

which one of the best is the following :—Fowler's solution of arsenic, twenty drops, half a dram of the ammoniated citrate of iron, an ounce and half of compound tincture of quinine, and eight ounces of orange-water ; *dose*, two table-spoonfuls thrice a day after meals. But meanwhile the sufferer is crying for present relief, and that cannot be refused. A paint consisting of a dram of the extract of belladonna to half an ounce of glycerine, smeared over the seat of pain, often does much good. If it is in the face, the patient should get to bed, after well bathing the feet and legs in hot water with mustard in it, take a hot drink, wine negus, with about twenty drops of solution of morphia in it, and having smeared the face, place it on a soft wool-covered pillow. Extra blankets should be put on the bed, and the patient made to perspire freely. Here is an ointment which I have often seen act like magic :—Two grains of aconitia is carefully mixed with five or six drops of strong spirits of wine, then a dram of lard added. This should be smeared over the seat of the pain. Should even this fail to give the desired relief—which, however, is in many cases unlikely—then resort must be had to the hypodermal injection of morphia. This must be done by a medical man, although I am sorry to say that many patients enamoured by the amount of relief given, and the pleasant sensations which have succeeded the pain, have taken to the habit of hypodermal injection as a panacea to all the ills of life, and thus ruined their constitutions irretrievably.

Hydrate of chloral is a drug that only medical men should prescribe, but its effect in relieving pain and producing sleep is instantaneous. Morphia draughts are also good ; the dose is from twenty to thirty drops of the solution of the muriate in about an ounce of camphor-water. But let me once more caution the reader, as he values his health, and life itself, to take care how he tampers with sleeping draughts, and also to remember that present relief from neuralgic pains does not mean the cure of the disease ; to effect that, his health must be raised above par.

Sore throats are common at this season, and great relief is obtained by wearing all night a nice soft bran poultice, or one of the above liniments may be spread upon a piece of flannel and tied round the throat. Well reddening the breast with turpentine takes away the harsh dry pain of a common cold. A dram and a half of dried alum with two and a half drams of capsicum tincture, a little syrup, and eight ounces of rose-water, form a nice gargle for the relief of hoarseness, and that troublesome complaint generally known as falling of the uvula. Again, for sore throat what can be better than a gargle like the following?—Three drams of laudanum, half that quantity of tincture of belladonna, and eight ounces of camphor-water. Lastly, I may mention this fact, not known to every one : in painful inflammations of the throat and in cases of gum-boil, a dose of Epsom salts cannot fail to do positive good, especially if the patient is at all plethoric.

THE GARDEN AND ORCHARD IN JANUARY.



ARDENING in January does not perhaps sound a particularly inviting subject, nor—for let us be honest enough at once to confess it—a particularly fruitful one. The gardener, however, may be allowed the pun which naturally suggests itself by way of repartee that

January is not a "fruitful" month. But for all that, we have no intention of sitting over the fire for the entire month. And yet, we say, how impossible it seems—looking this morning through the little clear patch which the proximity of our own warm breath has created on the ground-glass window-pane—how almost hopelessly impossible it seems to be able to do any good on the leafless, silent, dreary, frozen-up half-acre of garden round this poor old house ! It is snowing hard ! What in the world can we do ? Well, but why not have a day's work in the little greenhouse ? Depend upon it, a little examination and a general and hasty survey, under the almost dazzling white of our snowed-glass canopy, will reveal more than enough to occupy us until the dinner-bell rings. And once inside—after a staggering rush across the slippery

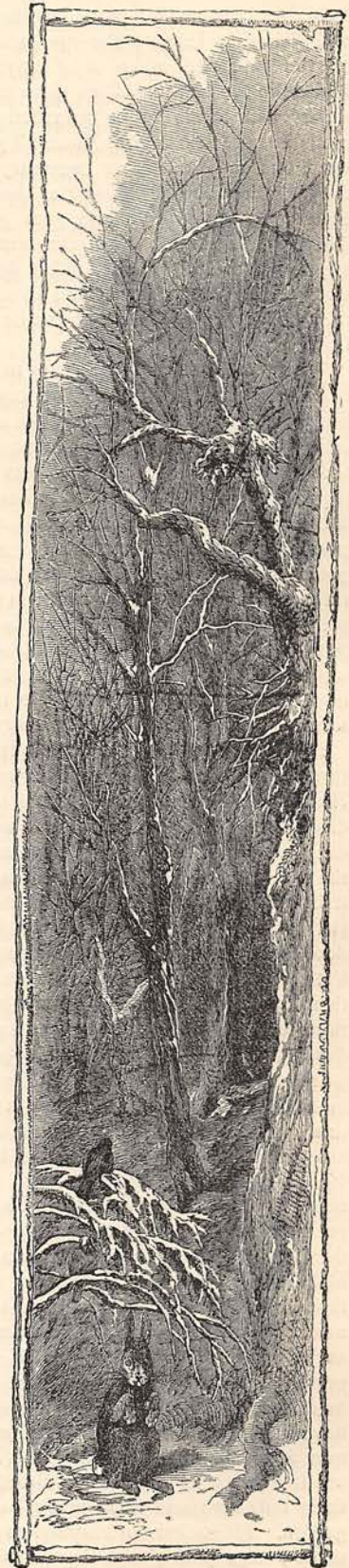
gravel way which the gardener's broom has just made passable—what a strange but nevertheless agreeable contrast is there in the little verdant scene which presents itself ! "Old Thomas," broom in hand, at the doorway, red-nosed, blue-knuckled, with a comforter round his neck, that would be white but for the snow-glare, is certainly January itself to look at ; but inside this little greenhouse of ours, of which we are so fond and so proud, what a paradise it seems ! We appreciate it infinitely more now than we do in July, when we have turned nearly everything out. We return the old man's New Year's greeting with good solid interest, and he follows us inside, pleasantly enough, shutting the door with wonderful alacrity. The four seasons of the year would seem almost to be doing battle with each other ! Is it spring ? Yes : for there are our pots of snow-drops, and the already yellow tops of the crocuses ; the primulas too, and even the cinerarias are looking promising. Is it summer ? Yes : for the fresh bright green appearance of our entire stock is in itself a delight : two or three pots of mignonette still give a slight fragrance, and the dwarf but scarlet blaze of a couple of stunted geraniums, bolder than their fellows, is a positive luxury, while in our very love of the gay summer we pinch the leaf of another, then smell our finger and

thumb, as if to refresh our memory of its glories that will come again in their turn. Is it autumn? Yes: for there are some chrysanthemums that have positively refused to quite finish off as yet their tawny-coloured and gipsy-faced display. Is it winter? Oh, what need to ask *that*, as we look from our little fairy-land into the bleak fog beyond? Can we not, too, see the holly-crowned top of the dear old kitchen clock, seemingly dancing for joy in the flicker of the fire-light, and are not the children's shouts distinctly audible while busy over the preparation of their Christmas tree? Who would not have a greenhouse then, be it ever so small?

But we have come inside for our day's work, and to work we must get. Of course, our fire is alight, and has been all night; for did we not, when snug in bed, hear the gate go, and know that it was only old Thomas coming in, after taking his share at the belfry in ringing out the Old Year, "jist to bank up the stove a bit, Maister, with some damp ashes afore turning in"? He had, indeed, never neglected this little custom in very severe weather ever since that unfortunate catastrophe two or three seasons ago when, on one unusually bitter night, the fire had been allowed to go entirely out, and the next morning the toppled-over and frost-bitten heads of nearly every half-hardy plant in the house was the mortifying result. A still more unfortunate and serious catastrophe has at this season of the year, however, to be guarded against, and that is the entire destruction, not only of your plants, but of your greenhouse itself, and it may be of the old home into the bargain, by a reckless overheating of your flue. Where a system of hot-water pipes is not to be had—for, of course, it is an expensive one, and therefore not within the reach of us all—and where the old-fashioned method is employed of warming your house by fire-heat only, extra caution is certainly necessary, for some gardeners seem to take a delight in heaping on fuel regardless alike of the expense and of the risk incurred. It has also to be borne in mind that, even if there *were* no risk of a conflagration, it is decidedly injurious to the well-being of your plants to overheat your stove and so raise unduly the temperature of your house. Your plants and stock of cuttings in general will only become more tender in consequence, and feel acutely the reaction as soon as your fire is allowed to go out. Recollect that you are not forcing pine-apples, or endeavouring to raise cucumbers or have a crop of strawberries by the month of March; all we wish to do is to exclude thoroughly and efficiently the action of the frost. Reverting then to the dread of "fire!"—a dread common to us all—have your stove attended to or examine it yourself at the end of the autumn. If you find the mortar and brick in a powdery and crumbling condition, with ominous-looking cracks through which you can see your fire when it is alight, send for the bricklayer and have it properly attended to; for if ever the old proverb, "A stitch in time saves nine," held good, it surely does so in this instance. Take care also that none of the woodwork of your stand is in dangerous proximity to your flue. The

writer of this paper once had the satisfaction of saving a house from probable destruction, by discovering two wooden supports of the flower-stand all brown and singed and smelling of fire. They were instantly sawn off and an iron support substituted for them.

