

**The Farmer's Flower Garden.**

BY GEO. J. GRIFFIN, OF JOHN S. PEARCE &amp; CO.

What is more beautiful than a few flowers around the country house, but how few there are who take any interest in them. In cities, even the poorest class have their flower garden; in summer and in winter when the thermometer registers 20 below zero, windows full of flowers are to be seen by the passerby. Then, again, where land is expensive and gardens small, every foot is occupied with flowers or vegetables. Look at the contrast in the country, where there is abundance of land around the house nothing is to be seen in the shape of a flower, and even the lawn is sown with Timothy instead of lawn grass.

When visiting a gentleman in Delaware last summer, the first thing that attracted my attention was a row of beautiful Hollyhocks fully fifty feet long, next the lawn, the grass on which was so fine and velvety that it would do credit to Euclid Avenue. Here and there were diamonds and heart-shaped flower beds, in which were planted Phlox Drummondii, Asters, Coleus, Geraniums, Verbenas and many other sorts of beautiful and rare flowers, and upon entering the house the Clematis, Climbing Roses, Convolvulus, Sweet Peas, &c., were a beautiful sight to behold, and I venture to say the vegetable garden was the finest in the county. Said I, "How do you find time to attend to it all?" the answer was, "I do it before breakfast and after supper." Just think of a twelve mile drive and only one genuine flower garden to be seen. I admit that a person must have a natural love for flowers in order to make it a success, but at the same time love grows with culture, and I think every farmer should allot a piece of ground to his sons for the vegetable garden, and a suitable piece adjacent the house to his daughters for a flower garden. By so doing the growing youth would take a pride in it, and in a few years it would be no uncommon thing to see as fine flower gardens in the country as are to be found in the city. Just say: Now, John, there is a piece of land for you, and let me see what fine vegetables you can raise in it; and to your daughter the same for her flower garden. Try and get out of the old rut: cabbage and potatoes as vegetables, and old man and single poppies for flowers. Plant something more in fashion, they don't take up any more ground and the extra cost is very trifling.

In cities the taste for flowers was never so universal as it is at the present time, and why should our country residents not have as fine a flower garden as their city cousins; the outlay is no more for the one than the other.

I will endeavor to give a few hints, *re* the raising of flowers from seed, and the places most suitable for them. Hardy annuals (marked in catalogues H. A.), are generally sown in the open ground on the spot where they are to flower. Many of them, however, can be transplanted without material hindrance to their development. The sowing of the seed in the open ground varies according to the purpose they are to serve. If they are intended to fill up blanks in the flower border they are sown in the rows, which are suitable to the height they attain. The fine seeded and dwarf sorts are sown thinly in circles of about eight inches diameter so as to form afterwards a bush. Large seeded and tall-growing varieties are dibbled in a similar manner as beans, for instance. Cover the seeds with soil, according to the size of seeds, in the open

ground, or twice or three times their thickness; press down the soil and give them a thorough watering with a fine rose and do not allow the soil after this to get quite dry until the plants are well up. Begin sowing in the open ground about the first week in May. The average distance for dwarf varieties should be from four to six inches; for taller varieties, eight to twelve inches, and for the very tall sorts, eighteen to twenty-four inches. The following varieties refer to the above cultivation:—Abronia, Adonis, Agrostemma, Sweet Alyssum, Cactalia, Coreopsis, Candytuft, Clarkia, Gilia, Godetia Ipomea, Larkspur, Sweet Peas, Marvel of Peru, Mignonette, Nasturtium, Phlox Drummondii, Portulacca, and many others.

Half-hardy annuals (marked in catalogues H. A.), require greater warmth in order to germinate, and are therefore better sown under cover in frames, pans or boxes in the house, and when well-established are planted out when warm weather fairly sets in. Of this class the following are better sown as above:—Asters, Balsams, Cockscombs, Hollyhocks, Petunias, Pansies, Carnations, Verbenas and Stocks. While these varieties will succeed if sown in the open ground, they can be made to bloom much earlier if sown as directed.

