

RURAL AND SUBURBAN

HOW TO MAKE A PERENNIAL BORDER.

Plant thickly enough to form eventually a mass of foliage sufficiently dense to completely hide the ground. Scattered plants about a newly-raked bed may look nice, but so would perfect rows of painted stakes. Neatness can be more perfectly attained by the close grouping of plants of similar foliage. Too great a mixture of leaf forms and colors often gives a tangled and untidy effect. The aim is the happy medium between the sameness of a too large group of one species and the careless mixture of many species. Make the groups decided enough to be called groups in comparison with the area of the planting; but let them be irregular and blend into the surrounding groupings with pleasing contrasts.

A very effective way of planting, especially where the border is long, is to use a large quantity of a few kinds of plants which follow each other in bloom through the season, and to plant the whole border in small groups, so that at one time the entire border appears attractive with flowers of one kind and of one or perhaps two colors, to be followed by a flower of another color. This method changes the color effect of the whole border almost every week, but it, of course, cannot give the effect of a solid mass of flowers, as would be the case if the same lot were planted, each kind in a plot by itself. A list for this purpose, to follow each other quite closely through the summer might be: Yellow daffodils, purple German iris, rose and white peonies, scarlet Oriental poppies, Japanese iris white, with pencillings of color, yellow day lilies, monardras, red, phlox, white or nearly so, ruebeckias, yellow, purple New England aster, and hardy pompon chrysanthemum, pink and white. If a larger list, with plants of several colors appearing at the same time is used, the effect is entirely different, and care will be needed to obtain the more pleasing contrasts of color.

The preparation of beds for perennials should be very thorough especially as the soil cannot be deeply dug or greatly enriched afterwards. If the subsoil does not provide sufficient drainage to prevent water from seeping on the surface of the ground, or the soil from becoming excessively wet during the winter seasons, then under-drainage to a depth of at least two and a half feet will be necessary.

A first-class perennial bed, suited to sustain a large variety of plants in vigorous growth, should have the ground made loose to a depth of two feet. It would be best to have the entire two feet made up of surface soil and then dig over the subsoil and mix with it a fair amount of manure, bone and wood ashes. If the soil is clayey or sour, there is nothing better than screened coal ashes to make its condition satisfactory. An application two inches deep to a foot of soil will loosen a stiff clay, and it will stay loose. Sand will answer to the same end, but not so well.

The top soil should, if possible, be a good loam, and be at least one foot deep. It should be well enriched with well rotted manure, bone and wood ashes, or other mineral fertilizers, and put in a finely pulverized condition. The growth of vegetation cannot be vigorous without a deep, rich, well-drained soil. Keep the surface soil rich, and do not get part of the subsoil mixed with it, as many of the garden plants are shallow-rooted, and need a very mellow soil; and, further, a good, friable surface is needed to allow the growth of annuals and small plants, especially those raised from seed. A good depth of soil gives a lower feeding-room for the strong-rooted plants, and allows the growth of more shallow-rooted plants among them, with far better results than could possibly be obtained on a thin soil.

When purchasing plants for a border, take pains to obtain good, healthy stock, and see that it is carefully planted as soon as received. The best season to transplant any particular plant is while it is yet dormant, and just before the roots start to grow. Plants in general, and early flowering ones in particular, make considerable root growth in the fall. A good rule to follow is: plant in the early fall those species that blossom before July, and in the spring those that bloom later in the year.

If it seems best to make the planting all at one time, then early fall will perhaps be the best season for the greatest number. Fall planting should be early, so that the plants can become established in the soil at any season, but more care must be used.

A well-drained, deep soil under the plants is the first and best protection. Too much water in the soil and too weak a root system, with the alternate freezing and thawing, are the main reasons for the winter killing of otherwise hardy plants. If the beds are given a dressing of short manure in the fall, just sufficient to cover the earth without smothering the crowns of the plants, it will prevent the two quick freezing and thawing.