Now then, let us look round our greenhouse. Inside we have a little table and a discarded and rickety chair on which to rest. Over in that corner of the house we have got some soil prepared; and although it has not long been brought in from our shed, it will now soon be warmed to the temperature of the house and fit for potting use; for it would never do, when shifting our plants, to repot them in this bitter weather into soil in an unprepared and half-frozen condition. The pots themselves, too, should now be washed and dried and got ready for use. Here, then, is one little January occupation for those grumblers who say there is nothing to do in the garden this month. Now let us find another.



"Go over" your whole stock inside: remove all dead and decaying leaves; stir up carefully the surface of the soil, and make it if anything rather the highest in the centre. Then there may be a supply of stakes and labels to be prepared; and before the really busy season returns, have all your tallies looked over, and renewed where necessary; any plants that are dirty may be washed, and at the very first appearance of green-fly fumigate your house thoroughly. Then your autumn show of chrysanthemums will now require attention. As they finish flowering, cut them down; they should then stand in a cool place where they will have plenty of light but be entirely free from frost.

We generally hope in February to have a gay show of cinerarias. These should be kept in a fairly cool house or frame; when shifting, use a good rich loamy soil; if you want large specimens, keep shifting, for their propensity is to fill the pots with roots; but if you are impatient, and want to have an early bloom, the roots should be confined, and shifting into large pots will therefore be unnecessary. Among your pelargoniums in severe weather use coverings at night rather than give much fire-heat; in mild weather give plenty of air; stop all the shoots that make their appearance, more particularly of those plants that you wish to flower in the summer months. *Salvias* that have done blooming should also be cut down. All *salvias* require a rich soil and plenty of pot-room.

It is time, however, that we left the greenhouse and turned our attention to some other part of the garden. Hitherto we have been supposing that we have been driven under the glass by stress of weather, and that a deep snow is lying all about and around. Never mind the snow; it will do the gardens all possible good; it is nature's covering and protection from the frost. On no account therefore remove it from your outdoor crops; remove it from your house-top if you like, but by no means from your kitchen garden. Let us, then, next suppose that the snow has gone, that the thaw has come and gone too, and that a few drying days have given us what we call open and favourable weather; for recollect that if it be impossible to do much on the land when the snow is about, it is if anything still more impossible to do much when the thaw has given us only a rotten sort of bog to work upon. If, then, the ground be dry enough to work upon, we might take a turn in the orchard, where trees can even yet be planted. If the soil be good and moderately deep, there will be no need for manure; always plant high in the ground; it has been generally thought that what we may call the collar of the root should be nearly above the ground. Given similar weather such as we are now supposing, and, if not already done, pruning generally, both among the standards as well as wall-trees, should be done; they ought, however, to have been done before this. Gooseberries and currants may also be pruned this month. Although we often see it done, it is a bad and disorderly plan to have them only here and there and all straggling about a garden. Plantations of raspberries may also now be made; dig, prune, and tie the old ones, giving a

little manure; and be especially careful to dig out all the old suckers that are not required. Indeed, it may fairly be said that very often the secret of a poor raspberry crop may be attributed to neglecting to remove old suckers. It is a troublesome and a tiring—and perhaps a dirty and a stooping—job; but you will so often see young canes enough to make a whole row springing from one source. Gardeners do not like the bother of their removal, and in consequence your canes are weakened and the fruit of poor quality, little more than half its proper size, and the quantity all in the same melancholy proportion.

In the kitchen garden, take every chance afforded by favourable weather for trenching up your soil as much as possible. Let the earth be thrown up in rough lumps, so as again to allow the frost, when it returns—for it most assuredly will—to act well upon it. By this means the soil is afterwards rendered more friable, and all slugs and other vermin give a better chance to your future crops and have a poorer one for themselves, which is certainly what we desire. The slug strongly objects to a little lime, and this may be used with advantage where he abounds. The neglect, again, of proper and thorough trenching—not merely turning over just the upper surface of the soil, but a good hard and deep dig—means failure of your crops. Do not, therefore, think it necessary always to charge the seedsman with your failure, but look first at home, and probably you will find your young plants trying almost in vain to force their way through your hard and battered-down soil. Indeed, we may say that a frequent turning and forking of the soil always benefits it and makes it in a better condition for the after-reception of your seed. Of course it may be said that all these suggestions have been frequently made, but they cannot be too often enforced. It is, moreover, positively impossible to avoid repetitions in any directions for gardening, or dwelling upon subjects which, though familiar *ad nauseam* to the adept, are novel and untried ones to the novice or the unskilled. Our ground, then, once well prepared, an early sowing of May vegetables may be made, such as parsnips, onions, peas, &c. January, however, being notoriously our severest month, this cannot often be done just yet. All necessary wheeling should be done, if possible, in frosty weather. Any heaps of vegetable refuse make good manure; a little salt or lime on your heaps will both assist decomposition, and destroy the larvæ of insects. The soil between your crops may be stirred about in fine weather, and a little portion of fine earth may be with advantage drawn round the young stems of your advancing crops.

We have not very much to say this month about our flower garden in the open. Hardy annuals may be sown in sheltered borders for the bare chance of an early bloom, for although the frost will very likely cut them off, yet perhaps the experiment may be worth trying in this fitful and uncertain climate of ours. Box edgings to flower borders may be planted. When properly managed there is, after all, nothing so good as box for the purposes for which we employ it. In a mild season hyacinths will perhaps be pushing forward;

before the next bout of cold weather, therefore give them a little protection, either by litter or by means of an inverted flower-pot. Protection, indeed, should be given to any half-hardy or tender plant in general. In this month, almost as well as in any other, turf may be laid down, where the weather, at least, admits of it. A well-kept lawn is always one of the greatest beauties of the flower garden, for no matter how

choice or good may be your stock of flowers, if your lawn is allowed to get into a condition of chronic roughness and uneven lumpiness—if there be such a word—the whole effect is spoiled. Generally then, and finally, let us say, do what you can to *anticipate* the wants of your garden, if when the swallow returns to us again you wish to begin to enjoy its delights and to reap its fruits in their season.

WHAT TO WEAR.

CHIT-CHAT ON DRESS. BY OUR PARIS CORRESPONDENT.



As the season advances there is a still more varied show of woollen materials, and woollen and silk mixtures. The stripes seem more unlike each other on better acquaintance, and the patterns of the brocades are so intricate, it requires a close inspection to decide as to which of the two classes of designs, Pompadour or Oriental, they belong to. Pekin rayé, in wool and velvet, with satin stripes displaying rosebuds, have found great favour, and I have seen many of the so-called lichen cloths, a soft material in heather mixtures, made up over velvet petticoats. Vigognes always will be one of the most ladylike styles of dress for young ladies, and French cashmeres, cheviots, serges, droguets, brochés, and Pekins are all worn. Nearly every style of dress has been resuscitated; the Louis XIII. time, severe and rich, gives *modistes* many suggestions, as well as the paintings of Vandyck and Rubens, and the materials used are of surpassing richness: brocaded silks and velvets, and Turkish cashmere; amethyst-violet being the particular colour of the season, ruby-red not having as yet been discarded. Changeable silks, as the Americans call them, find scant favour out of France. They are made with stripes of self-colour, and in mixtures of gold and blue, plum and gold, olive-green and blue, brown and green. There is vast novelty in the materials used for trimming: "satin plush" with deep pile, called "satin antique;" "satin sublime," thick and twilled; "tiger velvet," and "crackle velvet," like crackle china; and "royal velvet," and "feather-felt," showing loose shreds of feathers. White is more fashionable than black, which is being superseded—more's the pity—by brighter hues. We have much to thank Japan for, and Frenchwomen still lavish almost frantic admiration for anything Japonais, but it has brought in warm colouring once again. Oriental handkerchiefs are used as draperies on many dresses; three knotted, one above the other, down the front of the skirt, and arranged carelessly about the bodice, is a very usual mode of applying them.

