



THE SIMPLE LIFE



AN OUTDOOR LIVING-ROOM

How to Decorate the Home Grounds

THE garden is an outdoor living-room, but we are too prone to consider it a place in which to dig. We forget that it can be made as comfortable a place in which to receive our guests as our parlors, and it is certainly a far more enjoyable place to spend an evening after a hard day's work in an office than a stuffy room in a house, or the cramped quarters on a porch.

The most important article of furniture for this outdoor living-room is something to sit on. Have some good comfortable chairs and benches on which you can rest after the strenuous work of spading, weeding, and spraying.

During these breathing-spells you can gloat over your garden and plan how to make it better, which will make you forget the fatigue of fighting the weeds and the bugs.

The commonly accepted garden seat is a "rustic" chair or bench made from cedar. If you do not care to go to the expense of buying them, they can be made easily. Use cedar poles which have been cut in the fall after the sap has stopped running; the bark will then cling to the wood; if cut when the sap runs, it peels easily. Paint all the cut portions with red-lead paint and countersink the nails. I do not like this rustic furniture nearly so well as that made of cypress and painted white or green. These seats may be had with or without backs, and straight or circular in form. Whatever you have, it must be comfortable. Have the seats well coated with paint to protect them from the weather.

Summer-houses, arbors and pergolas are really luxuries in the garden, but so much enjoyment can be gotten from them that you should have one of them.

Put the summer-house where it will command a view of the garden without giving it undue prominence, and plant vines around it to cover it. Have a floor in it, six or eight inches above the ground. Here you can serve afternoon tea, or the children—who will get as much pleasure out of it as the grown-ups—can play.

Arbors and pergolas can be made useful as well as ornamental. At the present time nearly every garden of any size has a pergola, but many times it is entirely out of place, for a pergola is really a vine-covered passageway leading from one point to another. Scores of the pergolas built now-a-days start from nowhere and lead you to nothing. They may, however, be very effectively used if placed on one side of the garden, where they will screen the garden and its occupants from the curiosity of a neighbor.

If properly used, vases will add greatly to the beauty of the garden. In a more or less formal garden, they may be used along the tops of walls, on the buttresses beside steps or in the angles of walks. In them half-hardy and tender plants may be grown all summer, and I have seen the German iris used in them very effectively.

TEN WAYS TO USE ROSES

Although the charm of the rose-garden is perennial, roses may be used to advantage in many other ways than by merely setting them in beds and rows. They may be trained over arbors, pergolas, porches and verandas, made to cover fences or the sides of houses, or grown as specimen plants. Indeed, one can hardly enumerate the ways in which they can be used, for each garden will present its own peculiar problems.

Roses will grow in any good, well-drained soil provided they are planted in a sunny situation; they will not succeed in shaded places. With a fairly large selection and proper handling, one can have them in bloom from June until December.

In many of the larger rose-gardens, one sees arches made of wood or iron, usually the latter, covered with roses. Frequently, arches like these can be used in smaller gardens to good advantage in such places as the entrance to the gardens. They may be just a piece of pipe bent into the form, looking like a big croquet wicket, or they may be a more substantial structure. The entrance to many an old garden was through one of these archways, and the effect produced upon one approaching it was never forgotten. These arches, usually made of wood, were about ten feet high and two to four feet deep.

One often sees such arches over doors. They are two to three feet deep and often have seats in them. The sides are sometimes covered with lattice-work and sometimes with just enough cross-pieces to fasten the vines to. These little arches, or arbors, always add very much to the general effect of the place, provided, of course, that they conform to the general architectural scheme of the house.

In the average suburban yard, there are posts which serve to support the clothes-line a day or two each week. Necessary they are, no doubt, but far from ornamental. Not long ago I saw a back yard where this post problem had been solved in a delightful way. Some hooks about eighteen inches long, made to represent ornamental brackets, were fastened in the post near the top, and vines trained on the post. The hooks were so long that they projected beyond the vines, but they did not look bad, because of their ornamental nature.

The best roses for use on these structures are the Crimson Rambler (polyantha), which

has many red flowers, and its pink counterpart, Dorothy Perkins; Queen Alexandra (polyantha), a semi-double red-flowered rose, much like Crimson Rambler; Baltimore Belle (setigera), double white; Pink Roamer (polyantha), pink with a silvery white centre, and Prairie Queen (setigera), pink. All these roses bloom in June. The first to bloom are those of the polyantha group, the varieties of setigera following about ten days later.

