

## A RAISED FLOWER-BED.

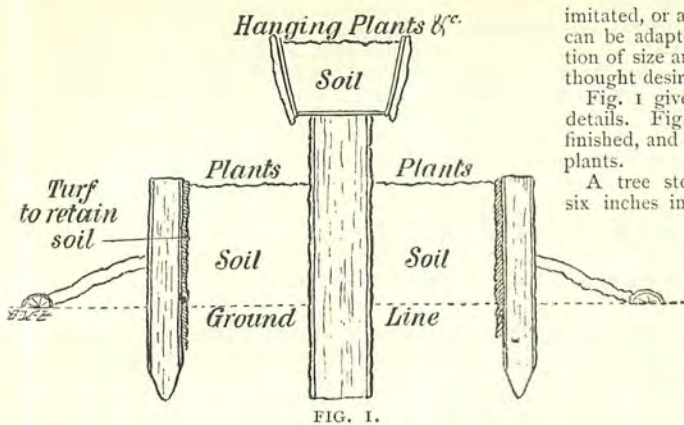


FIG. 1.

ONE of the ancient trees upon my lawn having fallen into a dying condition, I was reluctantly compelled to give an order for its removal.

I was sorry to part with an old favourite, and also I was a little puzzled as to how the great bare place left by its wide-spreading branches was to be filled up. At last an inspiration came, "We will have a raised bed of flowers and shrubs!"

It was a recollection of my youth, for I could recall rustic beds, tier upon tier, in a certain garden in which I had played when a child.

I sketched for my proposed bed a plan which was skilfully carried out, and all through the summer it has been so ornamental, and so much admired that I have had it photographed, and will now endeavour to describe how it was made, so that, if desired, it can be

imitated, or at any rate the idea can be adapted, with such variation of size and shape as may be thought desirable.

Fig. 1 gives a section view of details. Fig. 2 shows the bed finished, and ready to receive the plants.

A tree stem about four feet six inches in length was firmly sunken about eighteen inches in the ground; upon it was placed half of a butter tub, the outside of the tub was

covered with pieces of bark and small rustic branches, which concealed its plebeian origin.

A young larch tree was cut into lengths of three feet six inches, and these were pointed at one end and driven firmly about eighteen inches into the soil.

The bark being left on these logs gives them a rustic effect, but of course any wood can be used and some bits of bark nailed on will answer almost as well. Inside the ring of logs good soil should be filled in, and strips of turf inserted in the joinings of

the logs to prevent the earth from falling through.

Half logs, with the bark on, should be placed round the outer edge of the bed in order to keep the soil in its place, the earth being filled in to form a sloping border for low growing plants and shrubs.

In the centre tub the photograph shows the rice paper plant (*Aralia Sieboldii*), which is hardy and handsome at all seasons of the year.

The pretty Ivy-leaved Toad-flax and Creeping Jenny droop over the edges of the rustic work, and the other plants, of which I subjoin a list, are as varied as possible in form and colour.

Golden Privet and Juniper, the silvery leaves of the variegated periwinkle and veronica, the silver carex, and the flowers that supply other colours make the bed an extremely pretty feature in our garden throughout the year, all the plants I have mentioned being perfectly hardy.

One advantage of such an arrangement in small gardens is, that it affords the opportunity of growing

