

RURAL AND SUBURBAN

NATURE IN THE GARDEN

(By F. R. H. S.)

There is, it may be safely affirmed no phase of gardening that appeals in a greater degree to the artistic eye than the tasteful grouping of flowering plants amid natural surroundings. Such a system is advisedly inapplicable to the bed or border, and even in the most thoughtfully constructed rock garden the handiwork of man cannot but be apparent, but grassy glade and mossy bank may by a very slight expenditure of labor be spangled with a host of fair flowers, blossoming in as graceful abandon as though they had sprung spontaneously from Mother Earth. In the naturalization of suitable subjects due regard must be paid to the lessons learnt by a study of the informal groupings of the predominant partner, Nature. Nature does not plant in lines, squares, circles, or geometrical figures, but scatters her blooms as a sower does her grain, broadcast, and it is to a lack of perception of the importance of this simple rule that the failures, from an artistic standpoint, in the naturalization of hardy plants is almost invariably due. Of all flowers the daffodil perhaps lends itself most readily to the task of beautifying the outlying sward of the garden, for the home of the daffodil is in the grassland, and many an orchard in the deep South Devon coombes shimmers in the springtime with the pale saffron of growing varieties of daffodils are well adapted to naturalization; indeed, some succeed better in the grass than in cultivated ground, such as Queen of Spain, while many kinds will reproduce themselves freely from self-sown seed.

The snowdrop's loveliness can only be appreciated at its true worth when seen in unrestrained freedom. Then, along the winding woodland paths, beneath the over-arching branches of the great oaks and elms, the "Fair Maids of February" spread a broad, wavering line, their unnumbered, drooping bells gleaming like a veritable galaxy in the dark mid-winter days; then grassy aisle and steep, ivy-mantled bank are a-glitter with snowy blossoms that venture to the verge of the still, moonlit lakelet, or stretch away in ever-narrowing vistas between the great trunks of patriarchal trees, till, in the distance, the satin sheen of the flowers mingles with the blue-grey of the foliage in a soft monotone. Often during mild winters in the Southwest the spreading male ferns stand in the open spaces of wood or shrubbery with every frond intact, until the snowdrops have spangled the surrounding ground, with their white chalice, presenting a charming anomaly—the fern of midwinter. Snowdrops are popularly supposed to flourish better in the North than in the South of England, but if a deep and moist root-run is available they succeed admirably along the southern seaboard, where in wooded valleys in the proximity of water they will establish themselves in countless thousands and will increase annually by self-sown seedlings.

In the spring the so-called "blue-bells," or wood hyacinths, spread an azure carpet around the silver-grey trunks of the beeches and beneath the burgeoning branches of oak and elm, their relative *Scilla campanulata*, though lacking somewhat of the grace of the blue-bell's bending flower-scape, being also easily established in the woodland. Some of the tulips, especially those of crimson and scarlet hue, are particularly effective in the grass, and a colony of grape hyacinths, of which Ruskin writes that the flower is "as if a cluster of grapes and a hive of honey-bee had been distilled and compressed together into one small box of celled and beaded blue," when planted on a sloping bank, where the herbage is not too coarse, set deep-blue spikes. In open woods of deciduous trees, where the soil is not too heavy, the montbretias offer a charming autumnal display, their orange-scarlet scapes standing out in striking contrast to the green setting. In moderately damp ground the summer snowflake and snake's-head fritillaries are easily naturalized; a colony of the white form of the latter in a meadow being a beautiful sight. Of windflowers the Apennine anemone, soft blue in color, quickly becomes established in the grass and forms a lovely picture in the spring before the trees have unfolded their leaves, while the silver-blue Anemone Robinsoniana, blossoming around a tree-hole in a mossy dell, is one of the fairest sights conceivable. In the deep leaf-mould of the wood the hardy autumn cyclamens are thoroughly at home and blossom freely, seeding themselves until they are surrounded by hosts of young plants, and on a gently-sloping knoll the dog's-tooth violets star the sward with their spotted leaves and long-petalled blossoms.

