

# SUBURBAN & COUNTRY LIFE SUPPLEMENT

## A Year in the Garden

*General Work to be Done in the Month of July*

By E. T. COOK

**J**ULY, the dreamy, contemplative month, when the music of lake wavelets rippling to the shore lulls to sleep the cares of life, is a month of idle enjoyment in the garden. The world is taking holiday, or should be, and the home with a garden is a living reality.

But gardening is a restless, although health-giving, pastime. There must be an ever looking forward, and in those delicious lazy moments amidst the companionship of flowers one's thoughts fly to the summer and fall of the coming year. An essential duty in July is to maintain health in those plants already in flower. A park or a garden demands constant attention, especially in a hot summer such as we experienced last year.

Watering and mulching are two of the principal cares of the ardent horticulturist. Nothing is apparently more simple than watering, but discrimination is necessary. Give an abundance, sufficient to thoroughly soak the soil, and therefore the roots, and avoid using water direct from the tap. Big tanks should be in some hidden corner of the garden and filled to the brim every evening with the object of softening the water and bringing it to a temperature that will not chill the roots of the plants. The following afternoon it may be used, and the flowers will come forth more plentifully and the growth gain in strength through this thoughtfulness. Watering is not the only way of maintaining moisture in the soil.

There is what is known as mulching, and this should be assiduously practised. This consists in frequent working of the soil to keep it from "caking" or "baking"—the forming of a hard crust impervious almost to moisture and the warmth of the sun's rays. If more mulching were done, there would be fewer failures and hence disappointments. The chief care of the flower lover should be the health of the plant; to further that end, when the blossom has faded, pick it off at once to prevent formation of seed pods, which are a severe drawback to a prolonged display. In the city garden never attempt to save seed, as under these conditions it deteriorates.

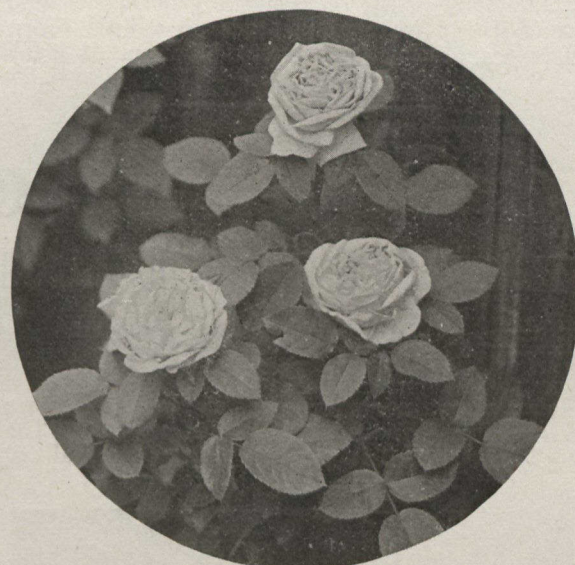
**O**NE of the illustrations shows a serviceable movable frame, consisting of two "lights" or compartments, and in this form the frame is more readily handled with a minimum of risk from breakage. The frame should be made of two-inch, well-painted wood, and placed against a wall facing south in a sunny position, so that the seedlings are shielded from frost and cold winds. A hedge of evergreens would be even a better backing than a wall. Where there is a great demand for flowers, about six of these frames would be none too many, as only one expense is incurred and they serve many purposes in all seasons.

For instance, the first use to which they can be put is the winter protection of the half-hardy perennials that are sown at this time, such as Canterbury Bells, Foxgloves, Chimney Campanula, the Alkanet, or, to use its botanical name, *Anchusa Italica*, Dropmore variety, Polyanthes, and Sutton's Royal blue Forget-me-not. Raise the frames upon soil four inches to six inches above the level to prevent drip and leakage from outside, so prevalent during the January thaws which are more injurious than frosts, and surround the frames thickly with leaves. Slabs could be placed over them to keep off the weight of snow.

The next use will be for the raising of the annual seedlings in spring. Some of the six lights could be turned into hotbeds for those seeds requiring bottom heat, and the materials should consist of

leaf-mould, loam, sand and a little bush earth or leaf-mould, all of which can be obtained with little trouble. The slant suggested in the making of the frame is twelve inches, and the earth, of course, will be graded down at the same angle. This winter protection is better than a greenhouse, because there is less air space, and is infinitely more satisfactory than a pit which leaks during the thaws.

