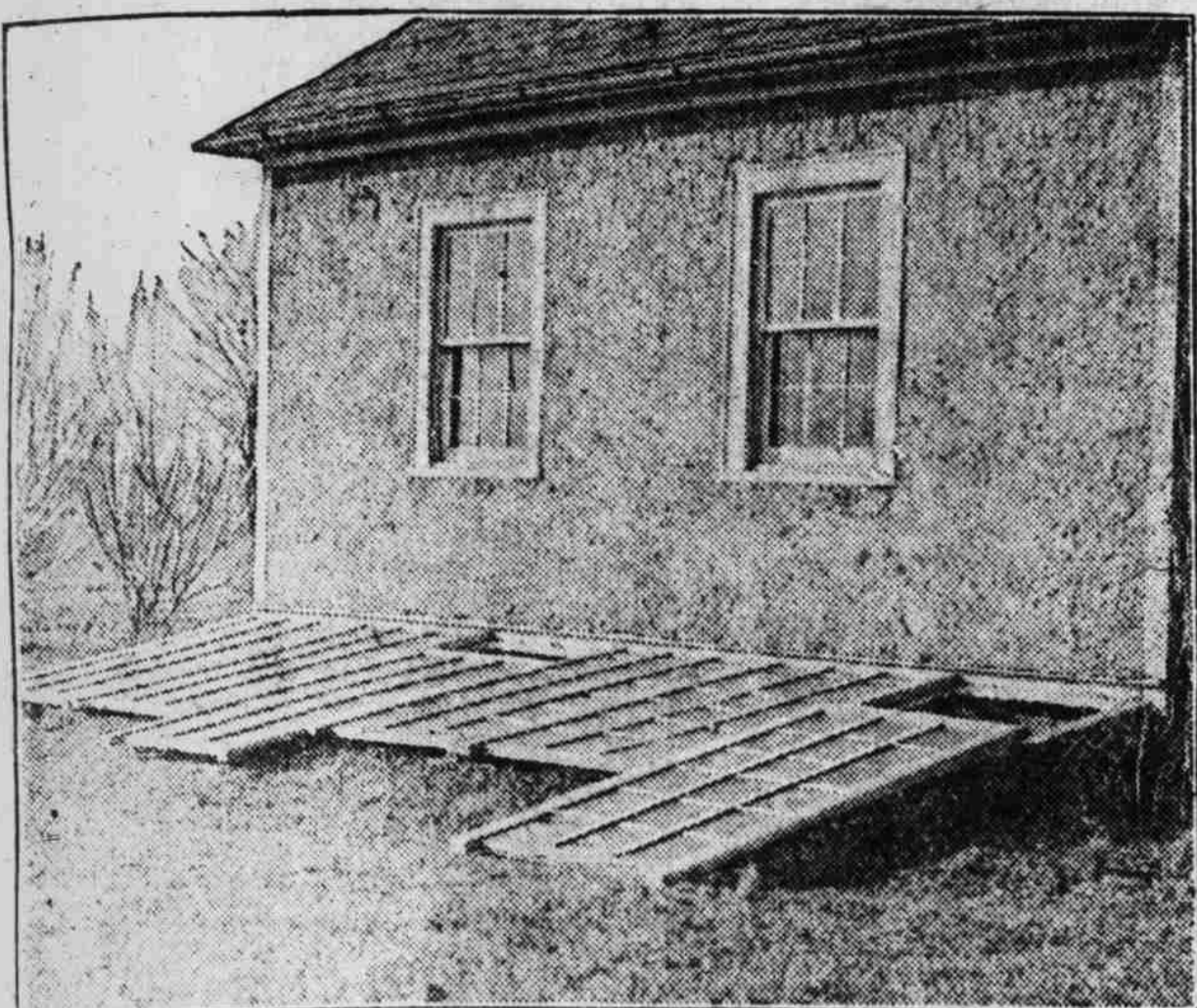


# THE COTTAGE GARDENER

## GROWING EARLY PLANTS IN BACKYARD HOTBED



Proper selection of seeds with which to plant a garden is stressed by the United States Department of Agriculture. It should be the aim of every home gardener this year to grow a better garden by making the most intelligent use of the available space, not only by employing better methods, but by planting seeds of the highest quality. The first cost of seeds is comparatively small, but it is very important that the seeds planted should be the very best obtainable.