Beneath the deciduous lawn trees no plant could have a better effect than the winter anemone in the early days of the year. In the cloudy weather the bright yellow, globular blooms, set in their Elizabethan ruffs of foliage, are individually very beautiful, even more so, perhaps, than when fully expanded in the sunshine, though in either case they are precious in the dull season of the year. It is, however, collectively rather than singly that they evidence their value, for the charms of the winter landscape are greatly heightened by the breadth of vivid color that they afford when they are present in their thousands. In the short grass beneath the great, leafless trees the flowers are seen at their best, for where the ground is open the sheet of gold gleams afar. In shrubberies, on sloping banks, by woodland walks the winter anemone will do well. The double meadow saxifrage (*Saxifraga granulata flore pleno*), known by the title of "Fair Maids of France," is an excel-

lent subject for naturalizing on the grass. In most cases plants established under deciduous trees produce their flowers while the over-hanging branches are still leafless, but the meadow saxifrage waits until the leaves are expanded to reach its full beauty. A colony of thousands beneath the fresh green foliage of a spreading lime is one of the most beautiful sights imaginable. The plant spreads rapidly, and, when once introduced, will enlarge its borders naturally year by year.

Of other subjects suitable for naturalization in the wild garden may be mentioned such herbaceous plants as the giant asphodel, the bergamot or bee-balm, an old-fashioned plant with deep crimson flowers and aromatic leaves, which in bygone days was wont to be used for rubbing the interior of the straw keeps in order that by its pleasant perfume the bees might be prevented from deserting their hive; the meadow cranesbill (*Geranium pratense*), with its large, blue flowers; day lilies in variety, leopard's bane, the great evening primrose (*Oenothera Lamarckiana*), the tall, purple-flowered monkshood, golden rod, perennials sunflowers, and the stronger-growing kinds of rudbeckia, with starworts or Michaelmas daisies, the more vigorous of which are well fitted for naturalization in the wild garden. In the damper spots Solomon's seal,

while the delicately beautiful alpine clematis (*Atragene alpina*) is an exquisite object in the late spring, when, clambering athwart some rocky ledge, it displays its narrow-petalled blossoms of soft blue and white.

For climbing over tree roots or rough places in the wild garden the morning glory is an effective subject, being particularly decorative when mantled with its large, snow-white flowers. It is a rampant plant of very spreading habit, and for this reason should on no account be admitted into the border, but in the wild garden its predatory proclivities may be regarded with unconcern. In certain districts the brilliant flame nasturtium (*Tropaeolum speciosum*) flourishes like a weed, and where it shows trails of vivid scarlet over the sombre foliage of yews and other dark evergreens is strikingly ornamental. In the south, however, it but rarely shows the vigour that characterizes it in the North of England and in Scotland. Climbing roses of hardier sections, such as the Ayrshires and evergreens, are also well suited for the decoration of the wild garden if a deep and rich root-run is provided for them at the time of planting, when they will grow vigorously and flower profusely for years without requiring further attention.

been cultivated under the most varying conditions during many years there is not one example of this nature. Plants vary in constitutional characters as in characters of color, habit, time of flowering, etc., and these variations occur when they are reproduced from seeds. For this reason it would not be difficult to obtain a race of potatoes or of dahlias that would be hardy in England, but it could only be done by sowing seeds and selecting from each generation only those that survived after a frost.

The weather experienced in most parts of these islands from October to March was exceptionally trying to many plants. Even natives were injured by the severe frosts which followed on a late autumn and early winter of unusual mildness. It would not, therefore, be fair to conclude that a plant was unsuited to our climate because it was injured during last winter, but we may set down as doubtful stayers all that appeared to have died from cold. In the Kew Bulletin, No. 6, 1909, some particulars are given of the injury done to the various trees and shrubs which are grown out of doors in the national collection. Many plants are tried experimentally at Kew in the hope that they will prove hardy, and quite an interesting list could be made of the successes. These are, however, less numerous than the

nus, lusitanicus, recognitus, and salviofolius. These may, therefore, be regarded as the best for ordinary planting. The Himalayan *Magnolia campbellii* and the Chinese *M. delavayi*, both reputedly tender, passed through the winter without injury.

