

## The Art of Potting

John Gall, Inglewood

**T**HOUGH it may seem a simple matter enough on the surface, there is some art in potting plants properly. The pots should be well drained, using for this purpose pieces of broken pots or crockery, and placing one large piece over the hole in the bottom of your pot. A little Sphagnum or rough material of some kind should next be placed over the crocks to keep the soil from being washed down and blocking the drainage. Then put on an inch or so of soil before placing the plant in position, and fill in with the compost, pressing this down firmly with the fingers until the pot is nearly but not quite full.

If the pot is overfilled, insufficient room is left for watering, while, if not filled full enough, not only does the pot not contain enough soil, but the plant is liable to become "drowned" when water is given. There ought always to be enough space left between the top of the pot and the surface of the soil to allow the giving of sufficient water to saturate the whole of the soil and moisten all the roots.

Some people seem to throw the plants into the pots almost anyhow, and still they grow and do well. This plan may answer well enough in a country garden, where plants seem to thrive under any condition, but too much care cannot be taken in the suburban or town garden. Most plants, especially those of the "hard-wooded" or shrubby type, require

to be potted very firmly—that is, to have the soil made almost hard in the pots, but in the case of soft-wooded plants generally, pot rather loosely for rapid growth and more firmly for early bloom. In all potting operations, see that the roots of the plants are spread out in the soil, that is to say, they should not have the soil thrown on them, but among them. The soil should always be slightly lower at the rim of the pot than at the neck of the plant.

### Hardy Perennials\*

H. W. Cooper, Ottawa, Ont.

Of all the plants that are cultivated for ornamental as well as for cutting purposes there are none which have made such rapid strides in public favor as the hardy garden flowers. Their popularity is not at all surprising when we consider the many varied and pleasant changes which take place throughout the growing season in a garden, or portion of one, given over to this class of plants, which every week, yes, almost every day, brings forth something fresh and new to interest and delight. Beginning in April the early flowering kinds, such as the anemones, hepaticas, Arabis and others, open their flowers soon after the snow has left the shadier parts of our gardens. From then on we have constant

\*A paper read at a recent meeting of the Ottawa Horticultural Society.

changing variety throughout the summer until the fall, when only the severe frosts stop the more persistent and late blooming kinds.

The most effective position for this class of plants in general is an open border surrounding a lawn, or backed by a fence dividing a garden or lot. They will not thrive if given a northern exposure.

The method of cultivation is of the simplest nature. Begin with any good soil as a foundation. When preparing the soil for planting the ground should be dug to at least two feet in depth and enriched with well-decomposed manure, or other fertilizer. The best time to plant perennials is in the spring as soon as the plants show signs of growth. Hardy plants, such as hemerocallis, dionysium, paeonies, and Oriental poppies, which produce their growth from a crown of close compact roots and flower in the early summer, are best planted in the autumn, as these take some time to get established. Fall planting of these varieties saves a season's bloom. These particular kinds should be left undisturbed for several years. Add a suitable fertilizer as a surface dressing each spring after growth is well started.

The late summer and autumn blooming kinds are usually of a more vigorous growth than the former. They are of such sorts as the rudbeckias, heleniums, helianthus, the perennial phlox and asters. On these the original crowns die out each season and many new side growths are made. These are best replanted every second spring, selecting from three to five growths, which, after the ground has been redug and enriched, may be replanted in their same positions or in another part of the garden. Treated in this manner they will not only produce more and larger flowers, but will prevent these stronger and more rampant growing kinds from crowding out their equally interesting, but less vigorous, neighbors.

### May Garden Notes

Ferns may still be transplanted from the woods to a sheltered spot about the house or yard.

Morning glories, wild cucumber, and hyacinth bean are good vines to cover up unsightly fences or rock piles.

Sow annual flower seed such as nasturtiums, portulaca, California poppy, and Shirley poppy in the open ground.

It is not too late to spade up that weedy place on the lawn, add well-rotted manure and sow good bluegrass seed.

Dahlias and gladiolus may still be planted. In fact, it is an excellent plan to plant gladioli at intervals in order to get a succession of bloom the whole season.



Spring Bloom in the Garden of Charles Hunter, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont., where many Beautiful Shrubs and Novelties such as Figs are grown