There was never a season when it was so difficult for people who do not care to spend much over ten pounds on a mantle to buy a winter one, even in England; in Paris you seem to be able to get nothing under thirty pounds, and double that price is paid. Sable and

skunk are cheaper than usual, but sealskin has gone up in price. Paletôts fitting the figure slightly, and with a fur founce, just reaching the top of the founce on the skirt, are the correct thing; or dolmans of sealskin, trimmed with racoon, skunk, or sable, with very long pendent sleeves. Very long or very short mantles are the dictum of fashion; but short ones mean close-fitting double-breasted jackets; these are mostly made of the material of the dress or of cloth. Fur capes and cuffs are fashionable and comfortable. The capes are longer this season, and reach to the waist; the cuffs reach to the elbow. Indian cashmere is a favourite material for mantles in France, and is trimmed with silk beaver like men's hats, or with shawl-patterned bands. But borders of woven seal appear on many good mantles; and they have attained great perfection in the manufacture of these materials—so much so, that mantles made entirely of imitation sealskin can hardly be distinguished from the real. Camel's-hair cloths make good mantles, but newer are fancy cloths in large diagonal and basket-work designs, trimmed with Ottoman velours, the rep like terry. Elderly ladies wear dolmans of brocaded silk, trimmed with fur, and Sicilian, which is what English shops are chiefly selling now for best mantles, dark brown to match the fur used, as well as black.

There has been brought out a wonderful panier mantle, made of satin and figured velvet, trimmed with feather ruches. It is longer at the front than the back, and has heavy tassels and drops attached to the back seams. Most of the French dressmakers have decidedly set their faces against paniers on dresses and mantles. The sleeves of some mantles seem specially worthy of attention; they are gathered at the top, and have ribbon loops falling over them, like epaulettes. Embroideries of gold and brown chenille are affected, and ball fringes with netted headings. The edges of many mantles are bordered with lace ruches, intermixed with ribbon bows, carried also round the neck.

Those who can afford to buy it and pay for cleaning it wear silk under-clothing still—petticoats, drawers, and chemises all made to match, elaborately frilled, the frills headed by the closest-set puffings imaginable. Many young ladies wear petticoats of the same for evening dress, the edge of the chemise trimmed to

LAST YEAR'S SNOW.



THE winter snow lay crisp
and white,
The cold pale winter
moon above
Grew brighter looking
on our love,
The stars were dancing
with delight.

Each stirless twig, each
leafless tree

With crystal jewels coldly crowned,
Listened and trembled at the sound
Of the sweet words you spake to me.

The sad sea sobbing at our feet
Paused, listened hushed, then ebbd away
Beyond the boundary of the day,
The joyous story to repeat.

A north wind shrieking overhead
Caught the glad whisper and grew mild,

And grim December paused and smiled,
Then passed us with a softer tread.

"My love, I love you," sweet and clear
You spake, a tear in either eye,
"My love will live as long as I,
And I so long as you are near."

I still am near, you still live on,
But by your side another stands
Whose right is there; and we touch hands
Lightly, nor think of days long gone.

I still am near, and still you live,
And laugh, perchance, but what care I?
No more to me your smile or sigh
Can any pain or pleasure give.

The sea still smiles 'twixt ebb and flow,
December laughs with scornful glee,
For last year's love for you and me
Has passed away like last year's snow.

H.

THE GARDEN IN FEBRUARY.



WHY is it that an early spring morning is such an universally popular theme, no matter whether it be the artist's brush or the poet's fancy that is in quest of a subject? Or even if we are debating any little matter of domestic detail, we seem to find a sort of increased interest in the question under discussion if our decision is arrived at upon a sunny spring day, provided at least that the question itself is one which under any circumstances would afford us pleasure and satisfaction. Spring is the season of hope and of promise. "Resurgam" is its motto: and it is to this "hope" that we one and all of us cling with a tenacity compared to which the clutch of the drowning man at a straw is as nothing.

And we gardeners, too, we are hoping, and go on patiently hoping half through a long dreary winter: hoping for a change, hoping for a thaw, hoping for good open weather that will enable us to get on to the land. And now that the days are really beginning to draw out, we shall set to work with a will, more especially—as old Thomas sagely remarked—when we have got an extra day to work in this month, being leap-year.

We will, however, begin our operations for February with a grumble, and suppose that we are still compelled by stress of weather to confine our attention to work in the greenhouse, for recollect that we must be content to allow the snow to repose in its placid whiteness upon our out-door crops. On no account must we meddle with it. Gardeners may grumble at it,

but not so the garden, for while the frost lasts and this great feather-bed of Dame Nature lies heavily about also, your crops are lying under it dormant, but snug and full of life; whereas if you remove the snow, the frost will bring death with it. Similarly the knife should never be used during the prevalence of a frost, unless you are content or can afford to sacrifice your plant.

Who has not in their small domestic experience overheard some such short dialogue as follows?—

Cook.—"Thomas, I want some green vegetables for to-day and to-morrow; I wish you'd get me some, please, before you go."

Thomas.—"I tell ye, I *can't*; all them as I cuts is safe to die down, weather like this."

Cook.—"Well, I *must* have just a head or two somehow."

Thomas.—"Well, then, I must just sacrifice some, I suppose; but if we hadn't got pretty plenty I couldn't spare you any."

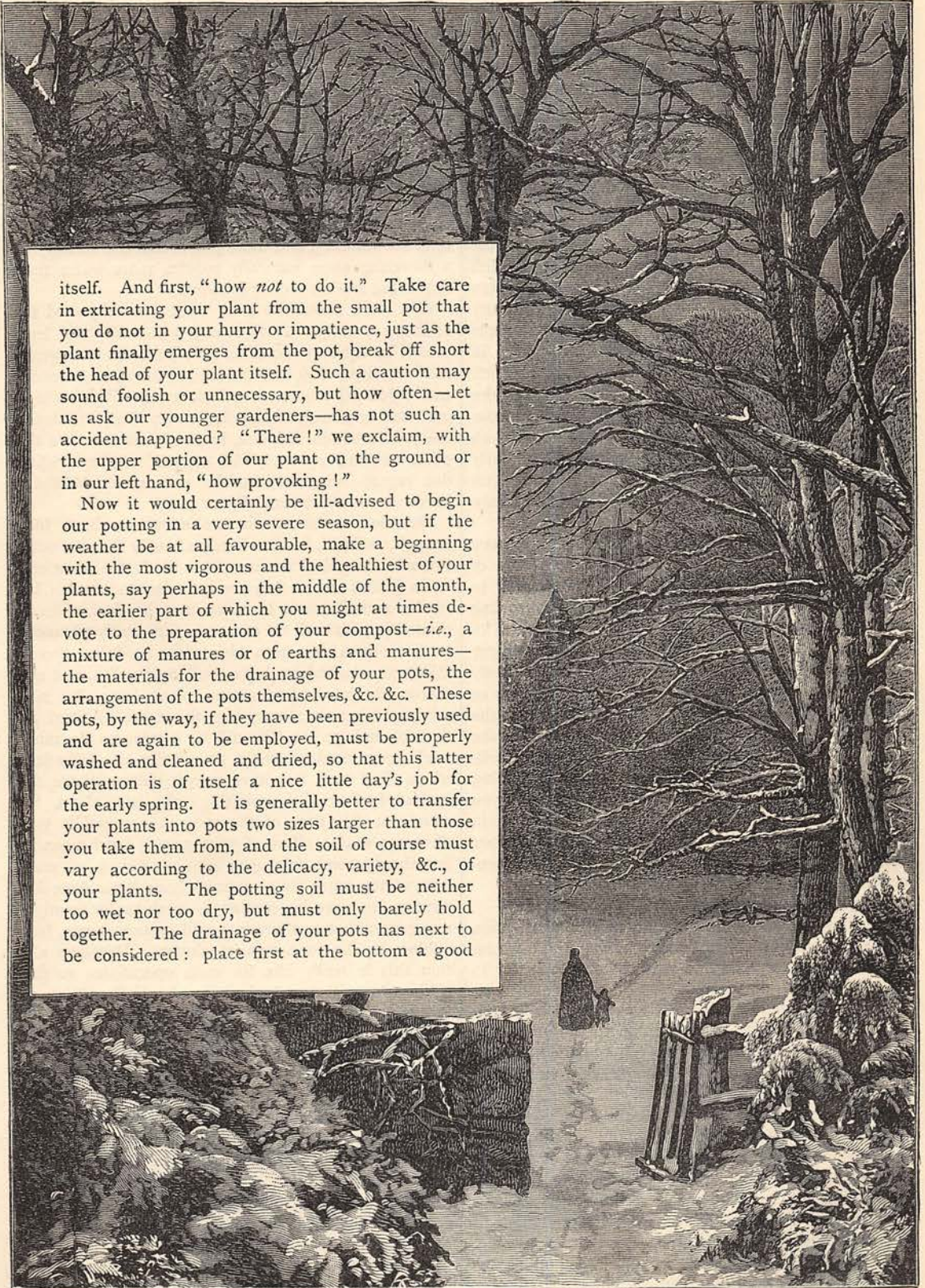
The moral of all this is sufficiently apparent. Unless you are content to sacrifice your plant, let it alone when Jack Frost is about.