Plants that are really tender to cold must be mulched to keep the frost from the roots. This can be accomplished with any material, such as straw, leaves, etc., that is open enough to form interior air spaces and so be a poor conductor of cold. It is well to place this manure in heaps over the crowns of the plants so as to at least partly shed the rain. The soil must be extremely dry to injure an established dormant plant, but it can easily be too wet.

When, after a few years, the border becomes too thick, or the clumps too large to

give satisfactory flowers, some removal of plants and division of roots will be necessary. In general, do not separate the clumps until they show very plainly that they need it. The best season to divide any plant is the same as the best time to plant it, which is just before its roots begin to grow.

It may sometimes be best to water the border during severe drought. Do it this way, or do not do it at all: Give to each square foot of the bed a two-inch covering of water, as the soil will take it up. The continual application of a little water not only hinders the rise of water from the subsoil, but tends to bring the roots to the moister surface, and so not only crowds them into a smaller feeding space, but makes the plants less able to endure the next drought, and less hardy for the winter.

THE JOY OF A GARDEN.

"The garden is a constant source of amusement to us both," wrote Dr. Arnold, in one of his delightful letters—he was writing of himself and his wife—"there are always some little alterations to be made, some few spots where an additional shrub or two would be ornamental, something coming into blossom; so that I can always delight in it. In the spring see how things are going on. In the spring and summer there is some change visible every day, something to fulfill and something to excite expectation. And even in winter time flower-culture has its delights, for those who possess a greenhouse or conservatory, no matter how small, have an indoor garden, wherein the same changes may be watched and enjoyed. And if one has no greenhouse something may still be done to preserve one's favorite plants during the severe weather. In fact, there are few states of life in which floriculture is not an available source of enjoyment.

Modern Tastes

The florid, strictly geometrical, and stereotyped fashion of planting flower-beds with wonderful mosaic patterns, and borders with line after line of mathematical exactness from back to front, has happily given way to a more sensible, beautiful, and appropriate style of garden decoration. Owners of gardens have realized that there is a hundredfold more pleasure and attractiveness to be obtained by the judicious selection and tasteful disposition of hardy plants of a permanent character than there is in the system of filling the borders with tender subjects whose beauty is of a temporary and doubtful nature.

The ideal of flowers for every month is coming nearer realization each year, and the disposition of heights and colors in such a scheme is correct, according as it does not err on the side of formality. Applied to the flower garden as a whole, it supplies not only a garden beautiful, but a garden economical, as the most gorgeous and pleasing effects are obtained from plants that are not expensive, and that are not difficult to grow. The use of glass and with very little trouble. In the days gone by there was often an ephemeral and painfully blinding blaze as of a fiery torch, and then the succeeding blackness and gloom, lasting until nine or ten months had rolled by. Herbaceous borders, on the other hand, composed chiefly of hardy perennials, arranged according to their season of bloom, become a perennial pleasure, and have done more to increase the enjoyment of gardening and decrease the cost than any other horticultural development of recent years.

As Messrs. Kelway, the eminent plant experts, of Langport, correctly state in their intelligent publication, "Garden of Delight," "A combination of the beautiful and practical has driven away the age of the Brussels carpet from our gardens, as woolwork and stuffed birds have been ousted from our drawing-rooms." There is no bare ground in a garden arranged on this plan; every portion of earth is made to yield its quota of beauty, from the birth of spring until the ground is frost-bound; and even then there are floral gems gleaming here and there amongst the snow. So that the enjoyment of a garden is extended as well as increased, and this is the basis of the garden as it should be today.

