



Over the GARDEN GATE

By RUTH KING

These are the days when the last leaves curl and color under the breath of white frost. The garden has given up its last cabbage, the corn stalks are a haven for gun wary pheasants and the flower borders, unless you are very lucky, are spotted only with the hardest of blossoms.

This is a good time to winterize the garden equipment and to tuck it cozily away before snow fills the paths to the tool house.

These suggestions made by an ardent gardener may be of help: Power mowers are usually accompanied by instructions for storing. No one ever tells what to do with the old oil from the gas models, but it will kill weeds in the gravelled driveway or unwanted grass in the fence row. After all the necessary cleaning of the mower is completed, a wipe over the entire surface of the machine with a well-oiled rag or with petroleum jelly will prevent rusting and wrapping snugly in a plastic sheet will keep it clean for that spring run around the bluegrass.

A more difficult job is preparing the spraying equipment for hibernation . . . for tank-type sprayers this requires pails, wrenches, screwdrivers, scrubbing brushes, trisodium phosphate, vinegar, kerosene, rubber gloves and a willing husband unless you are mechanically minded.

Dismantle the sprayer, place the smaller metal parts in kerosene. Remove the hose and scrub out the tank with the trisodium phosphate which comes under a variety of trade names. A straightened metal clothes hanger is fine to poke through the metal rods. Pour a mild solution of vinegar and water through the rubber hoses and treat leather washers with a

lanolin base face cream, perfect for the job. Coat metal parts lightly with oil, drop into a cloth bag and tie to the tank. Wrap rubber parts, (no oil rub) and hang hose over a wooden peg, not metal.

This sounds like a heap o' trouble but the reward will come with added years of use.

Give the rake, hoses, shovels, your small metal tools, a bath and oil rub too. Sandpaper off the splinters on the handles and if you are burdened with too much energy, a coat of paint does wonders for the handles.

Check the left over seeds. Those that will have a low percentage of germination next spring will make a meal for a hungry sparrow.

Be sure to place any garden chemicals ruined by freezing in a safe spot, scrub and stack the flower pots, you'll be happy about this come spring. Be sure every weed killer or other deadly chemical is safely out of reach of inquisitive small fry, then head toward that waiting book, the rug you started last winter or those letters that had to wait when the pulse began crowding the lettuce. Happy waiting for spring.

"FAIRY CROSSES"

According to legend regarding the crosses, or staurolites, found near Blue Ridge, in Georgia, the mountain fairies wept when they learned of the Crucifixion and their tears became these strange "fairy crosses." Staurolites are found in only a few places in the world.

CATTLE COUNTY

Cherry County, northwestern Nebraska, is larger in area than the combined areas of Rhode Island and Connecticut and it produces more cattle than any other single county in the United States.

Refinish All Outdoor Furniture Before Storing It For Winter

Now—not next summer—is the time to refurbish outdoor furniture. Spread the work out over some dreary winter days and come spring you'll be ready to enjoy porch or patio in comfort with no last-minute rush to put the furniture in shape.

First of all, a thorough cleaning of each piece is in order. It may be that brushing and washing will take care of most of the pieces.

For metal furniture, clean, then sandpaper lightly if a new coat of paint is needed. Clean rust spots right down to the bare metal. If you use rust remover, be sure to wipe off completely before painting.

Once the rust spots are sanded clean, remove gloss from the rest of the paint with light sandpaper (new paint will adhere better without the gloss). Apply a metal undercoat to rusted areas.

Use red lead, aluminum paint or any of the new, rust-inhibiting paints.

Before applying the finish coat, sand lightly the edges of newly painted spots. "Feather" them so that they won't show under the finish. Spray or brush on a good quality enamel.

If you plan a second coat, be sure first coat is thoroughly dry before applying it. Again, dull gloss on first coat before making the second application.

The finish on your wood furniture may have lost that new look, but a coat of paint—perhaps of a different color—will restore it. If the old paint is more than just dull; if it's peeling off, then remove it with paint-and-varnish remover. Otherwise, washing off the dirt and light sanding is enough preparation for the fresh paint.

Use enamel undercoat as the first coat. Finish with exterior enamel. Ordinary house paint is designed to chalk so that it looks clean, but the chalking is no good for your clothes.

If you are restoring a clear fin-

ish that has worn thin, use spar varnish. Its designed to hold up under poor weather conditions. If the furniture is unfinished, to keep its natural look and still protect it, stain it and give it two coats of spar varnish. This same finish is good for protecting reed and rattan furniture.

Don't attempt to brush paint or varnish on wicker furniture. It's an almost impossible job. Use a spray, after thinning the finish with turpentine. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for thinning.

If you have upholstered outdoor furniture, remove cushions and upholstered back before cleaning. Lay them flat on newspapers on the floor. Soap and water will generally restore their good looks if they are covered with waterproof material.

Faded colors can be repainted with thinned enamel, but the results are definitely not as good as new.

You'll need a steady hand if there's a pattern to follow, and the finished job will not have the smooth, glazed look of the original.

The metal parts of the furniture should be taken care of as explained above.

Canvas chairs can be restored with a coat of canvas paint or a clear canvas sealer. Wooden parts should be sanded and varnished. If the old canvas is too badly rotted or worn, now is the time to put on new covers.

All wooden furniture that is allowed to stand out in the grass through the summer should be further protected against the danger of moisture.

Coating the ends of the legs with a wood preservative will do much to prevent rotting. Make certain the preservative is of a nonbleeding type, so that you can paint over it. Ask your dealer.

If you are not certain, seal the preservative-covered wood with aluminum paint before the final coat of paint is applied.

Perennial Corms And Tubers Should Be Dug Up And Stored

By HENRY FREE

It's about time to give serious consideration to the digging, curing and storing of gladiolus corms, dahlia and canna tubers and similar tender plants which added so much color to the garden this summer and autumn. As a heavy frost may come at any time, it is none too soon to be prepared for this annual chore.

Gladioli are dug after the foliage has yellowed and dried in the sun, away from danger of frost, for a few days. Then the tops are cut off to within an inch of the corm and burned to kill any thrips which may be hiding there. All soil is removed from the corms, which are given a DDT dusting. This is done to get, we hope, any thrips who planned on spending the winter within.

The DDT treatment consists of placing the corms in paper bags and sprinkling them with two level teaspoons of DDT for each 100 corms. Twist the neck of the bag tightly, and in a week remove the corms from the bag, place in mesh bags in which onions and oranges are marketed, or in flat containers, three to five inches deep.

All containers must be such that air circulates freely through them—and the corms as well. Therefore do not pack the corms in more than three layers. The tiny cornets which are clinging to the mother corm should be rubbed off and stored separately in slightly moistened sand or peat moss. They will shrivel if stored dry.

As soon as frost has killed the dahlia tops, cut them off a few inches from the ground. Then lift the tuber clumps carefully with a digging fork, let them dry upside down for a few days, remove

loose soil, place in bushel baskets or large boxes and store in a cool, dry place for the winter. Do not wash the clumps. Sand, peat moss or vermiculite are excellent packing materials to keep the tubers from drying out.

When digging, take great care not to break the stems from the dahlia tuber.

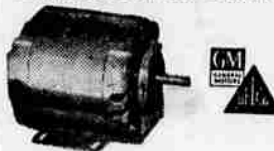
Many old-timers will wrap the tubers in newspaper which are moistened frequently throughout winter. The Old Gardener recommends dusting the tubers with

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