

# The Arrangement of a Flower Garden\*

M. E. Blacklock, Toronto

THERE are certain underlying principles that make for beauty, and having due regard for them, we can each work out our own ideas, and not be mere servile imitators of others. Very many people have exquisite flowers, in endless variety—very few people have really beautiful gardens. A great deal more depends on the laying out of a garden than on what is grown in it. Two or three shrubs and a clump of hollyhocks, if well placed, may give the greatest pleasure and satisfaction to the owner, and to every passer-by, but, if the shrubs are dotted over the lawn, and the hollyhocks planted in a straight row, while you might admire the individual flowers, the effect would be irritating to any one with any artistic feelings. A clear central space is needed in order to see things with a little distance to add to the enchantment, and, planting in straight rows is the least beautiful way of growing flowers.

What is true of shrubs being dotted over a lawn, is equally true of flower beds. If one has a very small lot, the temptation to increase the garden's capacity in this way is a very natural one, but it is far better to increase the width of one's borders and leave the central space for grass. The small lot of, say, twenty by fifty feet long, does not give room for many shrubs, but two or three should go in at the end of the lot, or if there has to be a small plot for vegetables, of, say, twenty feet square, at the end, then place your shrubs to hide the vegetable garden, and they will at the same time, form a back-ground for some of the flowers.

## CHOICE SHRUBS

A very difficult matter it would be, to choose three shrubs, and three only, but my first choice would be a Persian lilac—they are so graceful in growth and so prodigal of their gerat fragrant plumes of purple bloom—this I would put in the far corner. My next choice would be a rugosa rose (preferably a pale pink one) which would flower more or less all summer, after the wealth of June blossoms were past, and with its decorative rose apples and the glory of its autumn foliage, would be a constant source of joy to its owner. *Spiraea Van Houttei* would be the next best to have. If the lot were mine, small as it might be, I should add another lilac or two along the side, either "Marie Legraye" single white, or "Mad. Casimir Perrier" double white, and the dark purple "Congo" with its huge flowers."

## CLOTHING THE FENCES

The fences are the next important part to clothe. We have for the shady side the wild clematis (*C. Virginica*),

the climbing bitter-sweet (*Celastrus scandens*) and the other bitter-sweet with purple blossoms (*Solanum Dulcamara*) and the moon-seed (*Menispermum Canadense*) to choose from, also the good old Virginia creeper. These will all grow readily in fact, they will grow in either sun or shade, provided they have enough moisture at their roots. But honeysuckles (*Loniceras*) of all kinds prefer a sunny spot and so does the trumpet vine, and the new and charming *Polygonum baldschuanicum*, with its slightly rose-tinted buckwheat-like flowers. The homely old scarlet runner is a vine not to be despised in certain positions, (and its delicious beans add usefulness to its other good qualities); this with nasturtiums and morning glories form a trio of annual vines that are not fastidious and will grow for any one.

## THE BORDERS

With a good background of shrubs and vines, the borders almost arrange themselves. Plant your flowers where they are most likely to do well and, in nine cases out of ten, you will have them where they will look their best. For instance, the majority of lilies like their roots to be kept cool; therefore, put them where shrubs will give them a partial shade. Note the effect of lilies with shrubs for a background, and lilies planted in a bed by themselves in the open, and you will see how much more effective are the ones where the green background throws out their loveliness. A good large clump of Madonna lilies (*L. candidum*) in such a position, will rouse even the dullest clod to admiration. Poppies, on the contrary, like a sunny spot open to the passing breeze, which seems to love to wave their petals—and how gorgeous they look in such a position! So it is with other things. Nature seems to have specially designed them for certain places and though we may have succeeded in making them grow under different conditions, like the iris, which is naturally a water-side plant, and yet we see it flourishing in a dry sandy border, but we must own that it never shows off its beauty to such perfection as when it adorns the sides of a little slow running stream or is mirrored in the smooth waters of a pond.

In laying out your borders if you will only give up the "two by four" effect of straight lines, you will add immensely to the appearance of your garden. If you will think of your lawn as being a small lake, with vegetation of various kinds coming down to its edges—you can see in your mind's eye the kind of irregularities that would form an attractive picture,—which you can carry out in miniature. A lake never has an absolutely straight shore line,—there are

points jutting out here and there which form little bays, these will probably have bullrushes, or iris or some sword-leaved or arrow-leaved plants for their adornment, and so we get two ideas from our imaginings, a curving "shore line" (as it were) and the wonderful effects to be had from contrasting leaf forms and habits of growth.

You can have a beautiful garden, restful in the extreme, with but few flowers in bloom at any one time in it, if—and I must acknowledge it is a big "if"—you study the growth, form, texture and coloring of your shrubs and plants, so as to make the straight lines (it may be) of one, enhance the beautiful curves of another. For example, take the tall sword-shaped grey-green leaves of the water flag (*Iris pseudacorus*) grown near the beautiful arching leaves of richest green, of the lemon lily (or any other *Hemerocallis*) and observe the result; again, note how the dark, glossy deeply-cleft leaves of Fischer's monkshood (*Aconitum Fischeri*) act as a foil to the light green, much grooved leaves of the white day lily, (*Funkia subcordata* var. *grandiflora*); and still again notice the dainty beauty of the fine stemmed, cleanly cut, crimson-tinted leaves of the barrenwort overhanging a velvety grey carpet of mouse-ear chickweed (*Cerastium tomentosum*). And so it is with shrubs and trees. The somewhat gushing gracefulness of Van Houtte's spirea suggests companionship with the stronger, more reticent lilac—the one we can fancy talks, while the other listens quietly.

If you are the happy possessor of a large lot, there are endless possibilities before you. You can indulge in shrubs to your heart's content, and have plenty of room for bold groups of tall stately plants, such as foxgloves, hollyhocks, delphiniums, plume poppies, giant daisies, boltonias, heleniums, sunflowers, and so forth, which with vines and shrubs form a background for things of shorter growth such as peonies, iris, phloxes, campanulas, spireas, etc., down to dwarf plants like the polyanthus, primrose and daisy.

No border can be perfect without a plentiful supply of prostrate plants to carpet the ground. The earth itself is not particularly beautiful, therefore the less seen of it the better and if you put small plants of the white rock cress (*Arabis albidula*), both double and single, golden-tuft (*Alyssum saxatile*), white moss pink (*Phlox subulata alba*), lovely phlox (*P. amoera*), a lovely rose color, *Veronica prostrata*, sky blue, mouse-ear chickweed and the moss-like compact variety of cerastium (*C. arvense compactum*) white, alpine catchfly (*Silene alpestris*), white maiden pink (*Dianthus deltoides*),

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