

A Year in the Garden

Work in the Month of June—A Busy Time

By E. T. COOK

*"O universal mother, who dost keep
From everlasting thy foundations deep,
Eldest of things, great earth, I sing of thee."*

THE year is speeding on and now we are on the threshold of summer, the well-earned season of flowers, sunshine, and general rejoicing after a long winter and disappointing spring. At the time of writing the woodlands are dyed with the colour of a million flowers, and a soft scent floats on the breeze.

Summer is with us. The ringing laughter of the children is heard in street and wayside, and those who love flowers and grow them are throbbing with the necessary energy to achieve success in the too short season of planting.

Nature must ever be our mistress, and her ways should be our ways—"a mother kind alike to all." Seek some flower besprinkled coppice and see there the beautiful grouping, the snowstorm of flowers from the Trillium, the cloud of yellow Dog's-tooth violets, and the flood of sweetly perfumed wildings, there carpeting the brown soil with the priceless gifts of our earth mother, Nature.

There is nothing more irritating to a mind that is filled with artistic ideas than planting a host of things, forgetful utterly of true effect. I was looking at some double crimson tulips a few days ago, two huge beds of the one kind, and have seen nothing more imposing and arresting this year, simply the outcome of choosing one strong, forceful colour and using it to the greatest advantage.

Lessons in Planting.

All annual flowers may be safely planted now, and if seed has not been sown as previously advised, seedlings must be purchased. This may be done from the nurserymen, and for planting choose, if it is possible, a warm, showery day. When a very hot spell of sunshine has set in, plant either in the cooler temperature of the morning or in the evening to give the youngsters a chance of establishing themselves quickly to our delight and unbounded satisfaction. Nothing is more discouraging and disheartening than failures, and when these occur, as occur they must, the pursuit of one of the purest of human pleasures loses hold upon our affections.

Failure is not always the result of the plant itself, but sometimes of careless or ignorant handling. Plant well, give water freely afterwards, and pick off seed pods. Geraniums—the most cheery of exotics—and all tender plants may be taken to the garden now, also the hanging baskets of flowers, and everything that is desired for the beautifying of home surroundings during the summer and fall months. It is astonishing the wealth of colour and

scent that will come from the few well-spent dollars, and the joy these children of the earth bring to the home.

A lecturer recently impressed upon his hearers the value of making the surroundings of the home gay with flowers; the little ones were imbued with their simple beauty and insensibly reflected itself in their lives. Whilst the Geranium is in one's thoughts, let me recommend one sterling kind for freedom and colour—an intense scarlet—General



A Beautiful Shrub—*Rubus Nutkanus*. The flowers are red.

Grant. It is my wish to have a large bed of it, not to take the place of the perennial flowers, such as the blue daisies and other plants that could be mentioned, but for a position, in front of a large house, where a continuity of one thing is advisable. So much for the annual flowers and exotics.

In the last Country Life Supplement the question of colour harmonies filled the chief place in our monthly notes, and we are delighted to find—in all parts of Ontario in particular—a growing affection for the flowers which many of us recall with undying affection in the gardens of the old homeland. How we loved the tall Larkspurs or Delphiniums that tapped against the rough oaken fence, and the Hollyhocks, proud and stiff, the flowers puffed out into huge balls of petals, or the flaunting Paeony tumbling over the path. These precious recollections are day by day impressed upon us in this fair country, and, as nothing is more encouraging than good beginnings, let me urge upon those who have borders the wisdom of allowing each plant to tell its own tale and not suffer distortion through ugly ways of treating the lithesome stems.

Writers on gardening in the Old Country have for many years preached against destroying the natural beauty of a plant by, for instance, in the case of the Blue or Michaelmas daisy, as it is also called, of bunching the stems as if they were bundles of straw. All natural beauty went and the sweet words of Wordsworth could not be hearkened to when looking upon this ugly work of the man with no soul for flower life: "Then my heart with pleasure fills, and dances with the daffodils."