Lovely Paeonies

Schemes of color are eminently successful only when composed by someone who possesses practical knowledge of plants, as well as artistic talent; a minimum of the latter suffices, but experience with the flowers to be used is essential. The taste for hardy perennial flowers has increased in a very marked degree of late. The paeony, for example, asks for nothing in the way of climate; only put it in good earth and its buds will unfold in the teeth of a driving north-east gale; the rigors of our spring are worn to pieces. I have seen paeonies blooming magnificently in a dozen gardens that I know during the late alleged summer. May visitors going to the summer flower shows see the latest creations evolved—the marvels of burnished gold stems and silken petals in countless variations of cream and rose hues. It is a simple matter to get them, as the fleshy roots travel perfectly and may be planted now. The tree paeony, too, as distinct from the above-mentioned species, is one of the most admirable of plants for gentle forcing in pots under glass. Plants covered with lovely blooms in February and March are most decorative. They like plenty of air when inside. There is not a handsomer or more suitable plant for conservatories, large rooms, porches, halls, etc., than the tree paeony in pots.

Draining, Digging, and Manuring

This is the season for all such measures as draining, trenching, double-digging, rough-riding, and manuring. The earth, however, should not be operated upon while in a wet

state. It is even worse to wheel over wet earth. It helps to ruin the texture and hardens the tilth of gardens. In taking time by the forelock, and being on the watch for opportunity, suitable seasons may generally be found for all the necessary operations in gardening. The secret of success is to take the first chance that offers, for the sooner the earth is turned up to the air the better, and the sweeter the root run it will form next season. If manure cannot be got on now, dig or trench at once, and run the manure on when the frost comes, digging again afterwards. Never let the earth remain undug because it is too soft to bear the carriage of manure, nor puddle it into sourness by making it carry loads in a wet state. If time and opportunity offer, and the manure is ready, put it on at once. If not, turn up the soil, and put the manure on during frost, not spreading it out, but letting it lie in heaps.—D. McDonald.

THE WAY TO PLANT FRUIT TREES.

We have just received an admirable little work on the culture and management of fruit trees and strawberries, published by Messrs. Bunyard & Co., of Maidstone, price 1s. Mr. Bunyard's experience of fruit-growing extends over many years, and his advice may always be relied upon. The notes on planting fruits may well be reproduced, as the subject is opportune. It is mentioned that trees received during frost should, without unpacking, be placed in a warm cellar or frost-proof house till the return of suitable weather for planting, and thus treated they will take no harm; the roots should not be allowed to become dry through the wind or sun. If trees appear dry or shrivelled on their arrival from the nursery, place them in water for twelve hours to plump them up before planting. All main coarse roots should be shortened to a sharp knife and injured roots cut clean away. Prune back the roots that go right down and remove the bruised portions—cut down from the underside. The best months for planting bushes and trees are the end of October, November, February, and the first half of March, or in open weather before Christmas. Merely digging the soil over, stamping the roots in, and only result in failure. The right way is: 1. Never to let trees lie about with their roots exposed to the air. If several have to be planted, lay the roots in the ground first, and then plant at your leisure, or lay a mat over those to be planted within an hour, 2. Open a hole at least 1 ft. broader than the roots spread. Throw out the top spit, then well break up the bottom to the full depth of a fork or spade, replace some of the finer soil in a mound in the centre of the hole, and set the tree upon it. 3. If the roots are in any way jagged or torn, cut the ends cleanly off with a sharp knife from the underside, and shorten back all roots pointing downwards. 4. Place the tree in such a position at such a depth that when the planting is finished it will be at the same depth as it was in the nursery, as will be seen by the soil mark on the stem. The depth should be such that the upper roots will be about 3 in. or 4 in. below the surface when finished. 5. The roots will generally be found to be growing from several parts of the stem. Spread the lowest roots out carefully on the mound, and scatter a little fine earth over them; then spread out the roots next above these, adding more soil; also those higher up, and so on, giving a slight shake now and again to let the fine soil run in between the roots. 6. When all the roots are spread out and covered, add a little more soil, and tread it firmly, not hard, and fill up the hole slightly above the surrounding soil, as it will sink one or two inches. 7. Give one good watering, unless the soil is very damp. 8. Put a strong stake to the tree, and be sure the two are fastened together in such a way as to make it impossible for the bark of the tree to chafe itself against the stake when the winds blow. If two stakes can be used, so much the better. 9. Protect the trees from rabbits, cattle, and sheep. 10. As soon as the land is dry enough in spring, hoe the surface round the tree to prevent evaporation. Constant hoeing is one great secret of success in fruit-growing. No drought will hurt trees round which the soil is hoed every ten days. In America, fruit-growers hoe once a week.—Country Life.