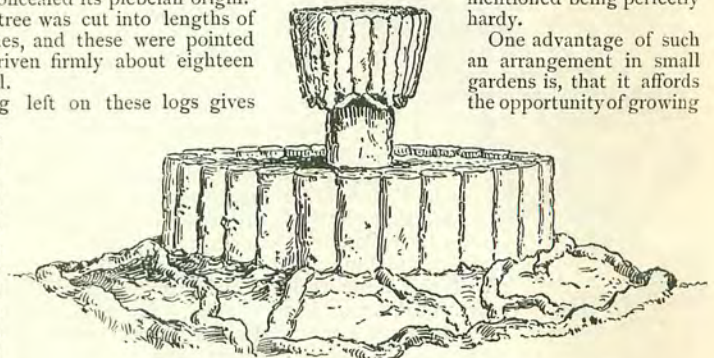
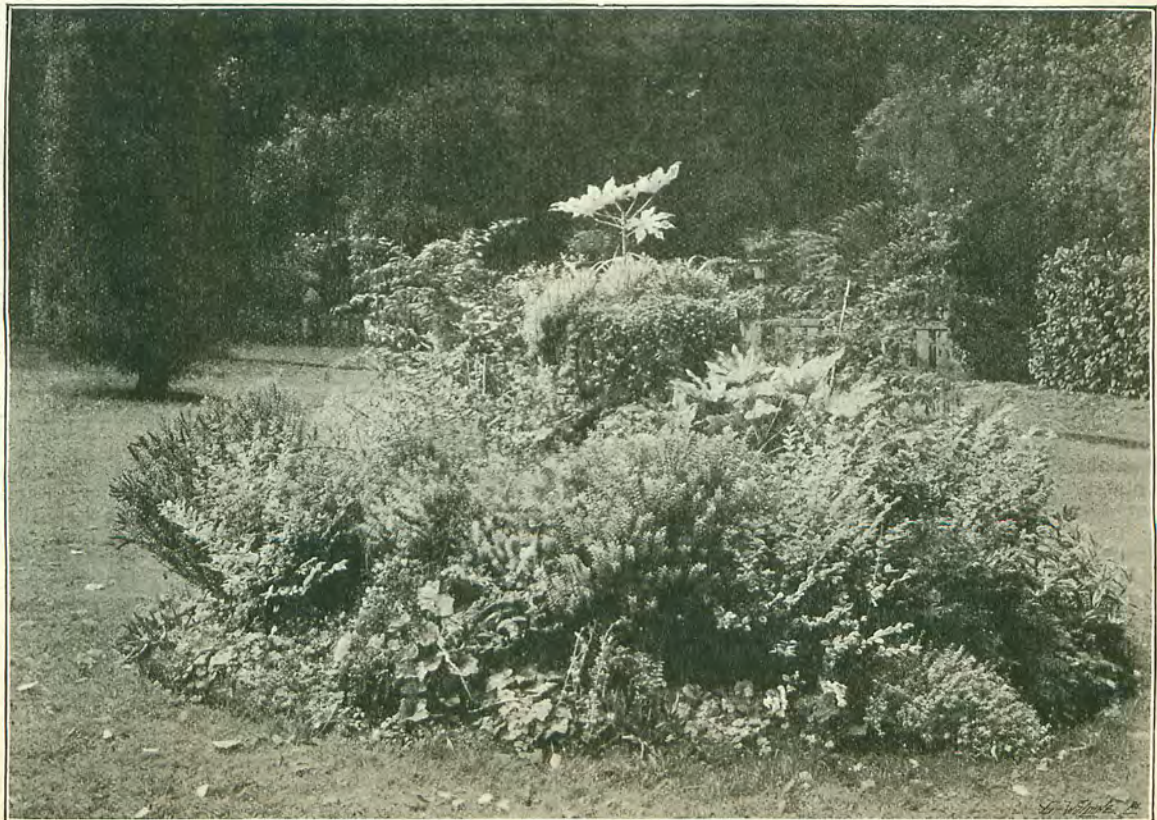


FIG. 2.



THE RAISED BED.



a large variety of plants in a comparatively small space of ground. Another advantage is that the gardening work can be done without much stooping.

Although my flower-bed had to pass through the test of an exceptionally dry summer, not a single plant died; on the contrary all grew luxuriantly and gave me the

pleasant feeling that they were vigorous and enjoying the warm sunshine which brought out the rich tints of their leaves and flowers.

LIST OF PLANTS IN RAISED FLOWER-BED.

*Abelia Rupestris*, and Rice Paper Plant, *Hypericum Calycinum*, various Ivies, Golden

Privet, Variegated Periwinkle, *Fuchsia Elegans*, Dwarf *Retinospora*, *Thujaopsis Dolabrata*, *Cedronella Cana*, Golden Juniper, *Cotoneaster Buxifolia*, *Bambusa Fortunei-Variegata*, Silver Carex, *Yucca Filamentosa*, *Crucianella Stylosa*, *Linum Perenne*, Ivy-leaved Toad-flax, Creeping Jenny.

ELIZA BRIGHTWEN.

## ABOUT PEGGY SAVILLE.

By JESSIE MANSERGH (Mrs. G. de Horne Vaizey), Author of "Sisters Three," etc.

### CHAPTER XXVI.



FEW days later Peggy was driven home to the vicarage, and stood the drive so well that she was able to walk downstairs at tea-time and sit at the table with only a cushion at her back to mark her out as an invalid just recovering from a serious illness. There was a special reason why she wished to look well this

afternoon, for Arthur was expected by the six o'clock train; and the candidate who had come out first in his examination lists must not have his reception chilled by anxiety or disappointment. Peggy was attired in her pink dress, and sat roasting before the fire so as to get some colour into her cheeks. If her face were only the size of the palm of a hand, she was determined that it should at least be rosy; and if she looked very bright, and smiled all the time, perhaps Arthur would not notice how thin she had become.

