

JANUARY.

Soft roll your incense, herbs and fruits and flowers,
In mingled clouds to Him whose sun exalts,
Whose wisdom perfumes, and whose pencil paints.—THOMSON.

General Observations on the Weather—Cabbage, Broccoli and Savoy Planting—Transplant Lettuce, Leek, Endive, and Celery Plants—Sow Turnips, &c.—General Directions for the Management of the Greenhouse, Orchard and Flower Garden—Mowing Grass Walks and Lawns.

THE opening month of the year corresponds to an English July in season and in temperature—in drying wind and in all the characteristics of an English midsummer, with its bright sunshine, dry atmosphere, and increasing warmth, slightly intensified. These atmospheric conditions usually attain their greatest intensity about the end of the present and commencement of the ensuing month. It is, therefore, a matter of peculiar importance in gardening to finish the planting and sowing of winter vegetables during the earlier period of the month, while the ground still retains a portion of the moisture acquired during the usually showery month of December; for if the operation of planting and sowing is carried on while the soil is dry, the sun bright, and the winds parching, the chances of successful gardening must necessarily become greatly diminished.

Seize, therefore, the commencement of the month for the planting of London and Walcheren cauliflowers; imperial white winter, and other sorts of flowering broccoli; early York, nonpareil, and drumhead cabbages; globe savoys, Brussels sprouts, curled greens, and other varieties of winter vegetables.

Transplant also cabbage and cos lettuce, green curled endive, leeks and celery, planting the latter vegetable in well manured trenches in the shadiest and moistest portion of the garden; if desired to be very large and fine, it must have frequent copious waterings during the drier portion of the season; for being naturally a rapid growing semi-aquatic plant, it requires a rich moist soil when under artificial cultivation.

Sow broccoli, cress, mustard, endive, lettuce, French beans, radishes, onions, carrots, swede, yellow Aberdeen, and white stone turnips; and risk yet a final sowing of peas and broad beans, which will be fit for gathering about the beginning of April, if they escape the contingency of early autumn frosts.

Gather all sorts of garden seeds as they ripen. Hoe advancing crops of cauliflowers, and shade with their own leaves large heads of nearly matured crops. Earth up the crops of celery, cauliflower, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, and other winter greens planted in December.

Pull full-grown garlic, eschalots and onions; prune crowded melons under glass, and plant cuttings of them for a successful crop; give copious daily waterings to cucumbers.

Gather sage-tops, lavender-spikes, camomile flowers, and plants of penny-royal, hyssop, mint, balm, marjoram, and other aromatic herbs, and place them to dry for winter use.

Commence budding fruit trees on cloudy days, and stake the expanding shoots of spring-grafted ones, displacing all suckers and shoots beneath the graft. Summer-prune all gross and superfluous shoots in fruit trees of whatever kind, and support branches which give promise of being broken down by over-abundant crops.

Transplant, shade and water biennials and fibrous-rooted perennials sown in spring or in the beginning of summer. Clear away the decaying stems of such herbaceous plants as have done flowering. Take up and dry bulbous roots, the decaying state of whose leaves implies ripened roots and fitness for drying.

Support and water choice carnations, dahlias, and hollyhocks; and propagate sweet-williams, pinks and carnations, by layers and pipings, taking care to water freely and shade fully every bright day.

Greenhouse plants now in bloom will require to be carefully staked and supplied with an abundance of water every afternoon, and on specially hot and parching days they are likely to require to be more or less watered twice a-day during this and the succeeding month, whilst a partial shade from the overpowering brightness of the mid-day sun will preserve the purity of the colours of their flowers, and greatly prolong their endurance.

Vineries, devoted mainly to the production of grapes, should be closed in early in the afternoon; immediately after which, the borders of the house may be sprinkled, and the vines syringed with clean water which has undergone some hours' exposure to the sun; this treatment will create a warm, moist atmosphere, in which the grapes will swell with great rapidity.

