



HOW TO PLANT TREES AND SHRUBS

Every year there are many buyers of trees and shrubs who are very much disappointed because they do not get good results.

It is when the unpacking is done that the trouble begins. Be prepared to cover the roots with damp soil immediately the plants are taken from the packing-box or the wrapping is removed.

If you cannot set the trees or shrubs in the ground where they are to grow permanently, "heel" them in, i.e., dig a trench big enough to hold the roots, throw some soil over them and water them to work the soil in among the roots.

The ground where trees and shrubs are to be planted ought to be thoroughly prepared before setting the trees. I prefer to do this in the fall; but if you have not done it, do it now.

If you have not the time to do this, or do not care to go to the expense of having it done, then, when planting, dig a good-sized hole, a foot or so larger than the diameter of the ball of the plant.

With the exception of rhododendrons, azaleas and their near relatives, set the plants just a little deeper than they were before.

Before setting the plant be sure that all of the roots are in good condition. If any are damaged in any way, remove the damaged portion, cutting it off just above the injury.

If you are planning to plant rhododendrons, azaleas, andromedas, mountain laurel, ericas, or any other plants belonging to the erica family, the soil must be thoroughly prepared before planting.

Dig the soil out to a depth of two and one-half feet and thoroughly drain the place. In the bottom throw three or four inches of stones or coal clinkers to help drain the ground better.

winter out-of-doors. It is necessary that the peat or muck be weathered in order to sweeten it. Muck when taken from a bog is usually sour and even ordinary upland plants will not grow in it.

To this soil add about one-tenth its bulk of well-rotted manure. It must be so well decayed that it looks like earth.

When the ground is settled, if you are planting the great laurel (Rhododendron maximum), or the mountain laurel (Kalmia latifolia), which have been collected from the wild in this country, set the plants two or four inches deeper in the ground than they were before.

When the tree or shrub is planted, prune it. A safe rule to follow with either, except in the case of evergreens, members of the azalea family and such trees as magnolias, is to remove one-half of the wood.

Plants when transplanted have no connection with the soil in the new location for some time. The leaves are all the time pumping water out of the soil up through the plant and giving it off.

Many people prune their fruit trees back to a whip—remove all the branches, leaving nothing but a bare stock.

When planting shrubs the rule I have always given of pruning back had better be followed by the inexperienced amateur, but to one who has had considerable experience circumstances will dictate just what is needed.

Such shrubs as the hardy hydrangea and the rose will stand a very severe pruning. These produce flowers on the current season's growth, and one of the objects of the severe pruning is to get many new shoots.

If the plants are received from the nursery after they have begun to grow, prune off all the new growth, otherwise the plant is very likely to die.

If the plant is spindly, that is, the branches are poorly furnished, cut the leader out. This may sound like heresy, but it is practiced by the best grower in this country today.

the shoot selected to it. Use raffia or other soft material which will not rot.

The only thing that can be done to secure the successful transplanting of conifers is careful planting—see that the soil is in contact with all the roots and that there are no spaces in the soil to drain away the water, allowing the roots to dry out rapidly.

HARMONY IN THE HARDY BORDER

I have been working to plan a hardy border which shall present from spring to autumn a succession of color combinations, each one of which shall dominate the border while in bloom.

The idea was suggested to me several years ago by one of those happy accidents that are the joy of gardening. One summer I raised a thriving lot of young foxgloves and pink cup-and-saucer Canterbury bells, and, as good luck would have it—for I had never seen either one of them before, and was growing them chiefly for the sake of their names—I planted the fox-gloves in the back of the hardy border and made an irregular group of the Canterbury bells in front of them.

For the second half of August there are Veronica longifolia and white phlox. A comparatively low-growing phlox, like Peanne d'Arc, should be used with the veronica, that the grace of its curving blue sprays may be emphasized against the white background.

By dint of observation and experiment I have finally gathered together nine such combinations, giving bloom from the first of May until the middle of October, except, unfortunately, for the whole of September.

