

## GARDENING

But och! I backward cast me e'e,  
 On prospects drear,  
 An forward tho I canna see,  
 I guess an fear.

I think Rabbie Burns must have walked around his garden after another season such as we have just endured. Top fruit almost non-existent, everything suffered from fourteen degrees of frost in May. Early potatoes frozen off, that is those that survived a rainless March and April. I started some shallots in pots, split them up, potted them singly, planted them out in April, then came trouble. Watered them, the moles pushed them up, I trod them in again - that became a daily chore; fourteen degrees of frost saw the end of them, they just gave up the struggle for survival.

My potatoes, new seed, dug in with farmyard manure; a lot just did not bother, those that did, well just two or three tubers on a root. All those hours of wasted labour. The early cabbages, pot grown planted out, watered, and the moles did their usual humping up job, the plants weakened and got infested with cabbage aphids - it took three applications of tumblebug to free them, they are about two months late now.

Some of the flowers took a beating too, the delphiniums had a real beating, most of

the early spikes died, the second spikes are not anywhere like the first ones; the daffodils and tulips suffered. The tale of woe goes on, and now for the second time this year we are dried out. Rabbie Burns had it just about right; I guess and fear too. To end the tale, my tomatoes were not only the worst I have ever grown, they are the worst I have ever seen, but being of an optimistic nature, I suppose we will try again next year.

August and September is propagating time - put in geranium cuttings beside the parent plants. Most other plants and shrubs will root in a cold frame, or put in pots, then in a polythene bag made airtight. Alternatively put the cuttings in compost in a foot deep box covered with transparent polythene or glass.

Time also to sow greenhouse biennials and put in a few hardy plants for the dull winter months. Primroses and bulbs spring readily to mind, they do give a good account of themselves. Antirrhinums make excellent plants in April/May if sown in September and grown in a cold greenhouse. Window plants such as streptocarpus and saintpaulia grow readily from leaf cuttings or division of large plants. The ornamental leaved begonias also prefer the same treatment. Hoping the weather gets kinder to us.

V. Mitchell.

## W.O.D.C. SKIPS FOR AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER

Ascott	3rd September	Dawls Close.
Milton	6th August	Church Road; Jubilee Lane
	10th September	Church Road; Reade Close.
Shipton	13th August	Ballards Close; Ascott Rd./Courtlands Road.