Gardeners are advised to secure the catalogues of reliable seed firms and spend a little time in going over and checking up the seeds that will be needed for planting.

Do not be misled by the highly colored and much-advertised novelties, but stick to the standard, well-known and proved varieties, advise the specialists. Good seeds should never be wasted, so figure carefully upon the amount required and place your order early before the best stocks are exhausted. Perhaps the seeds can be bought from local dealers. If not, orders should go to a seed house in some neighboring city, so the seeds may be received in ample time. When they are received, unpack and check them to see that no part of the order has been overlooked; then store the seeds in a mouseproof, ventilated container, such as a perforated tin box. They should be kept in a moderate temperature, and where they will not freeze or be exposed to moisture.

### Have Early Vegetables.

Half the pleasure and profit of a garden is derived from having something to use just as early in the spring as possible. In many cities and towns the local greenhouse men grow thousands of plants which are sold to home gardeners at reasonable prices. It often happens, however, that home gardeners do not have the opportunity to purchase well-grown plants, and must start their own supply of early plants in the house or in a hotbed if they desire to have their crops mature early. Among the garden crops that may be started to advantage in this manner are tomatoes, early cabbage, peppers, eggplant and lettuce; even cucumbers, melons, beets, snap beans, lima beans and sweet corn may be started indoors by using flower pots, paper bands, or berry boxes to hold the soil.

Where the required number of plants is too great for growing in window boxes, a hotbed or coldframe may be provided. The usual method of constructing a hotbed is first to dig a

shallow pit 8 to 18 inches deep, according to locality, and pack it full of fermenting stable manure. The manure, before being placed in the pit, should be turned over once or twice in a pile in order to insure even heating. It may then be packed into the hotbed pit and tramped uniformly. Standard hotbed sashes are 3 feet wide and 6 feet long, and the size of the bed should be made to suit the number of sashes employed. A framework of boards 18 to 24 inches high at the back and about 12 inches high in front is placed over the manure-filled pit to support the sash.

### Use for Thermometer.

About 3 or 4 inches of fine garden loam is spread evenly over the manure and the bed allowed to stand four or five days to warm up before any seed is sown. At first the temperature of the bed may run rather high, and it is best to delay planting the seeds in it until it begins to decline. This can be determined by planting a thermometer with the bulb about three inches below the surface of the soil. The temperature should fall below 85 degrees before seeds are planted.

If glass-filled sashes are not available for covering the hotbed, heavy muslin may be used instead; the glass, however, makes the most desirable form of covering. Care must be taken to give the bed sufficient ventilation to prevent overheating, as it is liable to heat up very rapidly when the sun shines full upon the glass. Watering should be done during the early part of the day and the bed given enough air so that the plants will dry off before night. The bed should be closed before evening, in order to conserve enough heat to carry it through the night in good condition. If the weather should turn severely cold, a covering of straw, blankets or canvas may be thrown over the bed to protect it.

### Coldframe Construction.

A coldframe is constructed in exactly the same manner as a hotbed, with the exception that no manure is placed beneath it to supply heat.

Before the plants are set in the garden, either from the hotbed or the coldframe, they should be gradually hardened to outside conditions by giving them more ventilation each day. Finally, remove the sashes entirely on bright days and replace them during the nights. The aim should be to produce strong, healthy plants that will make a quick start when placed in the garden.

## TO HAVE AN INDOOR GARDEN

Make Your Basement Work for You by Producing Vegetables Before Outdoor Planting Time.

Nearly every cottage, as well as the larger houses and the city bungalows, are equipped with large basements. Many of these basements have space that is not utilized and many of them have excellent southern and eastern exposures whereby the sun has a chance to play through the windows a large portion of the day.