The surprises among those plants which might have been expected to suffer, but did not, are worth recording. The most noteworthy are the new introductions from China, which stood the test well. They include *Davidia involucreata*, *Ailanthus vilmosini*, *Liriodendron chinensis*, *Eucommia ulmoides*, *Berberis wilsonae*, *Viburnum carlesii*, *V. rhytidophyllum*, *Rosa hugonis*, *Itea ilicifolia*, and *Sophora vicifolia*. The two Chilean beeches, *Fagus antarctica* and *F. obliqua*, introduced through Mr. Elwes a few years ago, were not injured.

It is understood that plants generally are tenderest when young, but the behavior of some things at Kew proves that such is not always the case. For example, old bushes of the New Zealand *Veronica traversii* were badly injured, whilst youngsters only two years old were scarcely affected. In like manner all the rosemary bushes were killed outright, but the two-year-olds were not hurt. In the winter of 1895 all the old plants of the Irish heath (*Daboecia*) were destroyed by the frost, whilst the youngsters survived.—The Field.

POINTERS FOR AMATEURS

Before good work can be done in the garden, the amateur gardener must have the proper tools. One can garden quite satisfactorily with a garden fork, spade, rake, hoe and trowel. Another great utility is a wheelbarrow. A few extra conveniences that will prove very useful, are a fifty-cent garden line, a seventy-five cent pair of pruning shears and a ten-cent hand weeder. Get a few feet of hose if you can afford it.

When digging a piece of ground, always begin at one end and work backwards. Thus you will not be bothered by the earth you have already broken. When digging, work in fertilizer or manure at the same time. Drive the spade or fork in as deeply as you can push it with the foot, lift it up and down, lift the clod of earth, give it a smart blow to break it and go on to the next spot.

Kitchen Garden

When digging soil for the vegetable garden, work in an application of well-rotted manure. A few wood ashes are useful. Plant or sow hardy vegetables as soon as the ground is fit for them. These include onions, peas, spinach, radish, lettuce, carrots, beets and parsnips. Sow the seed in freshly-stirred soil.

A delicious plant for home-growing is salsify or vegetable oyster. Sow the seed as early as possible. Handle the crop the same as parsnips. Sandwich Island is a good variety.

Among the Fruits

Spray the leaves of your currant bushes for currant worms when the leaves are half open. Use one ounce of Paris green to about ten quarts of water. Dusting with hellebore will also do the trick.

If there are no small fruit bushes in the garden, start a few this spring. They will grow almost anywhere, but good attention and care give best results.

Keep the old strawberry patch as clear of weeds as possible, but this is not so important as during the first year of its growth. If you are starting a new patch this spring, do not allow the plants to blossom. Cut the flower stalks and allow the plants to give all their attention to the production of runners and new plants rather than the production of fruit.

In the Flower Garden

Plants that have been started in the house should not be planted outside before being hardened off. Expose them for a few hours a day at first to outside influences. A cold frame is useful for the purpose. If this is not available, place the plants outdoors and take them in at night until they become accustomed to outdoor conditions.

Bulbs that have been left in the ground for two or three years should be lifted after flowering. Take them to an out-of-the-way place in the garden and heel them in. Leave them there until July; then lift again and keep them in a dry place indoors until they are required for planting in the fall. When the time comes only the best bulbs should be selected.

On the Lawn

Bare spots on the lawn may be repaired either by seeding or sodding. Lawns that are becoming thin should be well raked and sown with some good lawn mixture that can be purchased from any seedsman.

If you propose making a new lawn, do the work thoroughly. The creation of a permanent sod depends largely upon the preparation of the soil. Dig it deeply and evenly. Before sowing the seed, have the surface fine and smooth. After sowing, rake and roll.

When pruning the rose bushes cut out all dead and weak branches. Head back the remaining ones to a few inches of the old wood. The best time to prune most roses is just as the buds are starting.

"Doctor, how soon, do you think, I'll be well enough to eat things that don't agree with me?"

Bob—"Yes, since the Spriggs lost their money I have stopped calling there." Certie—"How good of you! How thankful I am sure they are!"