DON'T DOUBLE-CROP THE ORCHARD.

It is poor policy to try to take two totally different crops off the same land at the same time. Sod culture is all right in some sections, but taking off a clover crop would be dangerous unless there is ample rainfall in the growing season, and a heavy application of fertilizer is made to replace the plant food removed. Apple trees are particularly heavy feeders, and silken petals in countless variations of cream and rose hues. It is a simple matter to get them, as the fleshy roots travel perfectly and may be planted now. The tree paeony, too, as distinct from the above-mentioned species, is one of the most admirable of plants for gentle forcing in pots under glass. Plants covered with lovely blooms in February and March are most decorative. They like plenty of air when inside. There is not a handsomer or more suitable plant for conservatories, large rooms, porches, halls, etc., than the tree paeony in pots.

BANTAM AS UTILITY BREED

No doubt to many of our readers the above heading will seem strange, most of them remarking, "Whoever heard of the Bantam as a utility fowl?" Certainly up to now we have not looked upon them in this light, but this is no proof that we should not do so, especially

when we consider how many people would like to keep fowls if only they could find sufficient room. Further, how many are keeping, say, five or six fowls in a run hardly roomy enough for two, the result being complete dissatisfaction, retiring from the poultry fancy altogether, they require much cheaper than buy what eggs they need for their own egg supply. A case fully illustrating this point came to my notice a few months ago. A gentleman I know, contracted the hen fever, bought six hens and a cock, kept them in a run wherein they could hardly turn round, and in a very short time informed me that what eggs he did get, which are very few, cost him at the rate of 25 cents each; and this I am afraid is not an isolated case.

To people with only a very few yards of ground at their disposal, who are desirous of keeping a few fowls for their own use, I have no hesitation in advising them to go in for Bantams; and if only the right breeds are chosen the result will be satisfactory financially, and a source of enjoyment to the owner as well. We must not close our eyes to the fact that a great secret of success in all branches of farming lies in suitable stock and sufficient land.

Apply the same to keeping large poultry on a few feet of vacant ground; they look nothing, and prove very unprofitable. Keep the same number of Bantams in the same space; they flourish, are quite contented, and very profitable. Unfortunately, Bantams by the majority of persons are looked upon as rather expensive hobbies, purely from a fancy standpoint, and outside the show pen as utterly useless, as egg producers, complete failures, and for table purposes little better.

I myself have heard it said over and over again they are not worth the trouble of killing and cleaning, but this is a very mistaken idea, and simply strengthens my contention, and goes to prove how little they are understood. Where for its size can we find a fowl firmer, or one whose flesh is more delicate and juicy than the Bantam? If they are small, the bones of the bird and the necessary waste are small in from Rock and Wyandotte Bantams, which, when ready, take the scales at 2½ pounds. We must not forget the cost of keep is also correspondingly small. A pair of five birds can almost be kept on house scraps alone, certainly with a very small portion of corn thrown in. I know more than one ardent town fancier in the present time keeping Bantams in a small back yard with splendid results, having an egg average that would make many a small country fancier blush. Rock, Wyandotte, and Pekin Bantams are very profitable as utility fowls, contented, and capital layers in confined runs, the two former breeds of good-sized eggs; in fact, strange as it may seem, I know hens of these breeds, remarkable layers, whose eggs compare very favorably with many a pullet's egg.—Feathered World.

BEST ALL-ROUND BREED OF FOWLS.