Biennials require two seasons for their full development. In the first year these seed germinates, the plant gets more and more developed, stands over the winter, flowers in the second year, ripens its seed, and, in most cases, dies off, roots and all, in autumn. Snapdragon, Forget-Me-Nots, Pinks, belong to this class; many of them flower the first year if early sown, pansies, for instance; all such are marked in catalogue.

Perennials, which last for years, include shrubs and bushes as well as Ampelopsis Veitchii (Boston Ivy), Aquilegia, Double Daisy, Bignonia (Trumpet Creeper), Clematis, Cobaea Scandens, Cowslip, Delphinium, Polyanthus, Perennial Phlox, Sweet William and others. Their roots retain their vitality for a number of years. The stems generally come up from the roots in spring, they flower, ripen their seed, die mostly down to the ground in autumn, and renew their course again the year after. The cultivation of biennials and perennials differ only in so far, that the sowing of the former must be repeated annually, otherwise the treatment of both is the same. As a rule they are sown in June or July, in seed pans or in cool frames, though some may be sown in a sunny spot in the open ground. They are thinned out and aired freely, so that the young plants may grow strong, and afterwards planted pretty close, four to six inches apart in beds to stand over the winter. In spring the plants of biennials are planted with the earthball when they are to flower; perennials, however, remain in their beds to grow on still further. The spring flowering sorts of these are planted next autumn, the summer and autumn flowering sorts, however, not till the spring after. Shrubs do not stand being transplanted every year, they do not flower well if this be done, for this reason they are the most suitable plants for garden, we mean borders, which generally stretch along the walks.

If the border has a hedge in the background, plants so arranged that the tallest growing varieties stand behind and the smallest in front of the border, so as to slope down roof-like from the back of the border toward to walk. But if the border is open so as to be seen from all sides,

then the tallest growing varieties should be planted in the middle of the bed, and the lower ones so as to slope down on both sides. The distance which shrubs should be planted from each other averages from 20 to 24 inches. Regard must be had in planting, not only to their height but also to their time of flowering, and to Coleous so that a continuous bloom may be had all the summer through, any blanks between the shrubs are filled up with biennials and annuals.

**Ornamental and Profitable Tree-planting.**

BY MR. M. PETTIT, WINONA, ONT.

(Continued from last month.)

The inauguration of Arbor Day is a step in the right direction, and if every man in this country would on Arbor Day plant from one to ten trees every year for the next twenty years, there would be a very great difference in the appearance of the country, and consequently an increase in the value of the property let it be where it will. If you beautify a piece of land by tree-planting you increase its value. We see proof of this on many farms, and yet but few farmers are alive to the necessity of tree-planting. Some may say it is a long time to wait for trees to grow. Not so long. Mr. Geo. Leslie, of Toronto, a few years ago built a large packing building of timber grown on the ground, the seed of which was sown by himself only fifteen years before, some of the timbers being large enough to use for barn building. He has also cut a quantity of timber into cord wood every year, thus setting an example to be followed by all who are interested in the prosperity of our country, by showing what can be done in a short time in the way of timber raising. It is also important that we should beautify our homes with trees, shrubs and flowers. Many men and women begin life with the very best ideas of home and its surroundings, and also with such an immense amount of patience that they are willing to delay beautifying the home until they can make money. This is a fatal mistake, and is more especially true of farmers than any other class of people; consequently in driving through the country there are to be seen many places with a peculiarly lonesome, homeless expression caused by the absence of foliage. Many of these homes could be crowned with trees, fruits and flowers, if care was given to the work. The question of time is one of much consideration in this matter of home-making with the farmer. But if we spend the precious hours in idleness or useless work we have taken our choice and must accept the result. Hundreds of homes tell us most unmistakably what their owners have done with their time.

Our homes are the nurseries of our children, their characters are formed there, and when they go from us to their life work the world receives the product of our homes.

We have a national pride in our growing industries, our machinery and our manufactures. Let us remember that the best production of any country is its people. It is a misfortune for children to live in a rural home where trees, fruits and flowers are not grown in abundance. They have not the refining influence that comes from the daily care and culture of the beauties of nature, nor the love for the beautiful which is a safeguard through life from evil. We, as farmers, should consider these things, and remember that the whole of life's work is not to acquire broad acres and large bank accounts. Another neglect is our school yards. In