But our hand has been long enough on the handle of the greenhouse door, so we will open it and decide upon our work.

February then, we will say, is the month for potting the majority of our smaller plants which we have had in small pots during the winter. We can easily see the reason why. They have made a start, and stand therefore in need of a "shift," as gardeners say. Let us say, then, a word about the actual process of potting

itself. And first, "how *not* to do it." Take care in extricating your plant from the small pot that you do not in your hurry or impatience, just as the plant finally emerges from the pot, break off short the head of your plant itself. Such a caution may sound foolish or unnecessary, but how often—let us ask our younger gardeners—has not such an accident happened? "There!" we exclaim, with the upper portion of our plant on the ground or in our left hand, "how provoking!"

Now it would certainly be ill-advised to begin our potting in a very severe season, but if the weather be at all favourable, make a beginning with the most vigorous and the healthiest of your plants, say perhaps in the middle of the month, the earlier part of which you might at times devote to the preparation of your compost—*i.e.*, a mixture of manures or of earths and manures—the materials for the drainage of your pots, the arrangement of the pots themselves, &c. &c. These pots, by the way, if they have been previously used and are again to be employed, must be properly washed and cleaned and dried, so that this latter operation is of itself a nice little day's job for the early spring. It is generally better to transfer your plants into pots two sizes larger than those you take them from, and the soil of course must vary according to the delicacy, variety, &c., of your plants. The potting soil must be neither too wet nor too dry, but must only barely hold together. The drainage of your pots has next to be considered: place first at the bottom a good



piece of potsherd completely over the small hole. Two or three smaller pieces may be added and—if it is procurable—a little layer of moss is a good thing afterwards to prevent the soil from washing gradually away; next add, say, a good handful of the roughest part of your soil, some of the finer part can then be added, enough in fact just to allow the top of the ball of earth surrounding the roots of the plant you are just going to re-pot to be on about a level, or a little perhaps *within* the level of the pot itself.

And now for the actual process of re-potting. Take in your left hand the plant you are about to re-pot and hold it nearly topsy-turvy, taking care to let the stem of your plant pass between the fingers of your left hand. Give then the pot a slight tap—not a too vigorous one, or you will smash your pot—against any solid surface that you have by you, and the whole mass of fibrous roots and earth will remain in your left hand, quite disengaged from the pot, which you can now remove with your right. If you find the “tap” above named insufficient to detach the soil from the pot, you can assist in the process with the thumb or finger of the right hand, by pressing it only slightly through the drainage-hole at the bottom of your pot against the piece of potsherd which you certainly ought to find there.

The pot then lifted off with the right hand, remove from the bottom of the soil all the little pieces of potsherd, tile, &c., that of course will be clinging to it, gently extricating all the points of the growing roots. Next, place this mass now in the centre of your newly prepared pot, then fill up with the proper soil that you have by you, pressing all down firmly and evenly as you proceed, till within half an inch or thereabout of the rim of the pot. Then water the soil, and all is done. In pressing your plant into the new pot, be cautious however not to go too vigorously and excitedly to work, as the thumb and fingers being in such close proximity to the stem of your plant, you will run the risk, unless you are careful, of once again bruising or breaking off your plant short, to your ineffable disgust, just at the close of the whole proceeding.

This, then, is the ordinary method of re-potting.

We have certainly been minute in our description of the process, but as there is a right way and a wrong way of doing everything, we have thought it better to be precise in our directions.

In running your eye generally over your collection of greenhouse plants, if in addition to those that you have decided at once to re-pot, you remark some few whose general appearance does not seem to warrant you at first sight in re-potting them, yet if the soil looks wet and the pot and plant themselves feel unduly heavy, you may be sure that something is wrong; most probably defective drainage is at the root of the evil, and defective drainage is as much a cause of death to plants as it is to human beings. At this season of the year, excessive and random watering of your plants is also injurious and very often—more particularly where you have neglected to stir about slightly the upper surface of the soil in your pots—may be the cause, in some

measure at least, of the drainage of your plants going wrong, owing to the soil becoming caked hard and battered down from want of proper attention. A further injury also is sustained—particularly by delicate plants—by watering your plants with ordinary water straightway drawn thoughtlessly from your pump or well. Bear in mind that the roots of your plants have been subject to a temperature considerably in advance of that of the water with which you are so recklessly prepared to souse them. It is safer therefore, just now, to use water three or four degrees above the temperature of your greenhouse. The morning, again, is the best time for watering, and those plants that are actually in a flowering state naturally require more water than those that are but merely growing.

One word about the soils most generally used for ordinary potting. Turfy loam, peat-earth, and leaf-mould in equal proportions have been the most generally recommended, and indeed are the most generally used; you will also want a little sand. Plants which grew strongly last year may have very likely exhausted the soil in which they are, in which case remove the effete soil, and replace it with some of a better quality, due regard being had to the nature, requirements, hardness or tenderness of your plant.

Outside our house—for we have now been long enough, perhaps, inside—hardy annuals may be sown towards the end of the month in sheltered situations, or in places where they are intended to bloom; but tender annuals must be sown in a hot-bed, and cultivated in pots until the season is sufficiently advanced to turn them out into the open borders. Sweet-Williams, Canterbury-bells, wallflowers, &c., and any thoroughly hardy herbaceous plants may be now removed where necessary into the spots destined for their blooming; but it would be unwise to do much work upon borders where your bulbs are, especially where they may not have as yet shown above the ground, for fear of decapitating or bruising them. Of course at this time of the year the ground is very often too wet to allow of your getting much upon it; but should some fair open weather favour us, some even of the work that ought to have been done last autumn may yet be continued—such as, for example, any general heavy alterations and improvements, box-edging, or the formation of clumps. Recollect also that this is really late for such operations, so that if they have to be done there should be delay no longer. Every day will now multiply your work tenfold, and the ordinary gardener—who in December and January got his full pay, but often declared that he had little more to do in such a terrible season than chop up wood, and keep his greenhouse-fire alight, and potter about inside—must now very soon redouble his energy. Let the tulips be protected from frost, for they will already be making a start, for good authorities have often attributed every minute defect in the florescence of a tulip to the action of the frost. An ordinary cloth kept close over them is as good a remedy as any, and an old-fashioned one.