Fowls of this class, are generally speaking, the most profitable for farmers, unless they particularly wish to specialize in either egg production or table chickens, as they combine the two essential characteristics, without excelling in either; they are better layers than the table breeds, but less suitable for eating, while they possess better flesh qualities than the non-sitters, but produce fewer eggs. Hens of this class are our best winter layers, producing, when hatched at the right time of year, a large proportion of their eggs during the winter months. There are five good general purpose breeds, one of which, however is not so popular as it was a few years ago, owing to the fact that it has been surpassed by some of the newer varieties; I refer to the Langshan. One of the remaining four, the Faverolles, is a comparatively new comer, and although the breed undoubtedly possesses some sterling qualities, it cannot equal in utility characteristics either the Orpington, Plymouth Rock, or Wyandotte. Of the Orpington, there are several varieties, but the Buff is the only one with which we need deal, as it is generally understood by everyone who has kept both varieties, that the Buff is far superior to the black; of the Wyandotte there are seven varieties, but again we need only consider the White, silver, and Buff, as although the remaining ones possess some excellent characteristics, they fall a long way short of these three. The Barred and Buff are the two best varieties of the Plymouth Rock, the remaining ones being more particularly useful for exhibition purposes. The three breeds are almost identical in economic qualities, the Buff Orpington possessing just one advantage, namely the color of its flesh, which is white, whereas that of the Wyandotte and Plymouth Rock is yellow. Apart from this there is nothing to choose between the three varieties. They are excellent layers, especially in the winter; they are hardy and easy to rear successfully; for heavy fowls they develop rapidly; both the adults and chickens stand confinement well, the hens make reliable sitters and careful mothers; and the quality, flavor, and texture of the flesh leave little to be desired.—E.T.B., in Farm Poultry.

MOPING FOWLS.

In nearly every flock some few fowls may be seen standing about in drowsy fashion, they neither lay nor progress. If caught and handled they are found poor and out of condition. This is one class, another is those which are over fat. The latter are usually great eaters, and have a particularly good appearance, but they do not lay regularly or perhaps not at all, and are quite as profitless as the others and

more expensive to keep. As an antidote to both conditions Mr. Gilbert says:

"I find nothing better than Epsom salts. They clear out all impurities from the drooping ones, and reduce the fat. It is quite remarkable how beneficially they act. Half a teaspoonful every other day for two weeks invariably produces good results. Mix a little soft appetizing food, add the salts, in proportion to the number of fowls, and let them take this when hungry. Another sure way of distributing the salts evenly is to dissolve them in water; then mix the meal in. I find this medicine so useful that I give salts to the fowls now and then, whether they seem to require them or not, as this acts as a preventive of disease."

THE RUBBISH PROBLEM SOLVED.

Every rubbish barrel should be hidden from sight and yet be easily accessible. The following plan avoids the cost and delay of evergreens, and requires a minimum of space. It needs only one vine and this can be lifted aside just like a gate whenever it is necessary to remove and empty the barrel.

Set two posts firmly in the ground, one on each side of the barrel and close to the fence. Let their tops be slightly higher than the top of the barrel. Make the soil at the base of one of these posts deep and rich. With the barrel in place between two posts, fasten some common galvanized poultry netting, whose width is equal to the height of the barrel, to one post. When securely fastened bend the netting around the front of the barrel until the second post is reached, and cut off the surplus netting at this point.

In the second post screw three or four hooks, and over these loop the meshes of the netting.

At the base of the first post set a good plant of honeysuckle. Within a season the barrel can be completely screened by training the strongest shoots horizontally on the netting. The screening can be readily removed at any time, by simply unlooping the netting from the hooks and pulling it back toward you. It is just as easily replaced when desired.

Put three bricks at regular intervals on the ground, and rest the barrel on these in order to save its bottom, and bore a hole about two inches from the bottom to keep the barrel free from water, and from injury by freezing in winter. In summer cork the hole and allow sufficient water to collect to prevent the barrel from drying out and going to pieces.

A wooden fly-screen cover will keep out flies. If a stiffer netting with coarser mesh is desired other fence wires will be found suitable.

TIMELY SUGGESTIONS.

A little lime sprinkled over the potatoes will help to keep them from decaying or sprouting.

