

WINDOW GARDENING.

The question is often asked: How often should I water my plants? Although a seemingly simple question, it is under all conditions, a difficult one to answer, as some plants, even of the same kind, require different supplies under different conditions. Take geraniums, for instance. When growing with full vigor, with the pots well filled with roots, there is but little danger of giving too much. Every day will not be too often if the weather is clear. Take the same plant with but a small number of leaves on it, and newly shifted into fresh soil, with but few roots, and watering once a week may even be too often for it. All soft wooded plants growing vigorously require an abundance of water; always when they are the least dry, which can be told by the surface of the soil getting white, or when, the side of the pot being tapped with the finger, a hollow sound is made. By feeling the weight of the plants, a little practice will suffice for knowing pretty nearly the condition of them, whether wet or dry.

Plants sparsely supplied with foliage and with few roots, require sufficient water to keep them in a healthy condition; but care must be taken not to approach anything like a saturation of the soil. Succulent plants, such as agaves and cactuses, require but little water. When at rest, their succulent leaves serve for storing up water sufficient to keep them in healthy condition for a long period. Deciduous plants—such as fuchsia and crape myrtle—during the time they are without leaves should not, however, be allowed to get too dry. As the stem and branches evaporate moisture, sufficient water has to be given at the roots to supply this evaporation; for, if not, the roots will eventually shrivel up and die.

The temperature of the water supplied to plants should be about the same degree as the temperature of the room in which the plants are growing; or, if a little higher, will be a benefit, rather than anything else. And when water is given, sufficient should be applied to thoroughly saturate the soil. A mere dribble on the surface does more harm than good, as it draws up what moisture there may be in the soil below where it is wet. Plants should not be allowed to stand in saucers filled with water. Give sufficient water to run through into the saucer. But then empty it out and do not allow the plant to remain in it. During cold weather watering is better to be done in the morning, as then all superfluous moisture gets a chance to evaporate before night.

The temperature at which plants should be kept during the winter is lower than a good many would suppose. High night temperature to both green house and window is injurious, the results of which, are weak and slender growths, with but few flowers being produced. A temperature of 45 degrees during the night with 60 to 65 degrees during the day time is high enough for most plants. Of course there are plants which require a good deal higher temperature than this but they are not so well suited for window culture. The main aim should be a steady temperature more than a high one. A high temperature to-day and a low one to-morrow, has a very injurious effect upon all kinds of plants, and should be avoided as much as possible. Pans for evaporating moisture should be kept on the