In the kitchen garden sowing can be commenced, provided that the ground has first been properly pre-

pared by thorough trenching and manuring, in accordance with the directions we have so often given. Let your sowing bear some proper proportion to your vegetable demand. So much seed, land, time, &c., is positively wasted by want of forethought in this respect; for, afterwards, in how many houses do you find superabundance in some garden produce, which is then thrown away, allowed to decay, or given to the pigs; and a positive scarcity of other vegetables, for which there is as great a demand as for those of which you have too large a supply. Besides, this want of common-sense often gives rise to a two-fold vicious result: for, first, there is an excuse for after-idleness in the garden, because it is pleaded that "the land cannot be used until that large crop is got off it, and it isn't half used up yet;" secondly, there is the still stronger temptation to sell or steal the surplus stock. Then, it is apparent that frequent sowings at intervals of three weeks, say of peas and other vegetables, in small quantities, give you a far better chance of a good supply of vegetables than one or two large and final sowings will do. And what, too, are you to expect if you have one large failure? And there is always a risk of this if you sow but once or twice only. Unless, however, the weather prove exceptionally good and favourable, not much sowing will perhaps be attempted this month. Sea-kale and rhubarb can both be well forced on in February, by means of any old boxes, if the proper pots cannot conveniently be provided; which boxes, after being placed over the now developing heads, must be covered and surrounded with leaves or stable-dung. From any winter spinach that you are now using, only pick the

larger and outside leaves, as the centre part will grow out and keep up your supply. Among the salads, let us say, sow now in frames or in any open, good warm border; and if you have any lettuces that have stood the winter well, they can perhaps now be planted out in some mild situation. Here, again, although we have often recommended that the wants of the garden should be anticipated, yet upon the other hand it is certainly ill-advised to be too rash and presume that, because a sudden change or a few mild days have made their welcome appearance, therefore we are to assume that the winter is past and gone for good; for those relapses into winter with which we are so often favoured during this and the coming month—aye, and even later on than March—are often more serious and fatal in their results than the cold of Christmas, for which we are generally prepared.

In the fruit garden and orchard there is not, perhaps, very much to be done. Pruning should have been done some time back, but the gooseberries and currants may be run over, and any little weakly wood cut out. Meantime, it will be advisable soon to be thinking of protection for your fruit-blossoms, for these early springs force everything on; but though very beautiful while they last, and very glorious if they do, our crops are often fatally injured if we have no resources at hand to protect our blossom when the cold returns. Let us, however, hope that the summer, for which we are all beginning so to long, may be lavish in its produce, and that we shall never again be visited with such a terribly wet season as that of 1879—one probably unparalleled in the memory of any living man.

WHAT TO WEAR.

CHIT-CHAT ON DRESS. BY OUR PARIS CORRESPONDENT.



NOTICE that several English firms advertise the new jersey dresses as originating a fresh era in dress-making; and I am inclined to think such will be the case, but not quite in the way the advertisers mean. In my opinion no style has yet been brought out which renders home-dressmaking so easy. The elastic materials of which such bodices are made, whether silk or woollen, naturally adapt themselves to the human form, and an ordinary jersey taken up on the shoulders and beneath the arms requires no other making, save such as facilitates the all-important process of getting into it. Lacing at the back is the most fashionable mode, but it is hardly an improvement to the general appearance. The eyelet-holes ought to be supplemented by bows, which have an ugly habit of curling up; no lady can lace her own dress at the back, and much trouble is thereby entailed. It is far easier to cut the jersey down at the neck some six inches. This leaves aperture enough to get into it easily without spoiling the plain well-setting

appearance of the waist and bust, and four to six close-set bows of satin ribbon hide the fastenings and are an improvement rather than not. Silk jerseys fit closely from the first and do not easily lose their shape, but the woollen ones all require taking in under the arm from time to time, for they will stretch. But though the making of a jersey bodice is easy enough—we call them in Paris the "Veronese Cuirass"—they require much nicety in putting on. There should be a close-fitting under-bodice fastening at the back, and the stays must be long and come well over the hips, so that the basque of the jersey may be pinned down firmly to them all round, or it will ride up when the wearer sits down. With any ordinary skirt or tunic the jersey can be rolled up round the hips, but the usual plan is to tack the tunic over it six inches below the waist, the said tunic being a scarf of the material of which the dress is made, forming four folds and a drapery at the back. A jersey bodice in cardinal red silk, with a black silk skirt and red sash tunic, makes a stylish and not very expensive dress. Silk jerseys are much worn for evening, cut square at the neck, with barely any sleeves.

GARDENING IN MARCH.



WHEN we have to treat of gardening, a little prelude with reference to that well-hackneyed subject, "the weather," seems to be almost a necessity. But though a weather allusion is undeniably the chief staple of the morning greeting of us all, and affords an almost inexhaustible resource to the more modest and retiring of

us on the occasion of a formal dinner-party, yet as a gardener has not generally the reputation of being a shy man, why should he be so often obliged to

talk about the weather? On the contrary, in our old English domestic life, the presence of the gardener rather inspires confidence and regard than otherwise. He is a popular and a privileged man wherever he goes. The embryo squire sees him crossing the lawn, and calls out, "Oh, mamma! there's gardener; may I go and help him?" and in five minutes' time the little fellow's hand is in the horny grasp of the old man, whose familiarity of confab. "Buttons" or "John Thomas" would never think of assuming. Cook also allows gardener to come into the kitchen with his hat on, and spud over his shoulder. He brings a pleasant sort of fragrance with him—of the earth, earthy, or smelling of celery that he has been cutting, or geraniums that he has been potting. He sits down for his lunch, and with all his village news he is of as much importance to the assembled servants as Reuter's telegrams are to the newspapers. It is, however, tolerably obvious that a gardener is of all others obliged to be a careful observer of the weather pending his operations, for he knows that an "unseasonable" experiment will be probably fatal to his success.

Just now, however, he has been debating whether it is too early yet to prepare the hot-bed for the cucumber and melon frames. By the end of the third week in March, it is generally safe to begin getting in your manure, &c., for this purpose, though should the cold return with any great severity, you often hear gardener say that he fears he shall lose his heat, if he should have happened to have got his beds early into working order. We will have a few words then about the formation of an ordinary hot-bed. At best it usually presents a somewhat unsightly appearance, and hence in gardens which are conducted on a large scale we frequently see a small piece of ground fenced off for the purpose. But in our unpretending kitchen garden we merely select the best situation that we have, nor do we intend to allow the littery exterior that it always presents to scandalise us in the slightest degree. Its utility is our main and indeed our only object. If therefore we can have it near our little greenhouse, or outhouse,

or potting-shed, all the better. But it is positively essential that we select a warm and sheltered situation. If, for example, we have a wall running along our garden and shutting off that terrible north blast, have the frame nearly against the wall, leaving of course ample space between the frames and the wall for walking and for opening your lights. The best aspect, then, is one that looks south and east; nothing—not certainly the bough of a tree—should intervene in this quarter to cast a shadow, not even for the smallest part of the day. Speaking of these overhanging tree-boughs, reminds the writer of these pages of a stupid trick of a gardener, who once to his actual knowledge prepared his frame in the proximity of a couple of apple-trees. July and August came, and the first windy day completely riddled the glass of the frame and ruined the cucumbers, melons, &c., beneath, for nothing of course could be moved then. One has heard of a hail-storm but never of an apple-storm insurance company! Some protection also against the north-west and north-east is certainly desirable.

The next thing naturally is to peg out the required plot of ground for your purpose. Now our average garden frame is usually about five feet long and some eight feet wide; but whatever be its dimensions, first, having selected your site, simply lay your frame on the ground and drive in a peg or stake at the four corners. As, however, the dung will have to extend a foot to eighteen inches all round *beyond* the dimensions of your frame, the stakes had better be driven in at this distance from the frame, which you must now remove and proceed as follows:—Excavate your land to the depth of some fifteen to eighteen inches, and for the foundation of your hot-bed some litter, leaves, and rubbish will do very well. If your hot-bed is built on a sloping garden, all the better—provided, that is, that it slopes in the right direction—*i.e.*, from north to south. After, however, your space has been hollowed out, you ought to allow a good dry day or two to intervene before proceeding. The advantage to be gained by thus excavating your ground is at once apparent, for not only are you better able by this means to collect the drainage from your bed, but the variation in temperature caused by exposure to the cold wind will be a good deal obviated, and it is evident that this fluctuation in the heat of your hot-bed must be considerably deleterious to your plants inside.

