

# Labor Saving Tools for Garden Work\*

Hermann Simmers, Toronto

THE first and still the most important tool in the garden is the human hand, and probably at one time in ages past, it was the only one. Still, at a very early period, tools of some description had been devised, to lighten the labor of the gardener. In our youthful days—alas, further back than some of us care to admit—a conundrum was propounded. It ran thus: "When Adam delved and Eve span, who then was the gentleman?" The obvious answer is that Adam was the gentleman, and mark you he was the first man, he was a gentleman and he was a gardener—all of which is true. Our immediate interest, however, is to enquire what Adam delved with. No doubt he did much work with his hands—in many gardening operations still the very best of tools—but he could not delve very well thus, unless he had something to aid him. The cradle of the human race is in the East, and it is there, we can observe customs to-day

In explanation of my further meaning, you will find that among the first and last things to be done in almost any garden in spring or fall, is to have your garden dug in the spring and spaded again in the fall, and those who are not so fortunate as to employ a man for this work, will better understand the necessity of a pair of good, strong arms to do this work.

## THE BEST TOOLS

I have not had the pleasure of attending any of the conventions of this association, and am not acquainted with the intention that you have, whether it is necessary, just to introduce the subject and after introducing, that questions are asked, as to this, that or the other matter, but I am going to give you a list of a good many articles that I have used myself, as well as some of the others that I know are "labor-saving tools," but which I may not have had occasion to use. The list approximately is as fol-

Now, to those who have a more pretentious vegetable garden, this more modern implement, is apt to encourage the amateur to extend his work.

I have seen many a fine garden in the smaller towns, which does credit to the man who attends to it and should be a credit to the town, if the towns would so take note of them. To these gentlemen, I strongly urge their using one of these implements. They were originally gotten up by some Yankee not overly fond of work, but let it be said to the credit of his genius, that he has bestowed on us an implement that will save the labor of an amateur gardener.

## TAKE CARE OF TOOLS

I would also suggest that all the tools possessed by the amateur be properly hung up, neatly and systematically, and that they should not be thrown in a corner, in a careless manner. You might as well expect a woman working in her kitchen to throw her pots and pans in a heap in the corner and expect her to be able to find what she requires, quickly. I see no reason why man's labor-saving tools for garden work should not be kept in the same precise manner that a woman keeps her household utensils. The garden tools should also be kept clean and ready for use.

## Flowers in the Yukon

The illustration of pansies that appears on this page shows one of the horticultural possibilities of the Yukon. These pansies were grown in Dawson City by Mrs. George Black from Giant Pansy seed, furnished by J. A. Simmers, Toronto. In a letter to J. A. Simmers, Mrs. Black said:

"I am sending the pansies to show how successfully we grow flowers from your seed. Many of the gardens here in summer are very beautiful. In a space only twenty-five by fifteen feet, that we devoted to flowers last season, we grew twenty-eight kinds, including pansies, English and shasta daisies, nasturtiums, musk plants, nicotiana, ice plants, poppies (Iceland, California and Shirley) sweet peas, canary vine, wild cucumber, stocks, asters, everlastings, gypsophila, mignonette, forget-me-not, lobelias, wild orchids and ferns."

Be sure and take some photographs of your potted bulbs in bloom and send them for publication.



Some Pansies that Grew in the Yukon—Illustrated One-quarter Size.

which had their inception in Adam's time, or not long after. The soil there is so sandy and easily worked, that a very primitive stick sharpened, would be all the labor-saving appliance required. Irrigation is the great problem there. In lands under different climatic conditions, different circumstances naturally arise and in our own land, one must admit, that stirring with a pointed stick would not have much effect. Therefore, other labor-saving tools had to be invented. The king of all labor-saving tools, is still the spade. Spade culture is the most intensive and, per acre, produces more crops than any other form of culture.

In my opinion, the Creator, has endowed us with the best means of labor-saving appliances. I mean a pair of strong arms. To those who have been at the garden hobby for some years, their arms will have been strengthened by their use, an all-wise Providence having created man or woman with these handy appendages, and the man or woman who makes liberal use of them, will have as a result much the better garden, for his close attention.

\*Extracts from a paper read at the convention of the Ontario Horticultural Association, held in Toronto last month.

lows: spade, shovel, lawn rake, steel rake, field hoe, Dutch hoe, spading fork, manure fork, garden reel, garden line, grass hook or sickle, pruning knife, pruning shears, pruning saw, half-moon edging knife, indelible pencil, labels tree or pot, appliances for destroying insects, hot-bed thermometer, garden trowel, tree pruner, watering can, wheelbarrow, lawn mower, hand weeders (such as Hazeltine's, Excelsior, etc.), wheel plow, and hand seed drill.

## MAKE GARDENING A PLEASURE

This is about the list that would be necessary to complete a full stock of "labor-saving tools" for the amateur. Many might say that a spade, a hoe and a rake, is all he has used and found them satisfactory, but if they had picked out from this list any other special tools and used them at the proper time, they would have saved labor and made for themselves, the garden, more interesting.

## THE COMBINATION SEED DRILL

It is almost useless to go into the detail and description of all the tools that I have listed and from which I will refrain, but amongst the list, I would like to draw more attention to the combination seed drill, which has the garden plow, wheel hoe and seed drill combined.