OUTDOOR VICTORIA IN NOVEMBER

No better testimonial could be found as to the salubrious climate of Victoria than the above illustration. The roses were grown by James Simpson, Blanchard street, and were cut in his garden on the tenth of November. They are named specimens of the polyanthus, tea, and hybrid-tea varieties.

THE HARDINESS OF PLANTS

Hardiness in a plant is understood to mean that it is so constituted as to be able to thrive permanently under the climatic conditions in which it is placed. A plant may be hardy in one part of England and not in another. Many plants can exist under a wide range of climatic conditions; these may be said to have a strong constitution. On the other hand, many plants are able to bear only a limited range, a few degrees one way or the other, either of temperature or moisture, or light, being in some cases injurious and in others even fatal. There is no character in the plant which serves as an index to its constitution. We may obtain some idea of its hardiness, etc., from a knowledge of the conditions under which it grows in nature, although, as Darwin remarked, species in a state of nature are often limited in their ranges by the competition of other organic beings more than by conditions of climate. As every experienced gardener knows, it is only by actually testing plants newly introduced from a foreign country that we can be certain of their ability to stand our climate. There are numerous instances of plants newly introduced from a foreign country that we can be certain of their ability to stand our climate. There are numerous instances of plants which, under cultivation, not only live but grow with exceptional vigor in a cooler set of conditions than those they are found wild in. There are also as many in which a close imitation by the gardener of the natural conditions does not succeed. For this reason experimental cultures are of the greatest importance when we are dealing with new introductions. Even then we must take care not to assume too much on the behaviour of a plant in a certain garden or locality. Plants are sometimes killed by cold in one place and uninjured by the same degree of cold in another. The condition of the plant in respect of age, ripeness, root action, and exposure often materially affects its powers of resisting cold.

The question of acclimatization requires to be treated with caution. It has been stated that plants can become habituated to different temperatures; that by a process of nursing and gradual hardening the cultivator may develop in the plant a harder constitution. There is no proof that this has ever been done. Among the hosts of tender exotics which have

failures after a spell of severe weather. The winter of 1894, killed many "impostors," as the late Mr. Charles Ellis termed those plants that were only doubtfully hardy, but that was in consequence of a long spell of very severe frost from mid-winter onwards. The damage done last winter was due to "softness" of the weather from October to December, followed by a sudden fall of temperature just after Christmas. This was succeeded by alternating spells of quickening mild and chilling severe weather, and coming as they did at a time when plants generally should be in their winter things. Those plants which are hardy only in the warmer parts of these islands, such as the cistus, ceanothus, escallonia, veronica, myrtles, olives, pomegranates, tree heaths, and Himalayan and Chinese rhododendrons were among the worst sufferers. Bamboos generally were badly disfigured, the plants not having recovered even in July. Only two out of the many species grown at Kew came through uninjured namely, *nitida* and *fastuosa*, whilst the most trusted and commonest of all, *metake*, is now an absolute wreck. Three other species that were not badly injured are *flexuosa*, *nigra*, and *guilin*. Certainly no one seeing the Kew bamboos in July this year would be impressed by their appearance. The new Chinese *Libocedrus macrolepis* was killed, whilst *L. chilensis* was uninjured. Among the rhododendrons *rubiginosum*, *yunnanense*, and *subulaceum* were either killed or badly injured. *Buddleia globosa* was cut to the ground, but has since started growth at the base, whereas the new Chinese *buddleias* were not affected. *Ceanothus* were badly damaged. The beautiful *Dendromecon rigidum* was killed, although growing against a south wall.

Fremontia californica, from the same country, not only passed through the winter in a similar position unscathed, but it has since flowered splendidly. *Romneya coulteri*, another Californian plant, was uninjured. The protection afforded by a wall is seen in the behaviour of the beautiful New Zealand *Plagi-anthus lyallii*, which was killed to the ground in an open border, but unharmed against a wall. The same thing occurred with *Sophora tetraptera*. Among the heaths the chief sufferers were *australis*, *veitchii*, *lusitanica*, and *arborescens*. The only species of *cistus* that escaped were *laurifolius*, *corbairiensis*, *florenti-*

ed to the native music. The enchant-
dies are really Grieg's own, only
per cent of them (of which "Sol-
ing" is a familiar example) being in
of folk-tunes.