Now we must say something about the preparation of the manure; and, first, it must not have been lying too long in your stable, or heap, or wherever you are accustomed to store it, for in that case it will probably have begun almost to get scorched inside; nor must it be taken up, although in fairly good condition, and laid *all in a heap at one operation*, for then the heat would be excessive—for recollect we can have too much of a good thing—and it would,

nevertheless, be not of long duration. Every forkful should, then, be thoroughly well shaken out and the air freely admitted to it; and as your heap advances a foot or two, no harm is done if you give it a sprinkling of water, unless the manure happens already to be very moist. What you want, indeed, to avoid particularly at first is too great and sudden a heat. If therefore your manure appears to be having a white, silvery-looking and dry appearance, this is all wrong. Fork the manure over, then, a second or a third time, giving perhaps a little water where it looks dry; it is evident that in the second process of shaking out, what was formerly at the top of your old heap, will now be at the bottom of your new one. A long stick or stake is generally thrust right through your heap, as by taking it out now and then you can judge by feeling it of the temperature of your manure-heap. After the second shaking out, the manure will doubtless now be in a fit state to be finally transferred to the space you have already marked out, and in which your layer of leaves and litter now is. This time, however—that is, as you are now finally arranging the manure in its place—pat it down with the fork so as to get it, not too close, but yet well together. Your square or oblong should be some four feet above the level of the ground. It will be sure in course of time to sink quite a foot. Take care also to have the surface of your manure even, and not higher in one place than in another.

Again thrust your stake through the centre, and when the temperature rises a little your frames may be put on and closed. Do not, however, be unwise enough to consider the whole process as now at an end, for your frames will require a great deal of watching and attention. The glass will draw up the heat tremendously, so that it would be quite possible suddenly to attain such a temperature inside as to kill anything that you might shortly be intending to plant. During the best of the day, then, open the frames a little, and if you find the heat excessive, give a good wetting—though not, of course, a deluge of water. If, however, the heat be merely ordinary, the lights need only be lifted a little to let out the steam. Some three inches in thickness of good loamy soil, made up, say, from rotted turfs, must now be put on your manure, and if you are intending to grow melons or cucumbers—the most general experiment that we like to try—let your soil be raised somewhat in a conical shape, the top of your cone being naturally in about the middle of your light.

The cucumber and melon seeds have, however, generally been raised before this, in pots, in some good forcing-house, and your young plants can now be transferred from their pots and planted with their little ball of earth round their roots directly in the centre of your cone-shaped soil. By the middle of May you ought, with what gardeners call good luck, to have your cucumber on the table. Success, however, can only be promised to the industrious and attentive. One day's inattention to your frames afterwards is quite sufficient to insure a failure. What if an early morning walk round the garden after a

bright and perhaps even a frosty April night reveal the lights of your frames as *open!* They were forgotten to be closed yesterday afternoon, and perhaps your young plants are now drooping—it may be irrecoverably so. On the other hand, bear in mind, nothing can thrive without some air, and very often the mistake of so many gardeners is that they are too frightened of air. In your greenhouse, for instance, you will so often see plants drawn up, sickly, lanky, non-shrubby and unhealthy, and all this from want of a plentiful supply of wholesome fresh air.

The asparagus-bed will want lightly forking over: we say lightly, because at this time of the year, if you are too rash with your fork, you will damage the advancing heads, which, when April comes, will begin to give their welcome peep above the ground. On your asparagus-bed a few radishes may be sown. In fact, utilise your bed as far as possible; and between your rows of potatoes—which, by the way, you will also be busy in planting this month—a few lettuces or young cabbage plants may be set out. This, however, cannot well be done immediately after your potato-planting, for you will soon afterwards be walking between your rows for earthing up your crop.

In the flower garden we shall be getting in our annuals as the month advances—not too early in this climate of ours, especially if the spots in the sun, about which we have heard so much, think of extending themselves. Seeds—tender annuals—if sown too early in the open will not germinate. The roses, too, must all be cut back now. It is a mistake to cut them too early, and it is also a mistake to cut them too closely.

Any further alteration in the way of shrub-planting or box-edging that is really necessary must be done forthwith. Last month was late enough for such operations, no undue amount of sagacity is therefore necessary to see that there is still more risk in such experiments this month.

In the greenhouse—full, let us hope, of promising cuttings, that are rapidly developing themselves into fine young plants—recollect that there are a good two months before you must even begin to bed out, and this being so, do not force on your plants too much. Merely exclude frost and damp, and give plenty of air, for more air is necessary now that your stock of plants is looking more bulky by reason of growth. The rapidly developing foliage is a great temptation to the green fly, and other pests of the sort. Fumigate the house with tobacco-smoke, and keep the syringe in use.

Now that winter is really leaving us, the lawn will be beginning to look lumpy, and we shall soon be having our first mow. The scythe must come into use, as a rule, after the winter, before we begin with the machine. The gravel walks also may now be looked over, and got into a good state with the roller.

Farewell, then, to winter, for who does not long for the first sight of the primroses and the “daffidown-dillies,” the first spring chorus of the feathered tribe, and—with some of us—the first rush down to the rippling trout-stream in the valley?

Every one has heard of the Grape cure, and visitors to the Salzkammergut must know of another favourite "cure," the Schlammbad—a bath of thick, briny mud from some neighbouring salt-mine, in which the patient lies buried to the chin for a certain number of hours, until the mud hardens into a mould. But of all the cures the "Hunger-kur" is one of the most dreadful.

At a school in an out-of-the-way German town where we had been "finishing our education," one of my *compatriotes* broke down in consequence of the living, which we English girls found unpalatable and insufficient. Amongst her ailments she got a sort of inflammation of the eyes, for which the doctor (a "real allopath") kept her in a darkened room for six weeks, and then for six weeks more without going out

of doors, and after that, as a last resource, he prescribed the hunger-cure. Poor girl! she had been undergoing that "cure" for many a month, but the Herr Doctor knew nothing of it, and there was no means of telling him privately, so she had to submit to the Hungerkur. And the hunger-cure means that the patient is only given two or three ounces of white bread and one wine-glass of water in the twenty-four hours—at least, till extreme weakness sets in, when an ounce of meat may be added. This patient went home to England blind of one eye, and with the sight of the other barely safe; but of course she was not a fair "case" for the merits of the cure; she left off "unfinished." I have seen Germans who went through to the end of the prescribed time, and not only survived, but even said they felt better. L. F. B.

GARDENING IN APRIL.



IN the little talks that we have had about gardening at intervals for now some considerable time past, let it always be remembered that we have never attempted great things. Our gardening has always been on a limited scale. To enter upon the *spécialités* of our subject—such, for example, as the rearing of a particular and rare orchid, would, though an interesting, be an almost endless task. We cannot all of us afford the time,

or the money, or the land for the cultivation of orchids. They are very beautiful and very wonderful—some of them so marvellous in their perfection and structure, and so eccentric in their appearance, as to make us doubt for a moment whether they belong to the vegetable world at all—but we find turnips and potatoes more practical, roses and geraniums sufficient to delight us, apples and pears, currants and gooseberries, &c., in our kitchen garden more than enough for our purpose. We want, then, to deal with everyday life in a matter-of-fact and common-sense way. But, on the other hand, if we want a stimulus to our exertions in our quiet acre, there is perhaps no better way of exciting our enthusiasm than by having a morning walk round the extensive gardens of—say some ducal estate, or those of some wealthy old county squire, where everything is conducted on a large scale and with a lavish hand. There may, on the other hand, be a momentary feeling of despondency, occasioned perhaps by the reflection, "Oh, this is quite beyond my capabilities, I cannot possibly attempt the tithe of what I see here;" but this little impulse of disappointment is as quickly displaced, not only by the pleasure derived from the sight of such horticultural perfections, but

also by the lessons that we are learning from the gardener who may be escorting us.

One man, we observe, is hoeing the early-sown turnips, and onions, and carrots: he seems to be destroying a good many of the young plants, as well as the weeds, towards which he shows no mercy, and we come to the conclusion that we shall not sow our seed so thickly; for what, we say, is the use of sacrificing so many plants afterwards? Among the turnips and carrots, the gardener only leaves one plant to every six inches of ground. The cabbages, we remark, are making fine progress, and the most forward are going to heart; as yet, however, these hearts are nearly green all through; but the most advanced are being tied in tightly with an ordinary bit of matting, so as to whiten the inside of the cabbage earlier than would be the case if left to itself.