Make the basement work for you. It is an easy matter to have a miniature greenhouse in most any basement where there is sufficient heat to keep the soil and plants from freezing. At least, plants for setting out when the danger of frost is past can be easily raised in the basement, and small vegetables such as radishes, onions and lettuce can be raised and eaten by the owner long before it is time to plant such things outside.

If the window space in the basement is sufficient a long tray arrangement such as used in greenhouses may be used for the indoor garden. Such a tray will be sufficient to produce a good quantity of small vegetables until time to plant outside and at the same time the tomato, pepper, cabbage and other plants may be started, transplanted to individual pots, and given intensive cultivation, to transplant in the healthy plants.

## PRUNING WILL GET RESULTS

Fruit Trees, Vines and Bushes, as Well as Flowering Shrubbery, Require Trimming.

Fruit trees, fruit vines and bushes, as well as flowering bushes, require careful pruning to get the best results—fruit and flowers.

There is some difference of opinion as to whether the pruning should be done in the fall or in the early spring. Despite the argument as to the time, the pruning is absolutely necessary if crops are to be the best possible under weather, soil or other conditions that may prevail in any particular locality.

In pruning fruit or flowering trees and vines it is well for the one who wields the pruning knife to know just how to do the work. One not acquainted with the operation would best post up on the task before one seriously wounds the trees or vines. It is not a difficult task, but one that is as necessary each year as cultivation—for crops cannot be expected unless the proper attention is given.

### "HOE" THE PLANTS IN FLATS

The small spikelike plants that have just come through the soil in the flats in the basement require a little "hoeing" occasionally. Gentle loosening of the ground—not close enough to injure the tender roots—will do the plants good.

## IMPROVED UNIFORM INTERNATIONAL

# Sunday School Lesson

(By REV. P. B. FITZWATER, D. D., Teacher of English Bible in the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.)  
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## LESSON FOR FEBRUARY 12

### ELISHA AND THE SHUNAMMITE WOMAN

LESSON TEXT—II Kings 4:3-57.  
GOLDEN TEXT—Verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live.—John 5:25.  
REFERENCE MATERIAL—John 11:1-46.  
PRIMARY TOPIC—Elisha Brings a Boy to Life.  
JUNIOR TOPIC—How Elisha Brought a Boy to Life.  
INTERMEDIATE AND SENIOR TOPIC—Elisha Helping in a Home.  
YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULT TOPIC—Our Ministry of Comfort and Help.

#### I. The Shunammite's Hospitality to Elisha (vv. 8-11).

1. Its occasion (v. 8). A wealthy woman of Shunem, observing that Elisha passed continually by her house in his journeys, was moved with compassion toward him. She determined according to her ability to supply his needs.

2. Its nature (vv. 8-11). "She constrained him to eat bread" (vv. 8-9). As a result of her earnest entreaty, as often as he passed by her house he turned in to eat bread. She received a prophet in the name of a prophet.

#### II. Elisha Endeavors to Repay Her Kindness (vv. 12-17).

1. He offers to ask a favor from the king or head of the army (v. 13). This offer implies that Elisha had influence at the royal court. The woman's reply shows her truly to be a great woman. She did not desire to change the calm and quiet of her home for a place even in the royal court. Her answer also shows that her motive in extending generosity to the prophet was entirely unselfish, purely because he was God's prophet.

2. Elisha announces the giving of a son to her (vv. 16, 17). Through inquiry of Gehazi it was discovered that this woman was childless. So the prophet made known to her that in about a year from that time she should experience the joy of a mother.

#### III. The Coming of Sorrow to the Shunammite's Home (vv. 18-21).

The child which brought joy to her home was suddenly taken away. How many homes are like this! Scarcely do we begin to enjoy life until death enters and snatches away some loved one. The cause of his death was probably sunstroke, for the heat of the sun at harvest time in this country is very intense. When the boy complained of his head, the father sent him home to his mother. By noon the child died and the mother laid him upon the bed of the man of God. Faith prompted her to do this. She did not make preparation for burial, but for restoration to life (Heb. 11:35).

