

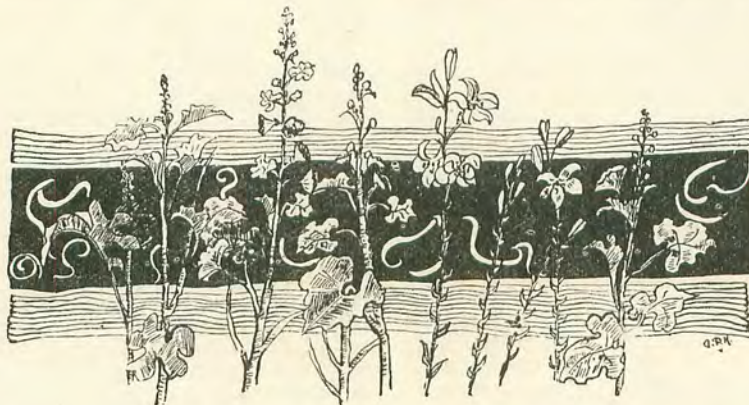
pursuits. At the age of twenty-one years she joined her brother at Bath, and undertook the arduous duties of his astronomical assistant, not only acting as his amanuensis, but executing, with marvellous patience and exactness, the necessary laborious calculations. It was not that she was "born" to it—as we say. Her love for her brother was the great mainspring—her devotion to whom has been described as "spaniel-like." For years she was his house-keeper, his secretary, and his assistant, and although never really fond of astronomy, and imbued with an absolute distaste for the work on which she was engaged, she learned the routine of observation with such success that she independently discovered eight comets. So important and numerous were her observations, indeed, that she became the recipient of honours which anyone might covet. The Royal Society published a volume of her "Observations," in 1828 the London Astronomical Society presented her with their gold medal in appreciation of her "Zone Catalogue," subsequently electing her an honorary member of the Society. On the death of her brother in 1822 Caroline went to Hanover to reside, and remained there until her death in 1848, at the advanced age of ninety-seven years. Towards the close of her long life she published a *Memoir*, and it is pleasant to know that so useful a soul spent her latter years in repose, cheered by the visits of the learned, and by the regard and esteem of all who knew her.

TALENTED PRINCESS.

"H.R.H. Louise Caroline Alberta."* Such was the title by which for so many years her late Majesty Queen Victoria's sixth child was known to the vast English-speaking race and the world generally. "Princess Louise" has always been, and long will be, a favourite name in the

* Born March 18th.

mouths of English people, because the public at large have come to regard this sister of the Sovereign as a bright example of what study and perseverance can accomplish in Art, however highly placed the worker may be, and unnecessary as it may seem to be for a princess of the realm to associate herself with matters outside the claims and duties of Court life. Patience and industry, though, are qualities which are strongly marked in the case of English Royalty, and Princess Louise has particularly inherited these, as well as her passionate love of art from her father, the late Prince Consort. Her great hobby, as most art-students at any rate are aware, is sculpture, in which she has become as proficient as her undoubted talent in this direction would naturally lead us to expect. When the late Sir Edgar Boehm was alive, there was a no more painstaking attendant at his studio and observer of his work than Princess Louise. It was in 1871 that our widowed Sovereign, the late Queen, enjoyed the felicity of seeing her daughter married to John Douglas Sutherland Campbell, Marquis of Lorne, K.T. It was a felicitous union, for the pair had been playmates from infancy; and on this account her late Majesty exercised her prerogative over scruples which were expected to rise, and, indeed, were raised. To-day Princess Louise is the Duchess of Argyll. She still retains, however, all her accustomed interest in the affairs of the people, especially of the poorer classes. Only the other day, in company with the Duke of Argyll, she presided at the Edinburgh School of Cookery, of which she is Patroness, and presented certificates to the successful students in cookery, millinery and laundry-work. A splendid example this, inasmuch as this sort of work is precisely that in which most girls, no matter what their station, are mostly deficient. Princess Louise, Duchess of Argyll, is a Member (First-Class) of the Royal Order of Victoria and Albert, a Lady of the Imperial Order of the Crown of India, the Royal Red Cross, and a Lady of Justice of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, etc.