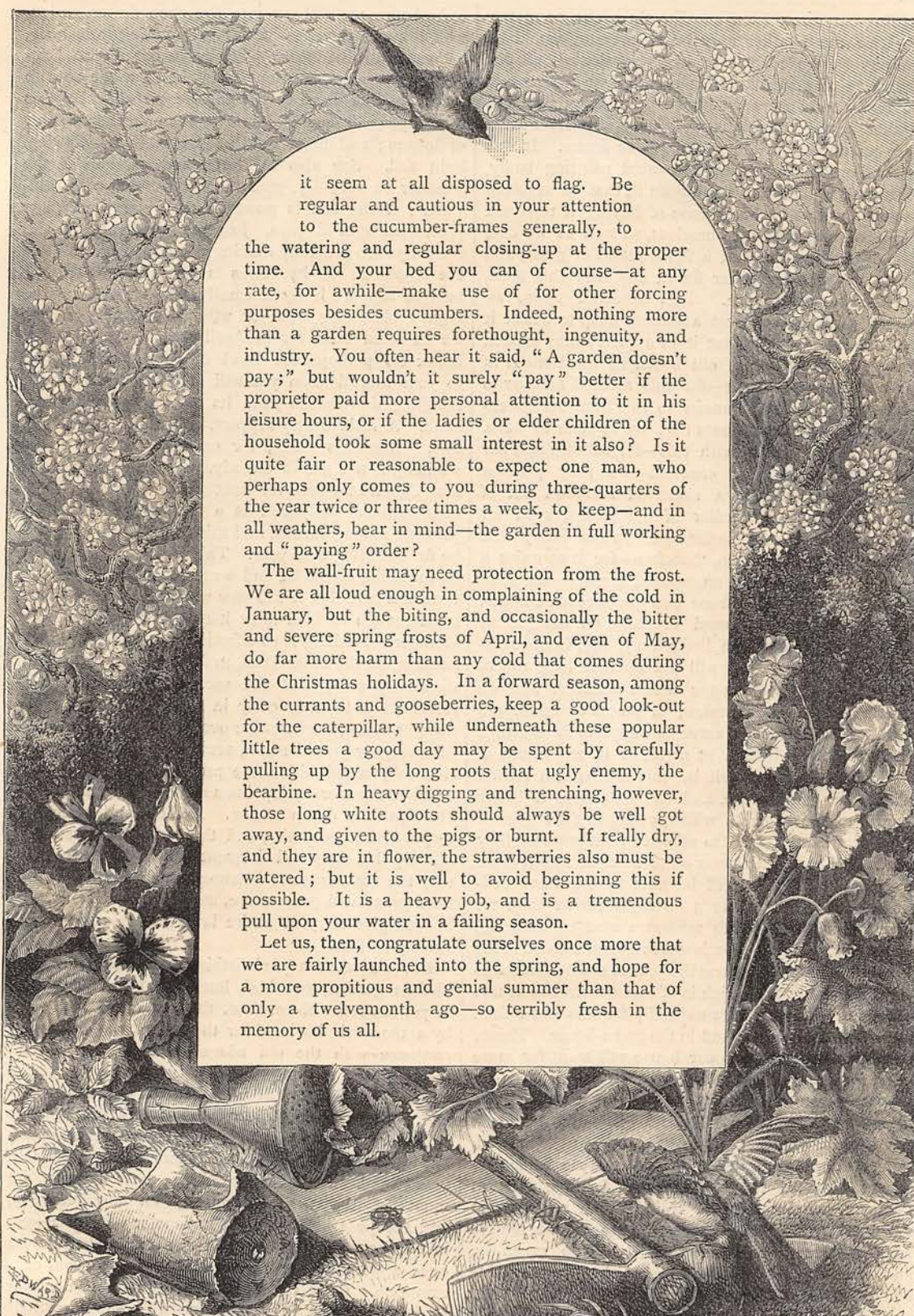
On the gravel walks, too, they tell us that the winter, so severe as it has been, has made the paths unusually soft and rotten, so that we see men rolling it down to get it well together and into its place. But we will not anticipate in too cursory a way, by this ramble round the squire's garden, what we may have to say in our directions for home, whither we will therefore hasten at once.

Here, then, we are once again in the solitary greenhouse. We have no other. It is our conservatory and our green-house, and perhaps our grapery, all in one. We have in it two or three fine myrtles, a couple of orange-trees, of which we are especially proud, for just now they are in full flower, and by their overpowering scent they in a measure remind us of some of the wonderful fragrance we remarked in the houses at the squire's. What, however, is just now troubling us a little, is that our stock of cuttings, taken last August, although they all look in very good condition, yet is going, or rather growing, ahead so fast that we feel we are getting overcrowded; and we know that to attempt to begin

bedding-out for at least another six weeks, no matter how fine the weather may be at present, would be absurd. So we resolve to begin hardening off our stock by giving increased air in the house whenever the really mild days will possibly allow of it. And another happy thought strikes us. We have over there an unused or discarded pit or frame. It was nearly done for last year, it wanted painting badly, and so much glass was gone from it, that we resolved we would not go to the expense of having it repaired. So we will patch it up ourselves, as well as we can, with a lump of putty and a few squares of glass, and get it into working order for at any rate this once, and for immediate use. This resolved upon, we carried it off from almost a lumber-heap to which it had found its way, and put it in a good sunny aspect. Putting a few pieces of old board at the bottom of our now restored frame—for this seemed handier to our purpose—we now transfer to this from our greenhouse any duplicate plants that we happen to have. Not content, however, with this—for we still find our poor greenhouse very crowded—we may perhaps determine to move to a sheltered situation out of doors some of the hardier of our plants, such for example as our calceolarias, &c. In our funny little *multum in parvo* garden, therefore—for it contains a long wooden shed, or an unused pig-sty—we shall choose a spot against these two picturesque edifices, and placing a long board or plank on the ground against that side which looks only, say, from south-east to south-west, we will put another long row of plants upon it, making the wisest selection that we can, and driving a few stakes, or pieces of wood, into the sides of the shed to serve as supports for matting, or some roof protection at night, or in any return of cold weather. We shall by this means still further relieve our greenhouse, and not only give a better chance to those plants which, owing to their greater delicacy, we are obliged to allow to remain where they are, but by now getting our outside stock into a more braced condition, we shall be able to begin our bedding-out by-and-by, quite a fortnight earlier than we otherwise should. With reference next to watering, these plants that we have just stood upon a board in the open will—unless of course the season should chance to be exceptionally dry, which is of rare occurrence at this time of the year—require naturally far less water than those that we leave behind in the greenhouse. Those, however, under glass in our house will want far more water now, or in the summer, than when they lay almost dormant in the winter; nor can it be too often repeated that a *thorough* watering should be given when it *is* given, rather than that little, hurried, general, and lazy watering which you see some gardeners disposed to give, making—for the sake of saving themselves a little trouble—one can-full last for a whole row of pots on the stand, that require perhaps three times the quantity. The green-fly, and other similar nuisances, often begin to trouble our greenhouse at this time of the year, so that the syringe may be used with advantage, more especially among those plants which are growing freely.

And now we will get into the open flower-garden, which every day, as this lovely spring advances, brings with it increasing pleasure in our work. Successional sowings of annuals should be made now up to the end of June or the middle of July. By this means you will have maintained one unbroken display of flowers; and they should be planted in a fairly rich, light soil. See also to the anemones, and if the weather be very dry, give them a soaking with rain-water; if the sun is powerful they will want some protection from his rays. Just now, the hyacinths and the tulips are probably making a gay display. Where the bloom on the hyacinths is heavy and large, it is best to support it by a small stake or stick. One night's blustering wind or wild hail-shower, such as we so often look for in April, will be sufficient to break off perhaps the head of your flower, which to your mortification you will find the next morning dangling downwards from its almost severed green stalk. A little timely support, then, will prevent all this. Biennials (such, for example, as the sweet-william), if not got in already, may be sown now, as also Canterbury-bells for next year's blooming. The old-fashioned hollyhock is a fine showy fellow for planting among shrubs, and this too, if sown now, will be for flowering next year. This month the lawn will be requiring attention, and we must not grudge it the time and care that it will now want, since it has been good enough to look after itself ever since the end of October. Nothing is so effective as a well-kept lawn; nothing, on the other hand, makes up for a lumpy and disorderly one; and the secret of a good lawn is *commencing* to mow early in the spring, and afterwards running the machine over regularly every week. Should your grass be thin, scatter over it lightly some rich soil, mixed with some proper lawn grass seed; or, if you prefer it, lay down some entirely fresh turf. Do this in a damp season. Rolling and sweeping, too, is also a necessity, and this must be persevered in. By this early and frequent mowing and machine-use, the coarser grass becomes weakened, while the finer grass will grow more, and, getting thicker, will in time give to your entire lawn a more uniform and velvety surface.