#### IV. The Mother Goes to Elisha (vv. 22-28).

When one is in trouble or sorrow the best place to go is to the man of God who is able to give counsel and comfort. Happy is the one who in the days of prosperity and sunshine has so related himself to God and His prophets that he can have help and sympathy in time of trouble.

1. She took hold of Elisha's feet (v. 27). This was the eastern way of enforcing a petition. She passed by Gehazi. She would not be content with the servant when the master could be reached.

2. She chided the prophet (v. 28). "Did I desire a son?" This implies that it would have been better not to have had a child than to have lost him so soon.

#### V. The Child Restored (vv. 29-37).

1. Gehazi's fruitless errand (vv. 29-31). He hurried away and placed the prophet's staff upon the child's face, but it did not revive. Perhaps the fault lay in Gehazi—his lack of faith. The woman seemed to perceive his lack; she would not trust him. She would not go until Elisha was willing to go along. This fruitless errand of Gehazi shows the worthlessness of the forms of religion when used by those who have no faith in them.

2. Elisha's efficient service (vv. 32-37). He went to the house where the dead child was. (1) He prayed (v. 33). He knew that no one but God could help, so he closed the door, shutting all others out. Our service to men should be preceded by prayer. (2) He stretched himself upon the child (v. 34). He brought his warm body into touch with the cold body of the child. God blesses and saves through the warm touch of those who are in touch with Him. After we pray we should get into actual touch with those dead in trespasses and sin. God's method of saving the world is through the ministry of saved men and women.

#### A Daily Prayer.

Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me; then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression. Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my Redeemer.—Psalm 19:13-14.

#### Wickedness As a Fire.

Wickedness burneth as a fire; it shall devour the briars and thorns.—Isaiah, 9:18.

## POULTRY FLOCKS

### TURKEY EGGS FOR HATCHING

They Should Be Gathered Daily Where There Is Danger of Them Being Destroyed.

When there is danger that turkey eggs may be chilled or destroyed they should be gathered every day, and a nest egg left in each nest. Skunks, opossums, rats, crows, and dogs are the greatest destroyers of turkey eggs, although occasionally minks, raccoons, coyotes, wolves, foxes, cats, and certain large snakes also eat eggs. When a turkey hen has been disturbed by one of these pests, she may change her nest to some other place and abandon the eggs.

Eggs for hatching should be kept at a temperature of as near 50 degrees or 60 degrees F. as possible, and should be turned over every day, say poultry specialists in the United States Department of Agriculture. They should be jarred as little as possible while handling and should be incubated while fresh, never holding more than two weeks if it can be avoided. It is an excellent plan to mark the date on each egg as it is gathered, in order to be certain that no eggs are kept too long before they are incubated.

### PICKING DUCKS FOR BREEDING

Active, Healthy Females of Medium Size Are Recommended—Use Only Mature Fowls.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

Ducks are usually mated in flocks of about thirty females with five or six males, as the drakes do not fight one another. The number of males may be reduced to one for every seven females about the first of March, and again changed a month later to one male for eight to ten females.

Active, healthy females of medium size should be used for breeding; that is, weighing about eight pounds when mature. Only mature birds should be used as breeders. Select ducks with short necks, medium long bodies, flat backs and of good depth to the keel bones. Watery eyes usually are a sign of weakness in ducks. The drake is coarser and more masculine in appearance than the duck, and has a distinct curl in his tail feathers. Ducks should



Ducks Should Be Sold After They Are Two Years Old.

be sold, usually, after they are two years old, although the best breeders or layers may be kept over their third year, say poultry specialists in the United States Department of Agriculture.

In handling ducks, pick them up by their necks, as their legs are very easily broken. Ducks lay their eggs early in the morning, and should be confined to the house or pen until 9:30 or 10 o'clock in the morning. If allowed to roam early in the morning they may lay in a pond or stream and the eggs may be lost.