STRAY THOUGHTS ON GARDENING FOR GIRLS.

By LADY GEORGINA VERNON.

So many delightful books upon gardening have been showered upon us lately that it seems almost superfluous to use one's pen upon that theme. We have wondered at the unflinching success enjoyed by "Veronica"; we have sympathised warmly with "Elizabeth" in the gloom of that "man of wrath," and our souls have felt satisfied with the peace and sweetness of the "Days and hours in a Garden"; while with keenest interest we followed the fortunes of the feathered dwellers in the "Garden of Peace," till at last we felt we would read no more upon horticulture. But the welcome which has been accorded to these books shows plainly that there is a wide-spread interest in the subject, and to-day I wish to point out what a very practical side there is to this love of gardening. There are women's colleges for horticulture, notably at Lady Warwick's hostel at Reading, where students can take either long

or short courses for one or many branches of the work, and the success they have achieved and the fabulous numbers of tomatoes and cucumbers and mushrooms packed off weekly is astounding. There is also the college at Swanley for students of both sexes.

Now at both these places girls are trained either as teachers at schools or to take charge of a garden, and already many have been successfully launched in this life. We are all learning daily that there are many women who are quite unfitted by health and by tastes for the drudgery involved in the life of a governess or companion, but who can earn their own living and pass healthy, happy out-of-door lives in the pursuit of gardening. But there are probably only a few who can give either the time or the money needed for the long course of tuition required to fit a girl to be a teacher or a head gardener.

It is often, however, overlooked that a modest competence, or even more than that, may be made by women in their own homes, who are blessed with a garden and a small capital, and that love for flowers which is one of the great secrets of success, that intuitive knowledge of what the plants like, the deft fingers that in planting turn no roots the wrong way, the careful eye that notes in a moment the dull leaf, the half-expanding flowers that betoken unseen mischief; for, after all, love is the king that rules the world, and no golden gate to success in life opens wide unless there is somewhere the compelling power of love, whether it is as workers amongst our fellows or as humble labourers on farm or garden. The loving heart has a power that is all its own, and a garden demands our love as well as our work. A garden has such a singular charm that one cannot wonder at the enthusiasm of those who make it their profession.

From the early dawn when the little birds begin to move and twitter in the shrubs, and long fingers of soft light steal amongst the trees and waken the sleeping flowers, bidding the great sunflower turn its golden face to the sunrise and the closed eyes of daisies and marigolds open wide, all through the hot hours of mid-day when the garden teems with the hum of myriad insects and busy work, right on till the still evening's calm falls like a veil on all, and only the heavy perfume of the magnolia and the delicate scent of heliotrope and mignonette remind us that we are in a garden, each hour as it passes brings such a sense of satisfied thankfulness, such completeness in the growing, budding, fruiting world around us that nothing else ever brings us!

It often seems to me that in the life of the garden is found that secret of perpetual youth which philosophers of old dreamt of and searched for in vain. Even now, when sadness seems over all, if you will carefully look in the brown soil, under the masses of tawny coloured oak and pale yellow elm leaves which cover everything, you will note already the pointed green spikes of next year's crocuses and snowdrops appearing here and there, and quite long shoots of the Spanish Irises, which are to gladden our hearts with their many-coloured blossoms next June! They are peeping up into the ever new world, bringing with them renewed young life, a fresh tale of the unending birth in nature, the ever-budding hope that enables us to struggle through the dark days, and always be looking on beyond to-day's discouragements to fresh life and joys.

I am sure that gardening holds a great future for women, and it may add a very important sum to those who wish to supplement their incomes.

The delightful history of the violet farm in the pamphlet* on Irish industries is a most cheering record of well-applied knowledge and work and its reward, and I think one's first impulse after reading it is to start growing violets at once. But the writer gives a wise word of warning that before venturing upon the outlay of buying and planting, one must find out if the soil and situation are suitable. The chief desideratum seems to be a mild climate, and a sheltered, sunny corner, as they will grow in almost any soil, although a good warm rich clay, plentifully manured, suits them best. Doubtless Ireland has in its warm, damp climate a peculiar advantage, but there are many places in England, particularly in the south and west, where we can find the same. Violets are a flower of which there can never be a glut in the market, for everyone loves and buys the fragrant little bunches; and one great advantage to the lady amateur in starting a violet farm is that so much of the work can be done by children; they are nearer the ground for picking, and the picking on a farm such as the one I refer to is a most serious business when, as sometimes happens, ten thousand blooms are picked and bunched in a day.