Write to your nursery firm now for a catalogue, so as to place your order for nursery stock for spring planting.

Keep an eye on the cellar. Vegetables and fruit ought not to be stored there, if there is any other place for them; but if there are such things in the cellar, be sure that they are not decaying. It is better to spend a little more time in sorting fruit and vegetables than a week or two under the doctor's care.

Every cellar ought to be ventilated. A simple method is to remove a pane of glass from one window, and replace it with a square L-shaped tunnel made of light boards extending about a foot from the window, and then for two feet pointing up. By this simple ventilating device, the foul air is removed from the cellar, and very little cold air gains entrance, being kept out by the upward current of air.

This is the time of the year to make plans for the coming season's work in the garden and about the grounds. There are a multitude of valuable hints and suggestions to be found in the various magazines and papers which publish articles on such topics. It is not a bad plan to have several scrap books for clippings, one to be devoted to the flower-garden, another to the vegetable garden, one to poultry, and so on.

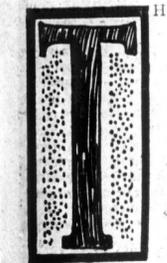
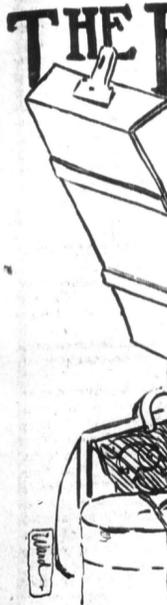
All shrubs and trees should be inspected for the purpose of locating injurious insect pests.

Plants kept in the living room require plenty of water, but it is far better to water thoroughly at intervals than to make a light application of water every day. Wait until the plant is dry, and then water it abundantly. Cold water should never be used for watering house plants, and in the case of calla lilies, the water should feel warm to the hand.

The mission of horticulture is to clothe the earth with loveliness, to co-operate with nature in her most beautiful function, to instill into the affections of the people an appreciation of the art and a zeal for its products. And to serve and gratify this desire is the mission of the horticulturist. The materials in which he now deals were once classed among the luxuries of life, but the world is fast coming to recognize them as necessities of a cultured and rational living, and as this sentiment grows, so also will grow the importance and influence of horticulture in the public eye.

A TURNIP FOR GREENS.

The Seven-Top Turnip is a true turnip, but the root has not been developed as in other turnips. The leaves are large, dark green, heavy grow flat upon the ground. It is grown only for greens and is used only in the South-



Finnerty. Ma was bl... face like a harvest m... in good-will what it l... had some left over. M... the arm of Jim Jeffr... fant's wife; in fact, ... and she used them dai... to earn the family liv... as the family had... Lastly, as the pre... the time you have m... and are placing men... burned to a crisp, the... Junior. Patrick Junie... a normal youngster, ... ment and all that that... Two nights before... ty—that is to say, M... If Ma hadn't receive... would never have b... there will be those... then, that Ma Finne... letter. However that... that she did receive... "Through enough... gazing wistfully up... Home" that hung... where the fireplace... had been any firepl... Norah, ye have wor... from the likes av m... Shure if the poor f... lay his head, an' it C... we'll have to do the... "Arrah Patrick... t'ough he'd come to... Why, at school he... t'acher had to stitay... ahead av him. An'... was entirely, tho' k... to t'ink av him this... to shlaip an' turnin... shure, bliss him. A... a dacent male in t... the rheumatiz, an'... out entirely. But... b'rin' his old sisth... "Ma Finnerty's t... the punches she g... She crumpled, he s... in lead-peucilling i... frame shook with... her in the whinin... constantly, and Pa... face streaked with... one parent to the o... "Ah will," excla... final sniffe, as she... few dishes one on... to washing them, "i... in," an' it's a welc... much else."

That night, aft... tucked into his cri... room, Pa and Ma s... together at the oth... "No, Patrick, I... want." Ma excl... aside the weak, cr... and theoretical m... bed while the sma... touch remarkably... fellow. The th