### SEEK VACCINE FOR CHICKENS

Field and Laboratory Tests Are Being Conducted at the Kansas Agricultural College.

Experiments involving many field and laboratory tests are being conducted at the Kansas State Agricultural college to determine the efficacy of a vaccine for fowls to prevent cholera, typhoid and roup. It has been determined that cholera and roup are caused by the same organism. In field tests a vaccine produced at the college by Prof. F. R. Bandette has given some very satisfactory results and this is now being tested out in the laboratory. If these tests are successful more field work will be done by college experts. No vaccine is being given out at this time because the chemists are not in a position yet to guarantee it.

### PRODUCING EGGS IN WINTER

Palatable Mash Can Be Made From Mixture of Bran, Meat Scraps, Oats and Meal.

A palatable mash which should produce winter eggs in a well-bred flock of fowls kept in light, roomy and sanitary quarters, can be made as follows: One hundred pounds of bran, 100 pounds of gluten meal, 100 pounds of meat scrap, 150 pounds of crushed oats and 150 pounds of cornmeal. Two ounces of this mash, with one and one-half ounces of cracked corn, and one-half ounce of whole oats should be fed to each hen daily.

## BETWEEN-SEASONS BLOUSE; APRONS AND APRON-DRESSES

ALREADY the blouse makers are preparing their lines for spring and attempting to feel the pulse of the dear public to find out what it wants. But it is not easy to decide in this between-seasons time; for those who buy blouses pin their faith to conservative styles and show little disposition to run after strange gods. They have bought fine, hand-made lingerie blouses in sheer cottons, that are always good style. They have taken a chance on plain shirtwaist types of crepe de chine, pongee, or cotton goods, that are also never out of

materials familiar and dependable, and that these materials are combined with much ingenuity, in captivating utility dresses and aprons. It takes an expert to tell which is which, and when the expert fails to see any difference between a dress and an apron he calls it an "apron-dress," which is simply a dress that can be worn over another dress, or not.

For these pretty new wash dresses designers have taken the standard gingham and percales, satens and printed cottons and worked them up into simple and smart garments. Every



PAISLEY PATTERN IN CREPE DE CHINE

the running, and they have picked up here and there, new ideas in great variety, but the choice has not been uniform enough to determine which way the wind of fashion will blow when spring comes.

The guess of one experienced manufacturer is as good as another, and when there is a consensus of opinion among several of them, it is reasonably sure that they are right. They are banking on the demand for white and light colors for spring, on silk crepes, on long line blouses, on slashes, by means of which in high color blouses a soft contrasting color is introduced.

one knows the fabrics, their dependability goes without saying, so that emphasis is placed, not on them, but on styles, and we have with us workaday dresses that have an individual charm—a prettiness that means much to their capable wearers. American women do not object to making themselves useful, but they are determined to make themselves attractive at the same time.

Two of the new apron-dresses are shown below, one of them in a plain material in a cheerful color. A vestee in white is set in with a piping. As in all house dresses, the sleeves are



NEW APRON DRESSES

Ribbons and applique trimmings are to be featured and the trend is still toward simplicity of design.

The blouse shown here takes advantage of this favored simplicity and utilizes a paisley pattern in crepe de chine for a plain but very smart model. This is something for the between-seasons period that will prove worthwhile. It is delightfully adaptable, worn either with a suit or a handsome, plain separate skirt.

Dry goods houses everywhere, in their advertisements, are singing the praises of their new displays of cleverly designed wash dresses and aprons for spring. We gather from this chorus that the style note is of great importance in them, the mate-

short enough to be out of the way, and are completed by a small cuff adorned with a little stiffery. Large patch pockets are useful and help to embellish the dress, and the wide girdle of the chambray slips through slides at the sides.

That perennial favorite, the checked gingham, blooms at the right of the picture, in a graceful model having a square-necked bodice that fastens with three buttons to the left side and a wide girdle that buttons at the back.

*Julia Bottomley*  
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