

Clubhouse Gardening

Selecting and Planting Perennials

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THIS is a question that before now has puzzled some of the most experienced. How then must it affect those who have not had any experience in this branch of horticulture? More especially when one considers the huge collection of perennial plants that are available for the lovers of flower gardens to pick and choose from, and which may be obtained from any reputable nurseryman.

Where there is ample scope for beds or borders of liberal dimensions, then the task of selecting is somewhat simplified, as with a larger variety one is reasonably assured of securing the cream of the perennials in cultivation, and therefore have a wider range of plants wherewith to maintain a longer period for cut flowers as well as a wider range of color. Whereas, on a smaller scale one has to make a more careful selection if longevity of flowering and cutting are required.

Commonplace Plants Accentuate Beauty of Others

To lovers of nature all plants and flowers are more or less beautiful, aside from the fact that there are quite a number of varieties amongst perennials that are rather drab looking or common-place when compared with others, especially when seen in small clumps or isolated. When planted to form a mass and in conjunction with other plants their attractiveness is more apparent.

It is not always the beauty of one plant over another that is so conspicuous as that the comparative plainness of one plant enhances the beauty of another one.

Plant for Variety of Cut Flowers

Where there is a steady demand for cut flowers, this should be borne in mind when making a selection of hardy perennials and to choose such plants that lend themselves to such a purpose.

There are a great many varieties which are beautiful and of great merit from an ornamental point of view, but which are practically useless for cut bloom, but by some growers are considered indispensable to complete an herbaceous or perennial border. I readily admit this where there is ample scope for such plants and one is noted for having a large collection, but where space is limited and cut flowers are essential I think it would be policy to cultivate those varieties that are of greater utility, and in this respect as before mentioned the assortment is so large as to satisfy even the most fastidious.

Now we come to that all important point in connection with perennials, viz., that of planning and planting

out beds and borders for effectiveness, compatible with usefulness. To the average person this may appear quite simple and probably would be if the majority of the plants were somewhat uniform in size, etc., no matter what quantity. But where there are perhaps, say fifty varieties and running into hundreds of plants of varying height, form and color, then it would indeed appear more complicated and consequently require some little knowledge to execute.

If this were a question of annuals to be planted and by some reason or another such as blending of colors, they were not satisfactory, one could make a note to that effect and rectify another time, but with perennials which are more or less permanent, well, that is a horse of another color.

Planting Methods not Recommended

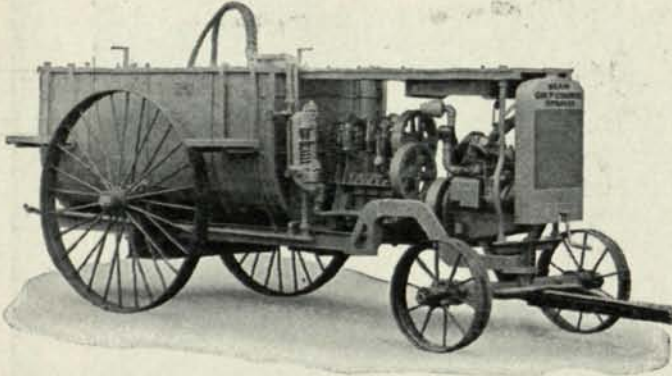
There is an old saying, yet true, "old customs die hard," and this is verified when one often sees the old method still in vogue of mixing shrubs, annuals and half hardy or greenhouse plants with perennials. Though I do not say this plan should not be adopted, it is one I would not recommend, but would rather speak of the disadvantages of adhering to this plan.

In the first place such a planting would not, strictly speaking, be a perennial border. A miscellaneous collection if you like—a jumble would be a better description. Experience proves that shrubs have a tendency to rob the other plants of both food and moisture, beside shading some. By introducing annuals, etc., into the border, this is injurious to the permanent plants by overcrowding and smothering them, oftentimes causing decay and premature ripening of the foliage, beside creating work which the permanent plants are supposed to lessen. A survival of the fittest is what one may look for in a year or two if this plan is practiced.

Another method which is upheld by some is to dot their plants singly throughout the border, irrespective of genera, species or varieties, the consequence is a sameness throughout, leaving much to be desired. One of the chief attractions of a perennial border is to see bold

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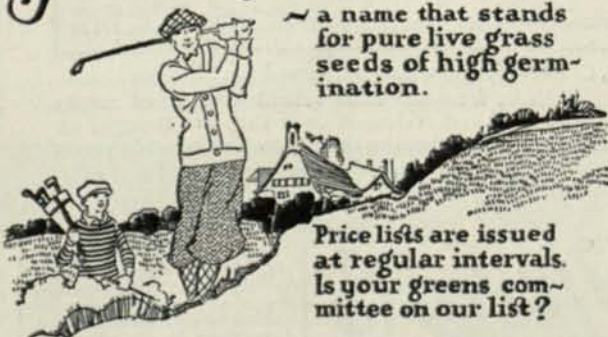
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Tips on New Construction

(Continued from page 10)

Grass seed was sowed 150 pounds per acre on fairways and 120 pounds per acre on the general planting, comprising 167 acres.

A Few Construction "Don'ts"

From some of the developments which have come from this course, we can give constructors the following "Don'ts." Don't work your soil until it is fluffy. It is better in a slightly packed condition.

Don't forget to protect all places where there is a possibility of washes, with sod if available or with a quick growing grain seed.

Don't allow the tile and water ditches to remain open any longer than necessary for this gives settlement no chance before seeding.

Don't use a pipe type farm roller after seeding. This gives uneven pressure and consequently variable growth.

Don't seed too soon after fertilizing.

Don't forget to provide plenty of inlets for surface water to get into the tile lines more quickly than by infiltration.

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masses of color in harmony and something fresh to meet the eye as one proceeds through the grounds.

Developing Color Schemes

A plan that has been adopted for a number of years, though perhaps not general, but which is more definite than some, is to plant out in masses so as to form color grouping. This is both effective in appearance and simple in operation, and may be done by planting from three to nine plants in a group, according to height, form and eventual size of the plants. For example:

Three Delphinium

Three Phlox (decussata type)

Five Lychnis Haageano—Three Lychnis Chalcedonica

Seven Heucheras, Pyrethrums or Aquilegiae

Where dwarf Alpine plants are used five or more may be included according to desire.

(To be continued)

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