DONNA AND LAUNDRESS

ome three years since Madame Susan
he well known American prima don-
a very new departure, even in an age
many ladies are in business, by estab-
personally conducting a laundry.
"laundry" is styled *Nettoyage de*
Luxe, and is meant mainly for the
of costly fabrics, laces, linens, and
but, none the less, it is a real soap-
laundry, where the only chemical
Madame Strong will tell you, is an oc-
copennypennyworth of soda.

made Madame Strong start her laun-
ell, why does anyone go into busi-
daughter of a wealthy Pennsylvanian
Madame Strong was reared in the "lap
," and pursued her art under the
st conditions, being able to pick and
er engagements and to follow her
al career free from any sordid cares.
e, however, overtook her, and she
self dependent on her voice, and
a singer of the first rank, singing in
recarious profession. Moreover, ill-
pervened to add to her troubles, and
h one thing and another, Madame
as driven to think seriously of find-
steady and lucrative occupation
e could combine with her profession.

One day, being then resident in
she was sending some beautiful laces
s to "the wash" when her German
erposed, saying, "Oh, don't send
dame, they will only be ruined. Give
necessary things, and I will do them."
Strong assented; the results were
satisfactory, and from this grew
of starting her own laundry.

periment, however, would probably not
with the success it has, but for the
Madame Strong was herself a skilled
oman. At Madame Strong's early
re was a fully-equipped laundry, and
she had special charge of this, and
roughly through every branch of
ag from flannel shirts to the most
laces. When she came to start her
dry, she went over to Paris and stu-
der the best blanchisseuses there.

the early days of her venture, when suc-
thung in the balance, Madame Strong
to call on a friend and found her
siding the packing of two or three large
with linens, lingerie, etc. "What are
g?" she inquired, to be told that they
were meant for Paris, where her
always sent her "things" to be done.
have them to do," said Madame
explaining about her laundry. At first
scouted the idea of getting fine laun-
ondon, but eventually consented, and
Strong departed in triumph with the
on top of a cab, and secured a per-
patron. Since then, among other im-
commissions, she has been entrusted
e laundrying of the layette for King
s first-born, and of a precious relic in
e of a shirt once worn by Napoleon.

THE WATER OF MARS

content with the prospect of a whole-
rumpus over the discovery of the
Pole, certain sections of the scientific
re busily fomenting a controversy over
tence of water-vapor on Mars. This
sion of considerable importance, since
ence of water-vapor would leave prac-
massailable the old belief that Mars is
bited. With this idea in mind a party
tists from Lick Observatory spent
ays on the summit of Mount Whitney,
photographs of the planet. In this
seems to be a general impression that
onomers were breaking new ground.
atter of fact, eighteen months ago the
ry of the water-vapor was made at the
Observatory at Flagstaff, Arizona.
amount measured by Very. The prime
ectograph showing the vapor has been
ed in Professor Lowell's "Mars as the
of Life." Without this knowledge
Lowell would hardly have become
asiatic believer in an inhabited Mars
shows himself to be in this work and
rthcoming "The Evolution of Worlds,"
new book, to be published this fall.
or Lowell discusses not only the possi-
human beings living on Mars, but the
problem of the beginnings of the uni-
we see it.

Emperor Francis Joseph has outlived
of his friends and interests that he
is. His greatest friend nowadays is
thi Schrat, who, with her late hus-
as admitted to closer intimacy with
er ruler during many years than
most members of his family. Frau
has a small villa close to the Imperial
e at Schonbrunn, and the Emperor
breakfasts there, letting himself out of
n the park with a latchkey and walking
the street. Frau Schrat returns with
acts as companion in his daily walk
erved portion of the park, and usually
s with him at the castle.

"you a teetotaler?" asked the employer,
ing an applicant for a place. "I used
ar, but I reformed."