When half-past six struck, everyone crowded into the school-room, and presently a cab drove up to the door, and a modest rap sounded on the knocker.

"That's not Arthur!" cried Mrs. Asplin confidently. "He knocks straight on without stopping, peals the bell at the same time, and shouts Christmas carols through the letter-box! He has sent on his luggage, I expect, and is going to pounce in upon us later on."

"Ah, no, that's not Arthur!" assented Peggy; but Mr. Asplin turned his head quickly towards the door, as if his ear had caught a familiar note, hesitated for a moment, and then walked quickly into the hall.

"My dear boy!" the listeners heard him cry, and then another voice spoke in reply—Arthur's voice—saying, "How do you do, sir?" in such flat, subdued tones as filled them with amazement.

Mrs. Asplin and Peggy turned towards each other with distended eyes. If Arthur had suddenly slid down the chimney and crawled out on the hearth before them, turned a somersault in at the window, or crawled from beneath the table, it would have caused no astonishment whatever; but that he should knock at the door, walk quietly into the hall, and wait to hang up his hat like any other ordinary mortal—this was indeed an unprecedented and extraordinary proceeding! The same explanation darted into both minds. His sister's illness! He was afraid of startling an invalid, and was curbing his overflowing spirits in consideration for her weakness.

Peggy rose from her chair, and stood waiting, with sparkling eyes and burning cheeks. He should see in one glance that she was better—almost well—that there was no need of anxiety on her behalf. And then the tall, handsome figure appeared in the doorway, and Arthur's voice cried—

"Peggikens! Up and dressed! This is better than I hoped. How are you, dear little Peg?"

There was something wrong with the voice, something lacking in the smile; but his sister was too excited to notice it. She stretched out her arms towards him, and raised her weak, quavering, little voice in a song of triumph.

"See—ee the conquering he—he—he—he—hero com—ums!  
Sow—ow—ow—ow—ownd the trumpet,  
play—a—a—a—"

"Don't, Peg!" cried Arthur sharply. "Don't, dear!" He was standing by her side by this time, and suddenly he wrapped his arms round her and laid his curly head on hers. "I'm plucked, Peg!" he cried, and his voice was full of tears. "Oh, Peg, I'm plucked! It's all over; I can never be a soldier. I'm plucked—plucked—plucked!"

"Arthur dear! Arthur darling!" cried Peggy loudly. She clasped her arms round his neck, and glared over his shoulder, like a tigress whose young has been threatened with danger. "You plucked! My brother plucked! Ho! ho! ho!" She gave a shrill peal of laughter. "It's impossible! You were first of all, the very first. You always are first. Who was wicked enough, and cruel enough, and false enough to say that Arthur Saville was plucked in an examination?"

"Arthur, my boy, what is it? What

does it mean? You told us you were first. How can you possibly be plucked?"

"My—my eyes!" said Arthur faintly. He raised his head from Peggy's shoulder and looked round with a haggard smile. "The medical exam. They would not pass me. I was rather blind when I was here before, but I thought it was with reading too much. I never suspected there was anything really wrong—never for a moment!"

"Your eyes!" The Vicar pressed his hand to his forehead, as if unable to grasp this sudden shattering of his hopes. "But—but I don't understand! Your eyes never gave you any trouble when you were here. You were not short-sighted. One knew, of course, that good sight was necessary; but there seemed no weakness in that direction. I can't imagine any cause that can have brought it on."

"I can!" said Arthur drearily. "I got a bad knock at lacrosse a year ago. I didn't tell you about it, for it wasn't worth while; but my eyes were bad for some time after that. I thought they were all right again; but I had to read a lot of things across a room, and made a poor show of it. Then the doctor took me to a window and pointed to an omnibus that was passing.

"What's the name on that 'bus?' he said. 'What is the colour of that woman's hat? How many horses are there?'

"I guessed. I couldn't see. I made a shot at it, and it was a wrong shot. He was a kind old chap. I think he was sorry for me. I—I came out into the street, and walked about. It was very cold. I tried to write to you, but I couldn't do it—I couldn't put it down in black and white. No V.C. now, little Peg! That's all over. You will have a civilian for your brother, after all!"

He bent down to kiss the girl's cheeks as he spoke, and she threw her arms round his neck and kissed him passionately upon his closed eyelids.

"Dear eyes!" she cried impetuously. "Oh, dear eyes! They are the dearest eyes in all the world, whatever anyone says about them. It doesn't matter what you are—you are my Arthur, the best and cleverest brother in all the world. Nobody is like you!"

"You have a fine career before you still, my boy! You will always fight, I hope, and conquer enemies even more powerful than armed men!" cried Mrs. Asplin, trembling. "There are