I cannot omit quoting the last paragraph of Mrs. Coghill's article for the encouragement of would-be violet-growers. She says: "I pay £5 an acre rent for my farm, and would think I had done extremely badly any year that I did not clear five rents for my pocket after having paid all rent, wages and incidental expenses connected with my violet farm."

* By Mrs. Egerton Coghill, published by the *Irish Homestead*.

There are certainly very few of the smaller industries that can rival this, and at the same time combine sweet and pleasant work.

I am a great believer in specialities for those who have not much money to spend in starting a large garden or employing labour. I should advise them to adopt some one plant with all its varieties, and make a name as a grower of that plant in perfection. For instance, take that charming tribe the Narcissi; there is wealth in the possession of an acre of land and a few thousand bulbs of good narcissi, as was found out many years ago by our neighbours in Holland and latterly in the Scilly and Channel Islands. The narcissus is not difficult to cultivate, and it yields not only a crop of sweet-scented and favourite flowers in the early spring, but the bulbs increase rapidly and a crop has in two years doubled in number.

Tulips and hyacinths and the delicate-scented Freesias are all profitable bulbs. Of course, the position and soil of the garden we possess must be a determining factor as to which plant we choose as our special one, and if we are handicapped with a stiff, cold clay we need not try bulbs.

I have heard lately of some very successful private growers of Michaelmas daisies, which used to be such singularly uninteresting flowers with very leafy stalks and dull, purple heads, but in these days they form a group full of charm and variety, and will repay anyone adopting them, but I think a fair gardener might with much success start as a vendor of "neglected flowers," and an article on that subject might well vie in interest with Belinda's musings on "neglected books." There are some scores of delightful flowers that one rarely meets with, except in old gardens or where herbaceous plants are specially sought after.

A short time since I went to call at an old grey-walled manor house, standing high up on rather a bleak hill-side, looking so grave and colourless that when I went through the gate and into the garden with its low boundary wall, I was almost startled with the blaze of colour that met my eyes; all round and beneath every wall there were masses of the *Heuchera Sanguinea*. I cannot describe the beauty of the tall, graceful spikes of coral-coloured blossoms, rising up from the low-growing bed of ivy-shaped leaves. There was quite a glow of colour over everything, and it turned what had appeared such a dreary abode into a bright, cheerful home. Certainly flowers have a witchery about them that transforms the dull room or home into a very fairyland.

I have, so far, though, only touched upon "flowers," but I have been thinking of garden-work from a woman's point of view, and also as work by which she may help herself. Vegetable-growing is not profitable unless it is done on a very large scale, or if only the finer sort of early vegetables are grown, and they require houses and glass and serious outlay. In these days, when markets are flooded with early vegetables from the Channel Islands, from France and other parts, we cannot in our colder climate compete in any way with the foreign produce. In some places the fruit farms, which have increased so largely all over the country, are very lucrative; and perhaps the most paying crop, although one that requires considerable outlay and a good deal of work, is strawberries. If there is a good crop it is sure to sell, but like all other fruits, a good crop generally means that they are plentiful everywhere, and this often means disappointment and loss to the grower. Still, with all its difficulties I believe strawberries to be the best of the specialities in fruit-growing, given a light, loamy soil, and preferably a hill-side sheltered from storms and exposed to the sun. Now I feel that, as I always do in a garden, I have just wandered about from point to point, picking a flower here and there, absorbing the sweetness and the beauty, and the peace around me and very often doing nothing, but of this I am sure, hours spent in a garden are not lost, for they bring us nearer to that great heart of Nature, elevating and purifying all brought within its influence.

"God Almighty first planted a garden,
And indeed it is the purest of human pleasures."

Bacon.