Staking and tying are the work for early June in the border, and of course some regulation is needful. An extremist in whatever walk of life he may be is a nuisance and a midway course is the most pleasant. Staking is necessary, but keep the supports as much hidden as possible; and if they are painted green they will be less noticeable. In tying, do so firmly but loosely. A perennial border should give the impression of a wonderful display of colour, and by judicious tying and staking this may be achieved. The difference between a formal border and one that is not is as marked as between a well painted picture and a daub. It is love's labour lost to grow plants well and then spoil them.

In the World of Roses.

June is the first month of the rose, the queen of flowers, and too much cannot be written of the sweet wilding of our own and other lands. Poets of all ages have sung memorable song-words in her

praises and to-day many an Old Country garden that was once roseless is filled with the favourites of our childhood and recent days.

All this fairest beauty has been given us through the introduction of wild kinds, such as the famous Crimson Rambler from Japan, and hybridization, crossing of species and varieties to gain hybrids, a work that the great lawyer Lord Penzance thought of in the evening of his long life in giving us the glorious Penzance hybrid Briers, in which the Sweet Brier has played a great part.

I want to help forward the making of rose gardens here, and no garden of any pretensions whatever should be without a set place for roses and nothing but roses, and there should be roses in the woodland.

It has been my pleasure to plant several hundreds of roses this year, not in the conventional way, but against trees, over stumps, poles, on rough banks, and wherever their trails of glorious blossom will come out in strong relief against their leafy surroundings.

Get out of ruts. This may apply perhaps with stronger force to other countries than ours, in which gardening is only in its infancy, but even here, where the gardener is advanced in the culture of his beautiful art, for art it is, fresh ways of using the rose should be thought out. It is only in recent years even in the Old Country that the rose has been brought into the flower garden—strange though it may seem—and the woodland. We can profit by the mistakes of those who lived in the past and surely we have many noble ideas to follow as well as many false ones to avoid.

Summer is with us, and it is during the months of outdoor life that we can gather up ideas for the fall planting. Opportunities are given now, and in visiting any good garden go note book in hand to make observations of some beautiful bit of planting to reproduce or imitate somewhat or a variety whose beauty engrosses the attention.

The following words of a great gardening teacher in England should be welcomed here, and were written only a few years ago: "Decorative" means in this sense, something quite informal, much as we should think of some exquisite orchard. Canada is a land for Roses and it is to be hoped that soon in the place of the word England, we shall be able to substitute Canada in these remarks. We have our wild Roses, too—one the Pasture Rose or *Rosa humilis*." The distinguished author says that the rose is not only "decorative," but is queen of all "decorative" plants, not only in one sort of position or garden, but in many—not in one race or sort, but in many, from Anna Olivier, Edith Gifford, and Tea Roses of that noble type in the heart of the choicest flower-garden, to the wild Rose that tosses its long arms from the hedgerows in the rich soils of midland England, and the climbing roses in their many forms, from the somewhat tender Banksian Roses to climbing Roses of British origin.

And fine as the old climbing roses were, we have now a far nobler race—finer indeed than one ever expected to see—of climbing teas which, in addition to the highest beauty, have the great quality of flowering, like Bouquet d'Or, throughout the fine summer and late into the autumn. (Will do so here.—Ed.). Of these there are various climbing roses that open well on walls, and give meadows of beauty, the like of which no other plant whatever gives in our country. See, too, the monthly roses in cottage gardens in the west and cool coast country, beautiful through the summer and far into the cool autumn, and consider the fine China roses, such as Laurette Messimy, raised in our own day, all "decorative."

Watering.

The amateur gardener must watch his or her plants as a mother watches her child, and success can never be the reward if flowers are allowed to suffer from dryness such as is our lot in the summers in the Dominion. When watering, water thoroughly early in the morning or late in the evening, soaking the roots well. Gentle spraying over from a syringe will be beneficial to newly-planted trees and shrubs, roses, and anything except in the nature of the sweet pea. Careful loosening of the surface soil also brings about good results and has a surprising influence on the growth.

Plants in pots quickly become dry and much neglect means gradual extinction.

Bulbs such as hyacinths and tulips that have flowered in pots may be planted out and will be things of beauty especially in two years, thus enabling one to buy fresh bulbs for the flower pots to adorn the greenhouse next spring.

Never waste. Read over the notes of last month and find out those that apply now, as I wish to avoid repetition. When May meets June much of the work for the two months is similar.



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