

## Fall Work with Peonies

P. G. Keyes, Ottawa

FROM September 15th to October 15th is probably the best time to plant peonies or to divide old plants in order to increase our supply. Almost any soil will give satisfactory results if it be not so low that the water will remain on the surface during the winter or spring. Choose a situation away from the roots of trees, but fairly good success may be had in partial shade. Trench the soil to a depth of at least two feet before planting, and work in a good quantity of old manure. See that this is well mixed with the soil, as the peony like all other plants resents the direct application of manure to its roots. This trenching is better if done two or three months before the planting season.

Set the root so that the upper eyes are about three inches beneath the surface of the soil. The plants should be set about three feet apart and if in rows the same distance will answer very well.

Although the peony is hardy anywhere

and needs no protection, an inch or two of well rotted manure may be thrown over the crowns in November *after the ground is frozen*, and the tops of the plant have been cut off level with the soil. This should be removed early in the spring, but it may remain around the plant and serve as a mulch during the summer, or it may be forked into the soil. If forked in mulch the surface around the plant with some fresh strawy manure, as this will serve to keep the ground moist and cool — conditions which exactly suit the peony.

Plantings may be left undisturbed for years if the soil is occasionally enriched. Typical blooms must not be expected the first year after transplanting; as a matter of fact, few plants such as are sent out by nurseries bloom in less than three years. I am pleased to see manifested a growing interest in these beautiful flowers and hope that we may soon be able to form a Peony Growers' Association for Canada.

## Have the Garden Effective All the Year\*

D. W. Buchanan, St. Charles, Manitoba

TO those who wish to have a good flower garden with an abundance of bloom for the longest possible season, I would say, indulge liberally in the hardy perennials. There are many species and varieties of these rugged plants that are quite hardy in the west. The severe cold of our steady winters seems more favorable to these hardy plants than the freezing and thawing that they are subjected to in milder climates. We have left our perennial flower plots unprotected, save for the covering which nature provides in the snow, for several years past, and have not suffered any severe loss from winter killing.

I have a record of the date of coming into bloom of hardy perennials growing in the grounds of the Buchanan Nursery Co., at St. Charles, near Winnipeg, for the season 1908. This record shows that the earliest species and varieties were in bloom about the end of April, and some late varieties were still making a good show of bloom in October. This shows a season sufficiently long to make a good flower garden a thing worth striving for. But the flower garden is not everything. In undertaking to beautify the surroundings of the home, and especially the rural home, where abundant space affords opportunity for spreading out, trees, shrubs and vines should be used liberally. We

cannot have the flowers blooming outdoors in the winter in our climate, but by a judicious use of shrubs and trees, we can produce pleasing effects for all seasons of the year and make the garden or the home surroundings beautiful even in mid-winter.

Some people may smile at the idea of planting for winter effect in our climate. Granted, that when the thermometer is away down below zero, we are not likely to linger outdoors to contemplate landscapes or artistic effects in planting, but after all, the really severe days of winter are few. Even in the depth of winter there are many days on which a ramble in the wood or a stroll about the grounds can be enjoyed, and in prolonged spells of severe weather, a pleasant view from the window is a thing to be desired. Then we have the early spring and late fall seasons, before verdure has appeared, or after the flowers are gone, during which there are many pleasant days to be about the grounds.

### FOR FOLIAGE EFFECTS IN FALL

For fall or autumn effects, pleasant views may be created by giving attention to the coloring of autumn foliage. When Jack Frost has touched the leaves with his magic wand, many of our trees and shrubs take on a richness of coloring that is hardly equalled in beauty by the fresh foliage and flowers of spring and early summer. There are other shrubs that hold the green leaf until very late in the season. Of the shrubs whose foliage is

particularly attractive in the fall we may mention, among others, the beautiful Ginnala maple. The coloring of the foliage of this plant will vary in individual specimens. Some will be found beautifully tinted quite early in the season, increasing in richness as the season advances, until the little tree at a distance resembles a scarlet mass. The foliage of the Virginia creeper is nicely colored in the fall, but the leaves soon fall. Another shrub that may be mentioned in this connection is the Japan barberry. This is a beautiful little foliage plant all summer, but especially beautiful when it has taken on its rich autumn coloring. This plant also holds its foliage well. Our native plum, and also the Sheep berry (*Viburnum lentago*) have finely colored foliage in autumn. The Russian olive holds its leaf late in the fall, its light



Colorado Blue Spruce

An excellent subject for winter effect.

color blending nicely with the rich coloring of surrounding trees. This shrub or small tree gives a fine effect all summer if planted among the green leaved trees, its silvery foliage showing in fine contrast with the green. In the fall the foliage takes on a lighter shade. Of plants that hold the green leaf late in the fall we may mention the common lilac, buckthorn and Amur barberry. The purple leaf barberry also retains its leaf well on in the fall, the color becoming more of a brownish shade as the season advances.

When Christmas comes you will wish that you had potted some bulbs in October. Do not procrastinate. Send at once to seedsmen that advertise in THE CANADIAN HORTICULTURIST, and get their catalogues.

\*Extracts from an address delivered at a meeting of the Western Horticultural Society. In a later issue, that portion of the address that deals with planting for winter effect will be published.