The season opens with white tulips and hardy yellow alyssum. L'Immaculee is a good tulip for this purpose, and is prettiest scattered among the alyssum, neither in front nor behind it.

Third in order, to usher in the month of June, are lemon lilies and German iris. But only certain varieties of the iris may be used. Close to the lemon lilies should come the fawn and violet variety and, last, the purple and violet.

Don't wait until autumn to sow seed for next year's blooming—that's my experience. Start the seed not later than the middle of May to get strong plants by autumn with plenty of crowns from which to send up flower stalks in the spring.

The first of July gives another blue and white combination. By that time the tall English larkspurs have sent up their columns of azure, and it would be hard to find a more perfect background for the exquisite outlines of the pure white Madonna lily.

season. The Madonna lilies go in front of the larkspurs, as they seldom grow taller than four feet.

The larkspurs have so long a season to bloom that they also play a part in the next combination with the little russet and gold coreopsis. This grows about four feet high and is best treated as a biennial.

August gives us two combinations. For the first half, cardinal flowers and tiger lilies. Every one who has grown tiger lilies knows the difficulty of finding anything to go with their peculiar yellowish pink color.

For the second half of August there are Veronica longifolia and white phlox. A comparatively low-growing phlox, like Peanne d'Arc, should be used with the veronica, that the grace of its curving blue sprays may be emphasized against the white background.

September, as I have already confessed, is a blank, but in October the border is glorious again with purple and gold. One autumn day I brought home from a walk three plants of the common purple aster.

Such a border as I have been describing has, of course, one obvious disadvantage: it is practicable only for a large garden, as it must refuse admittance to so many of the host of May and June perennials that one cannot do without.

The more we study the soil the more we realize the importance of having it well supplied with humus. Prof. Harry Snyder, of the Minnesota Experimental Station, in a recent address, has this to say about it:

In soils which have been under long cultivation, as in the continuous production of wheat, corn or other crops where the land is continually under the plow, there is a deficiency of vegetable matter, because there has been no return in crop residues.

In nearly all prairie soils there is a large amount of plant food which is not in the most active condition, but which can be made suitable for the food of crops by the chemical action brought about from the decay of the vegetable matter in the soil.

valuable in many ways, as enabling the soil to retain a larger amount of water, preventing the evil effects of drought, binding the soil particles so that the denuding effects of heavy windstorms are, in part, prevented, changing the physical texture of the soil so that it is more suitable for crop production as well as promoting a series of chemical changes which result in the liberation of plant food.

BREEDING SQUABS FOR THE TABLE

The "fancy" for pigeons, as it is called, stands on a different footing in many respects to the propensity for breeding them for commercial purposes.

To the sick and convalescent at certain seasons of the year they offer an appetizing and digestible food, highly recommended by medical practitioners.

This is a business, or branch of stock breeding that can be conducted profitably by nearly all fowl keepers or farmers. The birds used for this purpose are the large and vigorous breed known as the "Homing Pigeon."

To mate them for breeding it is the best never to allow them to select mates, but pairing them with the selection of a large size male and a medium size hen will result in good vigorous young.

—Ex.

LAND AND LIME

How can a farmer know whether his land requires to be limed? He can make a rough test in the following way: Put a sample of the soil of a field on a plate, make it into a powder, and then pour a little hydrochloric acid (obtainable from any chemist) upon it.

The leadwort (Plumbago Capensis) is the best light flowered bedding plant. Carry over winter by taking cuttings before frost.

Bubb Doddington was very lethargic. Falling asleep one day after dinner with Sir Richard Temple and Lord Cobham, the latter reproached Doddington with his drowsiness.

None are so fond of secrets as those who do not mean to keep them; such persons covet secrets as a spendthrift covets money, for the purpose of circulation.—C. C. Colton.

Horne Tooke, being asked by George III. whether he played cards, replied: "I cannot, your Majesty, tell a king from a knave."

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