The same varieties of roses which I have recommended for arches and posts will be equally good on pergolas and arbors. The plants should be set about four feet apart; this is close enough to cover the structure completely without crowding the plants.

I would recommend, however, that other plants be set with the roses, in order to get a succession of blooms; for if one has roses alone there will be a blaze of bloom in June and nothing afterwards. A good plant to grow with the roses is the Japanese clematis, which flowers in August. Later the plants are covered with seeds that have a long fuzzy growth which is almost as beautiful as the flowers. If this is done, be careful that the clematis does not interfere with the roses.

It is frequently desirable to reserve a por-

ACHIMENES, THE BEST BASKET PLANT.

I am an enthusiast about the achimenes. To my notion it is indispensable for summer decoration in the house, or on the porch, or in the greenhouse, blooming continuously for weeks. As a basket plant there is none to equal it. The flowers are blue, amethyst, white, or mixtures of these, and are produced in profusion. Individually they are flat, saucer-like, three inches across with a very short throat. The plants are good for house decoration either as single specimens or for banking on mantels or in open fireplaces, etc., keeping in good condition in the house for a month or more, if kept well watered. Achimenes can be had in bloom six to eight months, from April on, by starting tubers in succession from early February to the end of April.

The tubers are most easily started in flats or pans covered only a half inch with soil, and grown on in a warm greenhouse (a temperature of 60 degrees at night).

The best soil is a mixture of light, turfy soil, leaf mold and a liberal supply of well de-

ripened, place the pots on their sides in a rose house temperature (50 degrees and dry).

Achimenes can be struck from cuttings easily by taking two inches of the tops when the plants are several inches high. They will root from any part of the stem, and also from the leaf stem. They can be raised easily from seed and scales and cones, the latter being carefully rubbed off and sowed in pans like seed.

The following are among the best varieties for pot or basket work; Admiration, deep rose, white throat spotted with carmine; Ambrose, Verschaffelt, white, dark centre; Hybrida, deep mauve; Mauve Queen, large, mauve, brown eye; Dazzle, flowers small, brilliant scarlet, pale yellow eye, very pretty and free; Gibsonii, flowers very large, clear mauve; Grandiflora, rose; Eclipse, rich orange-scarlet spotted with carmine, extremely floriferous with a good habit; Longiflora, flowers large, blue; Rose Queen, flowers rose; Grandis, flowers deep violet, yellow eye; Madame A. Verschaffelt, a very attractive variety, large flowers pure white ground, heavily veined with purple. Admiration and Hybrida are the best for baskets.

—G. H. Hale, Seabright, N. J.



A GLORY OF BLOOM AT THE STEPS



AN AMBITIOUS AND SUCCESSFUL ENTRANCE



VINE-LADEN RUSTIC ARCHES



A SUGGESTION OF THE JAPANESE

GLOXINIAS.

Well grown gloxinias will make the orchid blush. The individual flowers are four inches long, the colors ranging from pure snow white to the deepest blues, purples and reds, through all the intermediate shades, with spotted varieties galore. In a small house, a group of gloxinias relieved by a few ferns will give the amateur something for enjoyment of which he can justly feel proud.

A well grown plant should produce fifty to sixty flowers. The many beautiful forms are all good, but the erect growing varieties are the most desirable.

The easiest way to handle the bulb is to place them on a bed of moss, in a shallow box with sand filled in between the bulbs to keep them steady. After being watered, the box is placed in a temperature of 65 degrees, and the bulbs will soon make roots. At this time they must be taken from the box and potted up permanently, in which operation a little care will be required so as not to injure the young, tender growths. The bulbs look very much alike all over, but generally the hollow part is the top, and if any particular bulb should appear to be slow in starting, it should be lifted and examined to assure one's self that it is right side up.

The preparation of a proper soil for the potting is of considerable importance if the best results are wanted. The gloxinia makes short roots, but such masses that they readily absorb liberal food supplies when the roots have about filled their allotted spaces.

