



Brilliance, beauty and little expense are the features of this border of annual flowers. The annual is never out of fashion for a border.



Something new in fence training is exemplified by this picture of pear trees trained around curved espalier fencing.

A RIOT OF SUMMER COLOUR

Produced to Perfection by the Race of Flowers Called "Annuals"

By E. T. COOK

THOUGH the once bare branches are clothed in green and flowers are everywhere, on mountain side, in cool ravine, and in the meadow, the garden has not reached the zenith of its summer beauty—we are only, as it were, preparing. It is unnecessary, of course, to urge haste in the sowing of seed, and if possible in the planting of seedlings, which is at present an infinitely quicker way of achieving results in something like their proper season. Firstly, what is an "annual"? We read in books and journals about such and such flowers as "annuals," but how few realize the significance of the word. An annual is a plant that blooms the same year as the seed is sown, which distinguishes the race from the "biennial," a plant that sown one year blooms the following, of which leading examples are Foxglove, Canterbury Bell, Sweet William, and Columbine or Aquilegia, and "perennial," a plant that goes on from year to year, familiar examples being the Peony, Delphinium, and the class generally called "hardy herbaceous."

The illustration shows a border composed of annual flowers alone, and when a fresh home is taken with everything around it bare, the quickest way to bring a "riot of colour" to it is by means of annual flowers, which must be sown at once if a display is to enrich the garden this year, which is possible when a little coaxing in the way of culture is given. A selection of the finest types has been given recently, and to do so again is simply repetition, but in sowing now prepare the soil with even greater care. What does that signify and "in the way of culture"? It signifies that as the time for seed-sowing is practically over, there must be more coaxing or forcing, which in other words means manure not in contact with the seed, but under the layer of soil that covers it, and more vigorous hoeing or loosening up of the surface. It is by these means that growth is hastened and therefore full flowering. Annual flowers that naturally bloom late, of which the best example is the Cosmea, called also Cosmos, should not be chosen for the border, as frosts will visit us before the flowers arrive in their winsome stage.

And while we are dealing with the subject of annuals, the most beautiful of all classes in the vegetable kingdom and appealing most directly to the amateur or beginner, a few words of advice to those who have a wealth of seedlings through the soil may be welcome. Many who, through long years of acquaintance with gardening, should therefore know better, will persist in sowing the seed too thickly, and the result is a spindling growth without air and sunlight to promote the true character of the flower. No annual should be less than six inches apart, and thinning out, that is, removing unnecessary seedlings, means a greater abundance of flowers and therefore seed. This process is the more important in the case of vegetables—peas and beans in particular suffering from an overcrowded growth, which means a poor crop that is quickly over.

Give copious waterings at the roots. Splashing water about overhead simply attracts rootlets to the surface for the sun to scorch, and another point is,

in the case of the creepers or climbers, to put sticks to the tendrils before they make much growth. Bear also in remembrance that neither a plant grown for its flowers or for its fruit can live under a double burden. The sun brings flowers and fruits, using the word fruits in its broadest sense, quickly to maturity,



A beautiful bunch of Narcissus grown indoors by an Edmonton amateur.

and unless everything is gathered at the right moment, the seeding stage soon sets in. This adds a tremendous burden to the plant, which is unable to continue to look fresh and beautiful or to produce those wholesome, appetizing vegetables which, so to say, melt in one's mouth. Therefore, as soon as a flower, such as a Nasturtium or whatever the plant may be, shows signs of fading, gather it at once, and a vegetable should be treated in the same way, never left until it is hard and full of ripe seed. Unless these rules are followed, the growing of annuals always will be a dismal failure. It is unfair to blame the seed when a few simple rules in the culture of the plants are ignored. China Asters, Nasturtiums and the glorious host of annuals are not grasses. Even when grass seed is sown on the lawn, certain quantities must be used; how much more

important is it when the plant has to bear flowers or fruits to give the growth plenty of space.

Flowers Everywhere

BROADLY there are two ways of growing most flowers familiar to us by name or through association, one in the house, that is in pots and bowls, and the other planted outside in the garden. The illustration represents a group of Daffodils or Narcissus—call the flowers what you will—named polyanthus-narcissus, and why is it thus described—from the likeness of the flower arrangement to the polyanthus, first cousin to the primrose, and from this type belonging to the beautiful narcissus family. None is more easily grown in bowls or pots, a way of using such bulbs as Daffodils, that makes winter not altogether a season of snow and ice, but of flowers, too, linking fall and spring with a beautiful chain. Growing bulbs in this way is more acceptable in cold climates, such as most of Canada, may be well described, than in those wreathed over with blossom from winter till winter. The writer was in a room last January scented with Daffodils and Hyacinths, and most comely of all were the fragrant polyanthus-narcissus. How were those represented in the illustration grown? it may well be asked. In this way: The bowl was not filled with ordinary soil, but with specially prepared fibre mixed with bits of charcoal. It is a preparation that may be purchased from the nurserymen, and its chief virtue is that it keeps sweet. Fill the bowl with the mixture to just below the rim and plant the bulbs, which should only be just covered with the mixture. Water carefully and not too heavily, and then place the bowl in a dark, cool, airy cupboard, free from frost. A close atmosphere is fatal to successful flowering. When an inch or two of top growth has been made, remove the bowl to a sunny window, or if a greenhouse is available then in that structure quite close to the glass to prevent anything approaching a drawn growth. Flowers will appear in due course and bring the breath of spring to the home when Nature is asleep.

Training Fruit Trees

PEOPLE who are not accustomed to growing fruit trees except in the conventional standard form will be interested in the illustration of a pear tree, Beurre clairgeau as an espalier, a form of training which is becoming popular in the Dominion. There are many points in favour of this form, and one is, it renders the culture of fruit possible in gardens too small to include an orchard. The espalier is often used simply as a dividing line, and a two-fold object is achieved, the former and also the production of fruit which is the more bountiful and highly flavoured from the severe restriction of the shoots. The gathering of it is as simple as the harvesting of a berry crop. This is surely a lesson to the fruit farmer who is learning to "keep down" by hard pruning the height of the trees to increase the size and quality of the fruits and render its ingathering simpler and less expensive. Trees may be purchased in the espalier form and the shoots are trained horizontally, not uprightly. Pears in particular are well adapted to this severe form of training, and where the fruit is a success, as in the St. Catharines district, Ont., in particular, the espalier should be thought of in next season's plantings.