

constitute the most troublesome enemy in a pit closed for any length of time; but we have, as yet, found nothing better than the recommendation given in back volumes, namely, to take pots and soak them twenty-four hours in water, then roll in arsenic and sow in a pot, as if in the regular way of seed-sowing. A few pots so prepared, should be placed in the pit before permanently closing up. The mice usually make for these pots at their first entrance to the pits. If placed on the soil, they seem to guess your secret, and will not "bite."

Plants in cellars need much the same care as those in pits. Avoid heat and dampness; frequently, however, plants suffer in cellars through getting too dry. They should be looked over, at any rate, once a month, and a little water given, if likely to become entirely dry.

Plants in windows and rooms usually suffer from excessive waterings,—very dry air about them,—too great a heat, or too much shade. As much as possible, room plants should be selected for their indifference to these requirements. Succulents, such as Cactuses, Mesembryanthemums, Ruscuses, Crassulas, Aloes, &c., care not how dry the room, but they demand all the sunlight possible. Camellias, Chinese Primrose, Azaleas, *Dicentra spectabilis*, *Polyanthuses*, *Violets*, *Hyacinths*, &c., do not mind a little shade; but they abhor a high temperature. Others again, while disliking heat, want light; of these, are *Calceolarias*, *Cinerarias*, *Geraniums*, *Pelargoniums*, *Pansies*, *Daisies*, *Tree Carnations*, perpetual blooming *Pinks*, *Roses* and the like "Leaf plants," for the most part, like a close, moist atmosphere, and a moderate degree of heat to do well. For these, glass partitions and closely glazed cases are usually employed. A great error in the growth of plants in these cases, is to suppose they require no air. The closeness is to secure a moist atmosphere, not to exclude the air. Whenever, therefore, the temperature is low, and little evaporation going on, the opportunity should be seized to air the cases; a few moments are sufficient. A very pretty plant arrangement is made in parlors that have bay windows; the whole window may be closed off from the main part of the room by a sash, and filled with plants. Some on the floor,—some on shelves, and some pendent from the roof. A gas jet lamp will be quite sufficient, with the usual window shutters, to keep out frost during the night or extra severe weather, while the regular day temperature of the room will suffice for that time. When the gas is burning, provision should be made for the admission of fresh air from the room at the bottom of the case, and for the exit of consumed air at the top of the case. This is best accomplished by a tube to and from the lamp.

It must, however, be remarked that the fumes of burning gas is highly injurious to vegetation, and any adaptation of heating by it will fail, unless provision be made to lead the fumes away. With this precaution, gas lights in towns and where it can be had cheaply, would be very useful in heating small parlor plant cabinets.

To those who have larger plant cabinets or small conservatories, connections with heaters or hot water from kitchen ranges will suggest themselves. This is often done. The great error we have often noticed is, that the heat is led to the back only, when it should be continued right to the front or coldest part of the house.

When heaters are employed, the oxygen of the air is usually defective, and, besides, the air is very dry and ungenial to healthy vegetation. Evaporating pans around the mouth of the air flues should be used in such cases,—syringing done at frequent intervals, and pure fresh air given whenever a warm out-door spell furnishes the opportunity.

The most critical season to these plants is fast approaching. A very common error, especially in houses heated by smoke flues, is, to keep the temperature too high. Unless the house be heated by hot water, a temperature of 55° will do perfectly well. The absorbent property of heated bricks, in flues, is so great, that the excessive waterings necessary to replace the moisture they absorb is more injurious to the plants than a moderately low temperature. In a house heated by hot water, a temperature of 65° may be maintained with advantage. The house will be very gay with *Habrothamnus*, *Cestrams*, *Begonias*, *Pentas*, *Plumbagoes*, and so on, and the syringe must be kept in daily requisition. It is highly advantageous to put a little sulphur, lime water, or soft soap into the syringing water occasionally, as the red spider, mealy bug, or scale, respectively, may make their appearance; this, with a vigorous use of one's eyes and fingers at times will keep them pretty well in check. *Orchideæ*, those of them which bloom on finishing their growths, will begin to add considerably to the attractions of the "hot-house." As any come into flower, they should have less water at each time, but be watered more frequently than they have been accustomed to; a very slight "dewing" with the syringe is all that is required. Heavy waterings and high temperature, together, destroy more orchids than many would dream of. Still atmospheric moisture must be retained for them in any case.

It is said that in England, the extent of land covered with trees has increased forty thousand acres in the last thirty-five years, and tree planting is encouraged among landholders by liberal premiums.

CONDITION OF CROPS IN THE UNITED STATES.

The Monthly Report of the Department of Agriculture, at Washington, contains the following account of the crops:—

The influence of drought and of the unusually low temperature of September have been unfavorable to the ripening of fruits and to the maturing of corn and other crops. No general or serious damage has resulted to corn, a large portion of the crop being well advanced by the high temperature of August before the recurrence of frost. The drought of midsummer has been almost unbroken in the West up to the date of these returns, interfering greatly with the seedling of winter grain, and with the germination and growth of the areas which farmers have been able to plant.

CORN.

In Maine and Vermont injuries from early frosts are reported, and in portions of the former State from grasshoppers. The other New England States indicate comparatively high condition. On Lake Ontario an injurious frost is recorded as early as the 21st of September, and injuries from frost are indicated in Erie, Franklin, Putnam, Ulster, and Wyoming. In some of the Upper counties of New Jersey, and in the highlands of North-east Pennsylvania, the fodder is much damaged, though the corn itself is too far advanced for material injury. In all the States between New York and Virginia, condition averages high. In Virginia the best soils well cultivated are covered with superior corn, and several counties report the best crop in several years; others have suffered from drought, as Clarke, where "many fields will not make a bushel per acre," while in Albemarle one farmer will harvest fifty bushels per acre on 300 acres. The crop has been reduced in quantity and quality in the Carolinas by drought, mainly upon uplands of a light character. The bottom-lands in Georgia have been flooded to an unusual extent at various times, and especially during the great storms of August, and drought has parched thin soils; otherwise the crop would have been superior. Similar causes have reduced the yield in Alabama, and drought has wrought much damage in Mississippi and the more western Gulf States. Arkansas is the only Southern State that claims average condition for this important crop. The increase in area was so large that a greater product than that of last year may be expected in the cotton belt.

In the West, Kentucky, Illinois, and Michigan, report reduced condition in consequence of drought; and while local damages from this cause appear in other Western States, their average condition is high, and a large crop is certain. Some fields were injured by frost in Northern Ohio and Michigan on the 21st September. The yield in Wisconsin and Minnesota will be heavy, without injury from frost; and in Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, and Missouri, another overflowing harvest of sound corn is assured.

The present condition, expressed as a percentage, 100 representing a good crop is as follows: Above an average, New Hampshire, 111; Massachusetts, 103; Rhode Island, 101; Connecticut, 105; New Jersey, 102; Delaware, 108; Maryland, 103; Arkansas, 103; Missouri, 112; Ohio, 104; Wis-