A light, porous soil is required, consisting of one part good garden soil, one-half part sand, one-quarter part leaf mould, or as a substitute some dead moss chopped fine, and one-quarter part dry cow manure, rubbed

or broken fine. Mix these well together, put a liberal amount of drainage in the pot, and fill it nearly full of the prepared compost and press lightly. Put in the bulb (which should by this time be well covered with fine roots) and press some more soil gently around it, finishing so that the top of the bulb just shows through the soil about one inch below the rim of the pot. Should the soil be dry, water it, of course, but be careful not to overdo, as the slightest excess of moisture will result in rotting the bulb. It may be several days before more water is required. Once a vigorous top growth starts up, water can be given freely as often as may be required. Large leaves are soon developed and then a little liquid manure will add to the luxuriance of the foliage and assist in the formation of flower buds.

At this stage give water as often as the soil becomes dry, but never allow it to become so dry that the plant will wilt, for that destroys all your chances of getting a long succession of bloom. Never allow any water to get on the foliage, for it causes a discoloration and destroys its beauty. If systematically fed with manure once a week the foliage should entirely cover the pot, and the whole plant can be used with good effect indoors for table decoration and in many other ways.

When the floral glory has departed, place the pots in a sunny position, withhold water, and let the plants gradually die down, when they should be stored in a dry warm place until required for the next season's display. Provided a temperature of 65 degrees can be maintained, the bulbs can be started at any time from February onward, but generally speaking, the middle of March is the most favorable time. It takes a much longer time to bring the early started bulbs into bloom than those started later which grow under more natural conditions; but these require constant shading from the bright sunshine. They can be raised from seed, exactly like begonias.

THE OSOBERY (NUTTALLIA CERASIFORMIS)

The genus Nuttallia was so named to perpetuate the memory of Thomas Nuttall, professor of natural history at Philadelphia and author of several works on American botany. There are two species in the genus, one of which, the Osoberry, is cultivated in our gardens. A native of Northwest America, Nuttallia cerasiformis was discovered by Douglas on the banks of the Columbia river, where it forms a small forest tree about the size of Amelanchier Botryapum, which it suggests in appearance. It is also common in moist places in California. Under cultivation it forms a shrub or small tree from 2 feet to 12 feet high, with numerous shoots developed from the base. In early spring, before the leaves appear, it produces large quantities of greenish white flowers in small drooping racemes after the manner of the white variety of Ribes sanguineum (the Flowering Currant). It is, however, a member of the Rose family, and closer akin to the Almonds and Spiraeas than to Ribes.

The flowers terminate the young growths, which arise from buds on the previous year's wood. They are dioecious, that is to say, the male and female blooms are produced on different plants. The male plant flowers the most freely, but a casual observer will detect little difference in the appearance of the flowers in the two sexes. A critical examination, however, will reveal fifteen stamens with very short stalks arranged inside the calyx tube in the male flower, while in those of the opposite sex the stamens are rudimentary and the centre of the flower is occupied by five green carpels. The whole plant has a faint Almond-like perfume when in bloom. The Osoberry seldom sets fruit in this country, although its bluish black berries are freely produced in its native habitat. This may probably be due to the fact that the sexes are often isolated under cultivation, or, considering the severity of the weather which is often experienced in early spring, the flowers may be injured by frosts. In its native country the berries, or more correctly, drupes, are eaten by robins and other fruit-eating birds, though they are most bitter to the taste and have a heavy odor of bitter Almonds. As an ornamental shrub the value of Nuttallia cerasiformis lies in its earliness and the freedom with which its flowers are produced. It succeeds in almost any garden soil, and needs little pruning beyond thinning when the branches become too crowded.—H. Spooner, in The Garden.

Visiting the gardens of friends is one of the most agreeable of rural diversions, and in however many directions one's own efforts may be surpassed it is usual to return with the comfortable feeling that certainly so and so's garden is behind in some respects, and that, after all, "East, west, home's best." Certainly my garden shall never suffer from a fashion which has of late laid hold of neighbors with astonishing virulence—the plague of dazzling white paint. White trellis work, white plant tubs, white pedestals for sundials, I see in all this the designing hand of the vendor of garden furniture, and rejoice to think that, as no color so soon soils, their owners will soon weary of constant repainting, and so it is a craze that cannot last. Surely white paint is trouble enough in the case of greenhouses and frames. It is used because it reflects light the best, but a black wall becomes hotter than a white one, and in any case white paint so soon becomes dingy that a less staring color, such as buff or slate, might very well be employed.