

together, each requiring similar conditions—partial shade and some moisture, and with them put, in the fall, the blue Scillas, to make the “fernery,” if one may so describe it, a place of flowers over as long a season as possible. During the hot summer days a fern retreat is pleasant to retire to, and if within the sound of falling water, so much the better. A practical little note is given in the recently published year book of the Toronto Horticultural Society. Mr. Cameron is writing of ferns and says: “The fern family is a very important one in many ways, and their requirements are as many and varied as the requirements of the animal kingdom. Some require to be kept warm, others cool, some must be kept very moist, others nearly dry, as evidenced by those which grow on bare limestone rocks, others thrive with the water dripping over them all the time—for instance, *Cystopteris bulbiferum*, or bladder fern, and still others delight to grow in cool, wet bogs and similar places, fastened in the crevices of rocks, such as *Pellaea atropurpurea* or Cliff brake. Some delight in burying their roots in the heavy moss that covers many rocks, such as *Camptosorus*, or ‘Walking fern,’ and the *Aspleniums*, or Spleenworts, yet the majority of them require shade, but yet light, moisture, and plenty of air.

“The purely commercial varieties are not large in number; they are generally the most dwarf, and of the hardest in texture, those which will stand the most hard usage, and the impure air of dwellings, gas, dust, smoke, etc. The best for table and window decoration are the various forms of *Nephrolepis* or Sword Fern, *Aspidium falcatum* or ‘Holly Fern,’ *Aspidium Tsussimense* and some of the *Pteris*. For covering walls and rocks we might mention the various *Adiantums*, or ‘Maiden Hair,’ *Pteris* and *Gymnogrammas*. *Pelleas* do well on dry walls, and mention might be made especially of the fine specimens of *Pellaea atropurpurea* on Brock’s Monument on Queenston Heights, growing on the east wall, in the solid masonry about thirty feet

above the ground, and all around are plenty of young plants in all stages. One large specimen above the doorway has been there for about twenty years.”

WHEN gathering for the house such flowers as the *Gladiolus*, never cut the stem with more than one leaf. Sometimes the whole stem is severed just above the soil and the result is the root or corm, to use the correct term, is in a large measure destroyed. As the *Gladiolus* will soon be in full beauty and is grown abundantly in the Dominion, this note may be of service. Tulips are, of course, out of flower now, but the same remark applies in this case, also to all bulbous plants. Gather flowers of all kinds either early in the morning or in the evening, never when the sun is shining full upon them.

TREES and shrubs planted last spring will require close attention during the summer, especially when the weather is very hot and the heat is prolonged. If advice previously given has been followed, there will be no grass next the stems, but only soil, which should be lightly loosened on the surface to let in air and sunshine, both of sweetening influence. Give liberal waterings from time to time, and when the soil is not hard or “caked,” the moisture sinks in with material advantage to the tree or shrub. It is only by strict attention to details that success is achieved. Slipshod ways are useless.

AN enthusiastic gardener in the Dominion lectured, a short time ago, on the German or Flag Iris (*Iris Germanica*), and the writer was pleased to hear so warm a eulogy upon a favourite flower. This Iris is one of the most accommodating of hardy perennials, suffers from no sickness, develops rapidly, possesses beautiful glaucous coloured sword-shaped leaves, and sends up a little forest of spikes bearing large, scented flowers of many

colours. It will grow in poor soil, by the waterside, in shade as by some woodland walk, and indeed almost anywhere.

This is the type of plant that one wishes for—happy under varying conditions. A long list of kinds or varieties is available, and of recent years the hybridist has been busy raising new and beautiful forms. Ed. Michel, flowers wine purple; Iris King, gold and purple; Caprice, lavender and red; Aurea, delicate yellow; Florentina, pale sky blue; Madame Chereau, white with margin of soft blue; Queen of May, rosy red and white, and Pallida dalmatica are a few of the noblest of their race. The last of all is a glorious pale blue flower and should be the first chosen. Flag Irises are increased by dividing the clumps soon after the blossoming season is over.

THE garden should smell of roses, and practical thoughts must go with the pure enjoyment of the queen of flowers. Vile insects seem to torture the Rose more than most denizens of our gardens, and frequent examinations are needful to prevent serious mischief. It is both a labour of love and of necessity to free the plants from an insidious foe, and in the case of caterpillars the only satisfactory way is to pick them off with the hand. It is not a pleasant job, but it must be done. An excellent insecticide is formed by mixing one hundred parts of water to one part of V<sub>2</sub> K, a preparation that mildew does not esteem. Hellebore powder sprinkled on the plants kills green fly and similar intruders. But the trouble is well repaid, and another help to the plant comes from gathering faded flowers. Each morning go round, basket in hand, the collection of roses, and pick off fading petals, making them, if it is so wished, into *pot-pourri*, a recipe for which I gave in the May supplement. One of the sweetest decorations consists of bowls filled loosely with roses, and always gather the flowers in the early morning, or in the cool of the evening.