Grass walks and lawns will now require to be very frequently mown, even so often as once a-week, where it is desired to have them kept very neat and smooth. If this operation is performed with a scythe, it will be best done upon showery or dewy mornings. Mowing machines are now, however, beginning to be much more generally used than scythes, and are much more expeditious, for they not only cut smoother and better, but equally well whether the grass is wet or dry, whilst they both roll the lawn and collect the cut grass all by the one operation.

FEBRUARY.

Rich in content, in nature's bounty rich
In herbs and fruits, whatever greens the spring,
When Heaven descends in showers or bends the bough,
When Summer reddens and when Autumn beams.—THOMSON.

The Weather—Directions for Gathering Fruits and Seeds—Weeding—Sowing Autumn Crops—Pruning—The Flower Garden—The Greenhouse and Vinery—The Lawn.

THIS, the first autumnal month, like that of August in England, usually displays more of the characteristics of summer weather than that of autumn. Vegetation is still in the midst of luxuriant growth, although the weather is generally hot and dry, so much so as to suspend, in a great degree, the usual duties of planting and sowing, and to restrict the operations of the garden to the collection of ripe fruits for preserving. Apples, pears, peaches, plums, and raspberries will now be ripening in great profusion, and ought to be collected only when perfectly dry; for fruit gathered and boiled in a wet state is sure to ferment.

Collect also all kinds of ripe vegetable and flower seeds. Hoe between growing crops for the destruction of weeds, and single out advancing crops of carrots, parsnips, turnips, onions, beet, and other large growing roots, which can only attain perfection when thinned to a reasonable distance.

Ripening crops of onions, garlic, eschalots, and other bulbous roots, may be drawn and stored. Weed and thoroughly clean asparagus beds, afterwards strewing the surface with a sprinkling of salt; remove the smaller and lower heads of globe artichokes; if rain should fall towards the end of the month, commence the usual autumn sowings of early York, drum-head, and other cabbages, cauliflowers, savoys, curled greens, red pickling cabbage, and Brussels sprouts for late autumn and early spring planting. Sow also white stone turnips for winter use. Continue successional sowings of radish, cress, mustard, lettuce, and endive for salading; and prepare land for a large breadth of onions, for the sowing of which see next month's calendar.

Continue to thin out all unnecessary wood in fruit trees; and if American blight should happen to show on apple trees, exercise unremitting diligence in painting every spot or twig with linseed or other oil, which, if persevered in, will effectually destroy the disease.

Frequently water and stake flower border plants, which require moisture and support during the period of blooming; continue the propagation of pinks and carnations by pipings and layers, as previously directed.

Collect ripened seeds of choice annuals and perennials, especially of verbenas, polyanthuses, pinks, carnations, dahlias, and other esteemed flower border favourites, the seeds of which are imported with difficulty, because of their liability to lose their vitality during the voyage; hence the greater necessity for a judicious care over those sorts we possess—the varieties of which may be greatly augmented, and the colours and habits of the parent plants greatly diversified in the well-defined characteristics of a vigorous offspring.

Greenhouse plants, throughout the whole of the present month, will require a similar attention to shading and watering, as well as by sprinkling them overhead from the fine rose of a watering-pot; or still better, by dewing them, gently, with a hand syringe, which has a very renovating effect after the depressing influence of hot dry weather.

Grapes grown in vineries which have received but little forcing will now commence to colour; the lateral and other growing shoots ought now to receive a final stopping, and the borders and atmosphere of the house may be kept as dry as possible, which will ensure grapes of a high colour and rich flavour.

Should grass walks and lawns at this season lose their greenness of colour from excessively dry weather, one or two heavy waterings sprinkled all over the lawn in the evenings will preserve its colour throughout the summer, and maintain the freshness of appearance peculiar to well-kept lawns in the earlier part of the season, when all is green and luxuriant.