of the profusion of bloom and the delicious fragrance of its flowers. It should be encouraged to grow large by giving it plenty of pot room and plenty of window room. It may be pruned and trained into any desired form.

MONTHLY ROSES, especially the tea-scented, are beautiful window plants. They need rich soil, thorough drainage, frequent washing of the foliage with a fine rose syring, as even a temperature as possible, carefully guarding from draughts of cold air, and smoking with tobacco if the green fly makes its appearance. They should have the morning sun, but be shaded from the afternoon sun when it has become powerful.

HYACINTHS make beautiful window plants grown either in pots filled with soil, or in moss, or in water. They should be kept in a dark cellar, free from frost, until well rooted, and then placed in the window to bloom. As soon as the flowers begin to expand, the plants will require abundant watering. If kept in a low temperature, say 65°, the flowers will last much longer.

THE CYCLAMEN is especially suited for window culture. The bulbs should be planted in pots in November, in a rich loam, intermingled with a little pulverized charcoal, with the crown of the bulb just peeping through the surface of the soil. They should be kept in a cool atmosphere and close to the glass, until the leaves are well grown and the flower buds begin to appear; then they should be removed to a somewhat warmer atmosphere and a sunny window. The variety known as *C. Persicum*