# Homes and Gardens of Canada

## 7---Suburban Residence of Sir William Ralph Meredith

By E. T. COOK

THE beautiful city of Toronto has many beautiful gardens on hillside and by the blue waters of the lake which ripple to the shore in drowsy summer days. Sometimes a fair retreat, a “home” in the finest meaning of a word sacred to all true hearts is hidden away, embowered perhaps amongst the storm-beaten monarchs of a once primeval forest or perched on a highland which carries the eye across the great stretch of busy streets to the oasis of islets into the far distance.

The home of the great lawyer of whom Canada is justly proud and whose home and garden it is our privilege to illustrate, is one of the most charmingly planned it has been our pleasure to visit, and on a recent morning, when a hot sun softened with a bracing breeze was tempting a hundred interesting flowers to open their eyes to the summer, the borders and whole surroundings were in exquisite perfection. The writer was filled with delight to find a garden planned with rare judgment and taste, with nothing to suggest that the one responsible for the outside beautifying of the home was embued or ever will be so, with a crude desire to bring in what is called in the old country “bedding out,” “carpet-bedding,” or “mosaic culture.” May one utter a word of warning that the planner of gardens may be led astray into bringing in abominations of which evidences are still strong across the seas.

LANDSCAPE gardening is in its infancy in Canada, and what is true of this art, for art it is, is true of architecture; keep absurdities away with strong force. During the early Victorian decade gardening in Britain was seen in its basest forms, and Mr. William Robinson, the greatest authority of his time, and who is still happily with us, mentions that in this “bedding out” the beautiful forms of flowers are degraded to the level of crude colour to make a design, and without deference to the beauty of the plants, clipping being freely done to get the carpets or patterns “true.” When these tracery gardens were made, often by people without any knowledge of the flowers of a garden, they were found difficult to plant; hence attempts to do without the gardener altogether, and get colour by the use of broken brick, white sand, and painted stone. All such work is wrong and degrading to

the art of gardening, and in its extreme expressions is ridiculous. Why are such designs bad? The good sense of all is the final court of appeal for



Sir William Ralph Meredith in his Garden.

even artistic things. Why should the cottage garden be a picture, when the larger garden is not? May the large gardens be as good in proportion to the money spent upon them and their size as a little cottage garden?

It is to be fervently hoped that Canada will never suffer from such a deplorable fashion as this, and remember that it is in the beginning wisdom should come for the avoidance of expensive errors and much disappointment.

One is reminded in this connection of a passage in a speech delivered by Lord Rosebery, in Edinburgh, a few years ago, upon the taste in sculpture. These words are true of many gardens and many mansions: “If those restless spirits that possessed the Gadarene swine were to enter into the statues of Edinburgh, and if the whole stony and brazen troop were to hurry and hustle and huddle headlong down the steepest place near Edinburgh into the deepest part of the Firth of Forth, art would have sustained no serious loss.”

THIS may appear a dissertation upon gardening rather than a description of Sir William’s home, but it is through his delightful home that the writer is attempting to convey a lesson, and the lesson is that such a position might have undergone a woe-ful transformation with an all round destruction of pristine beauty. The house stands above the Rosedale ravine and is approached by a simple terrace which sets off to distinct advantage the imposing colonnades. There is nothing mean; all is dignified, a real living home of flower life. Sir William has an intense love of flowers in his heart. He is, for example, Hon. Patron of the Toronto Horticultural Society, and has made gardening a health-giving relaxation from a great and strenuous life. The exquisite ravine is undisturbed; the song of birds trills from leafy branches, and terrace walls, strong and picturesque, are rich in floral treasures. As Mr. Robinson, whom we have already referred to, writes in his great work, “The English Flower Garden,” and his words may apply to the beautiful home in our thoughts now: “We may get every charm of a garden without sacrificing the picturesque or beautiful; there is no reason, either, in the working or design of gardens, why there should be a false line in them; every charm of the flower garden may be secured by wholly avoiding the knots and scrolls which subordinate all the plants and flowers of a garden, all its joy and life to wretched conventional design. The true way is