

THE CARDINAL FLOWER.

(Lobelia cardinalis.)

This beautiful native we find advertised in some seed catalogues, among the novelties of the season. This is a move in the right direction, and this brilliant and gorgeous flower which has been growing wild in our meadows and along our brooks ever since man first set foot on our soil, and no one knows how many millions of years before, is probably a novelty to many who have lived a life-time within a short walk of its native habitat. We search the wide world over for "novelties," while here they are growing around us in splendor and brilliancy. Nothing more dazzlingly beautiful can be imagined than a bed of Cardinal Flowers in autumn, when in full bloom, grouped in a shady spot on a smooth, velvety lawn with a group of Cannas or Rhododendron as a back-ground.

THE CARNATION AND PICOTEE.

PROPAGATION BY LAYERS.

The proper season for layering is June or July. When the time arrives for performing the operation, procure a quantity of small hooked pegs; then take a trowel and remove the earth to the depth of an inch or so directly under the shoot to be layered. Take the shoot in one hand, and with the finger and thumb of the other hand remove the leaves from the body of the shoot, and shorten those at the top an inch or so. With a thin, sharp knife, cut through the strongest joint on the body of the shoot, cutting upward until within a short distance of the next joint, and if the joints are close it may be necessary to cut through more than one. The slit may be from one to two inches in length. Then press the centre of the shoot down to the earth, being at the same time careful to keep the slit open and the top in an upright position; take one of the pegs and

secure it in this situation. A little clean sand placed around the cut will aid in the formation of roots. In September or October the shoots thus layered will be rooted sufficiently to separate from the parent plant, when they may be cut away and removed to winter quarters.

PROPAGATION BY PIPINGS.

This is a simple operation, yet requiring great care and attention to insure success. Prepare a small bed in some partially shaded part of the garden, composed of the same materials as that recommended for the seed bed, but with a larger portion of sand. Select the strongest short-jointed shoots, and cut them off immediately below the second or third joint from the top of the shoot.

As fast as prepared in this manner, place them in a pan of rain water to prevent flagging. Plant these shoots, or pipings, as they are called, as soon as a sufficient quantity is prepared in the bed, an inch and a half asunder; water slightly through a fine rose, and after the leaves are thoroughly dry, cover with a hand glass and shade from the mid-day sun. Pipings may be prepared in July or August, and if closely covered with a hand or bell glass, and shaded from the sun, will scarcely require any water until rooted. If they should need water, it will be found, in most cases, sufficient to pour a little on the outside of the glass. This will moisten the earth inside, and prevent the cuttings or pipings from drying.

POT CULTURE FOR EARLY FLOWERING.

In September or October, provide a sufficient number of pots, six or eight inches in diameter at the top. Make a compost of two parts turfy loam, one part of thoroughly rotten hot-bed manure, and one part of clean lake or river sand; place on the bottom of the pots a layer of broken crocks, and on