Make the frames now, so that they will be ready when required, and meanwhile sow the seed out-

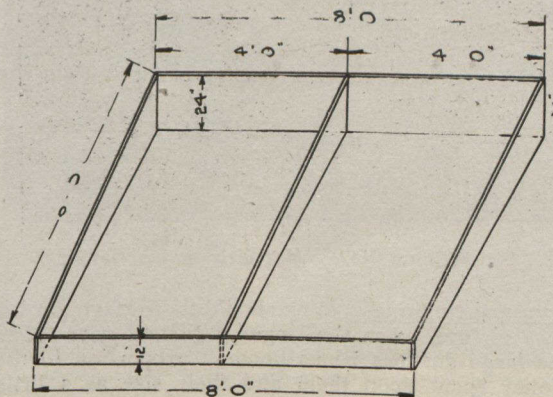


A Famous Rose—Lady Mary Fitzwilliam.

doors in a carefully prepared bed of fine soil. Sow in plenty—the quantity, of course, depending upon the requirements of the garden—Canterbury Bells, Pansies, the *Anchusa*, Forget-me-nots, Foxgloves, Delphiniums—also called Larkspurs, Chimney Bellflower, Sweet Williams, Stocks, night scented Tobacco, Sweet Peas, Verbenas, Asters, and other flower favourites of the summer and fall.

**H**ALF-HARDY perennials, to which category all with the exception of the last-named five flowers belong, are the sheet anchor of the gardener. It is almost unnecessary to describe them with the exception, perhaps, of the *Anchusa* and the Royal blue Forget-me-not. Both are blue flowers, but of varying shades.

The *Anchusa* recalls the Gentsian of alpine meadows, and is a glorious flower, as deep in its



Plan of Frame for all Garden Uses.

intense blue shade as the high mountain wilding. It may be called almost a bush, the strong, wiry spikes rising from a thicket of dull green leaves and presenting a rich contrast, each spike crowded with blossom, a perfect sea of sapphire colouring. *Anchusa Italica*, that is the type, belongs to the Forget-me-not family and its flowers suggest relationship. Dropmore variety is the outcome of, I believe, a chance seedling first observed in the beautiful gardens that surround Dropmore, near Windsor, England, gardens that the Dowager Queen Alexandra once declared the most fascinating she had ever visited, and so they are, in the blossoming time of Rhododendron and Azalea, when woodland walks and leafy glens are lit up with a blaze of colours. Visitors to the old country in early June should see Dropmore, which is reached from Slough, Tanlow, and Maidenhead, a few miles from London.

**I**N one garden last month a Forget-me-not, named Sutton's Royal Blue, lined the paths with its little bushy growth covered over with intense blue flowers, richer in shade than those one has been accustomed to greet in the late spring of the year. Forget-me-nots, with the help of the cold frame, are supremely happy in Canadian gardens, and should be planted more liberally, both in pots for bringing into flower early under glass, and in the open air. There is something delightfully winsome in those eyes of blue.

When planting Tulips next fall, reserve sufficient space between for the Forget-me-not, and the two together create a pleasant companionship, or to get right away from conventional gardening, plant out the seedlings by the fringe of a group of shrubs, or the woodland. It is in this way wilder and more natural pictures are realized.

**S**OW the seeds in a carefully prepared bed of soil, having the surface fine and smooth, and make a little rill with the finger, just covering the seed and no more. A depth of half an inch is ample. Water gently with a can to which a fine sprinkler is attached, and from time to time repeat this attention, if the weather is very hot and rainless. Meanwhile prepare another bed to which the seedlings are to be transplanted when they are of sufficient size to handle. Place them a few inches apart and in September the frame will be in readiness for their reception. By that time they will have developed into vigorous little tufts. It is astonishing the quantity of plants that may be raised in this way.

**I**T is a pleasure to find an increasing regard for ferns, which in hot summer days bring a sense of comfort to the city worker, especially that fern with drooping stems of soft green called *Nephrolepis*. It is a basket plant, but may be used in many pretty devices, by the margin of perhaps a fountain basin, in the window, and banked up in a reception room. A fern called the "Boston" is much in request not only when it is of mature age, but in its seedling stage, for filling glasses on the dining table and in bowls. A choice china bowl of ferns is a dainty gift to a friend. It is too late, of course, to plant now, but the fern should enter more into the garden scheme and it may be planted in many places, away from the fierce glare of the sun for preference. It is a moisture and shade loving group, and grows where nothing else will, except, perhaps, flowers that love to be screened from a too strong light, of which the Foxglove will occur to mind.

Ferns and Foxgloves are suitable plants to go