But we must say something about the fruit and kitchen garden, to which latter we have but barely as yet alluded. Keep, then, the soil clean and open by a thorough hoeing; for the weeds, which—in accordance with the old adage—grow apace, will do their utmost to overtop and overpower your young crops. A little salt will be useful on your asparagus-bed. About the middle of the month get in your beetroot-seed; sow it in rows fifteen inches apart, but do not have your soil manured immediately beforehand. Indeed, if anything, more than in the month of March, sowing may go on now generally, and the peas—always such a popular vegetable—got in once every fortnight, and the mustard-and-cress once a week—indeed, oftener according to your consumption. Bank up your cucumber-bed with a layer of fresh manure, in accordance with our directions given last month, so as to maintain your heat, should



it seem at all disposed to flag. Be regular and cautious in your attention to the cucumber-frames generally, to the watering and regular closing-up at the proper time. And your bed you can of course—at any rate, for awhile—make use of for other forcing purposes besides cucumbers. Indeed, nothing more than a garden requires forethought, ingenuity, and industry. You often hear it said, “A garden doesn't pay;” but wouldn't it surely “pay” better if the proprietor paid more personal attention to it in his leisure hours, or if the ladies or elder children of the household took some small interest in it also? Is it quite fair or reasonable to expect one man, who perhaps only comes to you during three-quarters of the year twice or three times a week, to keep—and in all weathers, bear in mind—the garden in full working and “paying” order?

The wall-fruit may need protection from the frost. We are all loud enough in complaining of the cold in January, but the biting, and occasionally the bitter and severe spring frosts of April, and even of May, do far more harm than any cold that comes during the Christmas holidays. In a forward season, among the currants and gooseberries, keep a good look-out for the caterpillar, while underneath these popular little trees a good day may be spent by carefully pulling up by the long roots that ugly enemy, the bearbine. In heavy digging and trenching, however, those long white roots should always be well got away, and given to the pigs or burnt. If really dry, and they are in flower, the strawberries also must be watered; but it is well to avoid beginning this if possible. It is a heavy job, and is a tremendous pull upon your water in a failing season.

Let us, then, congratulate ourselves once more that we are fairly launched into the spring, and hope for a more propitious and genial summer than that of only a twelvemonth ago—so terribly fresh in the memory of us all.



GARDENING IN MAY.

TREACHEROUS May is upon us once more—the month of nature's apparent anachronisms and inconsistencies—the month of strawberry blossoms additionally whitened by a possible snowstorm—the month of hot sunshine with a biting east wind—the month in which we love to listen to the "jug" of the nightingale, or the persistent tenor of the dissipated cuckoo, who often amuses us by joining in the moonlight chorus—the month in which we cannot sleep because there is so little night to sleep in, and surely then the month in which the best thing we can do is to get up early and go and work in the garden. No fear of not finding plenty to do when we get there, as we shall presently see.

"May and December," it has been said, "can

never agree," but our experience certainly is that in so far as the elements and the weather are concerned, these two months, though so distant from each other, make a desperate effort to shake hands at this time of the year, to the great dismay and terror of us poor gardeners. Perhaps in our enthusiasm we have been a little impatient to begin bedding out, and we find our young plants cruelly topped by the frost. Our poor great cherry-tree, too, that but the other day looked like a bride from "Brobdingnag," so gay in its virgin whiteness, and in which the bees from half the county seemed to have assembled to give their oratorio—what a wreck it looks this morning! The cherries were nearly set, but now ten thousand little green stalks, each with a provoking little green pill at the end, are lying on the ground at the base of our once proud tree; while of those that still remain, we fear that the parching east wind and keen night air will very probably make as terrible a havoc. But it is of no use to grumble, and as we have something of a cold, and feel a good deal of sympathy with the cherry-tree, we have decided to have a few hours' work this morning under our large bay window, which, as it looks nearly due south, with perhaps a point of west in the aspect, will afford a very welcome shelter for our operations.

In fact, before entering upon directions for the routine management for the present month, we have a few words to say about window-gardening in general. And first it may be hardly necessary to do more than notice in passing that to select any window but that which looks S.S.W., or as nearly as possible in that direction, with a partiality for S., is almost futile for our purpose. Window-gardening is not only a delightful amusement for those whose health, it may be, rather confines them in a measure to the house, but for those whose circumstances do not admit of the luxury of a green-house. A good window, if carefully made the best of, can really be used for the purpose of keeping alive any small stock of bedding-out plants, such as the hardiest of geraniums, or calceolarias, &c., for which there will be very shortly such a demand.



Window-gardening, on the other hand, has its disadvantages. The servants never like it. They say, "It makes such a litter and mess, and brings dirt into the house;" and to sit, moreover, very much in a room, the windows of which are over-crowded with flowers, is undeniably unhealthy. In the intensely bitter weather, of course, a small fire in the room is an advantage; but an over-heated room, or the use of gas in a confined space in which all the vital air is speedily consumed, is necessarily injurious to the plants. Then, again, bear in mind that occasionally our *intensest* frosts come with a south wind, and though a thaw very soon afterwards generally follows, yet in the few hours of keen frost that precede the welcome change, much incalculable and even fatal harm may be done unless great watchfulness is had. Generally then, let us say, *air* and *light*, and a good supply of each, are positively essential to the well-being of your plants. In the winter months—January, for example—have your flowers near to the windows the best part of the day-time, but moved to some dry and retired corner of your room by night. And unless our frosty south wind be blowing, to which we have just now alluded, the window might even be opened for the best hour of the day, so necessary is fresh air, as our own pale faces if confined to the house, or a stinky and sickly plant by a constantly closed window, serves to show. Absence of air, then, on the one hand, and a keen cutting draught of it on the other, have equally to be avoided. Then, again, as to watering. That habit which so many of our devotees of window-gardening have of keeping their pots standing in a saucer *always* full of water is a mistake. The practice has all the appearance of a bit of laziness, on the plea that the plants are thereby kept constantly supplied with water without the trouble of frequent watering. But this perpetual little lake so close to the roots of your plant will only produce rot, and perhaps end in the death of it altogether. In the winter months, then, water only occasionally, and just enough to keep the soil fairly moist.

Fuchsias in the month of January may yet be kept in any dark place; they may also remain drier than many other plants, but of course must not be utterly parched up.

At the outset of your window-garden scheme, let your plants be well and carefully potted with good

and proper soil, and select only those that are in a thoroughly healthy condition. The green fly, or other similar pest, is unhappily particularly partial to the window-garden. This gentleman must be washed off by hand, for the syringe we certainly cannot use in a room. In fact, you must recollect that your plants are really being put to a somewhat singular, if not severe test, by this endeavour to rear and cultivate them in a process contrary to nature. The Chinese primrose is an old-fashioned favourite for blooming in the window during the winter, but it requires to be sown in the summer, and grown during the autumn in a greenhouse, first of all.

Bright-looking evergreens — myrtles in particular — are admirably adapted for a window-garden display, but they want to be kept clean and free from dust and dirt, which other-



wise give to their foliage a dingy, untidy, and melancholy appearance. This leaf-sponging by hand, leaf by leaf, is a slow process, and tiring to the fingers, but you are rewarded by the appearance of your plant when done. It is a pleasant little pastime for an invalid, or for a wet afternoon. When, however, at the outset of our observations upon window-gardening on this day of supposititious east wind, we did not intend to confine our operations to working in the room, but rather outside in the garden immediately under our south window. Indeed, by this month of May all our half-hardy plants, geraniums, calceolarias, fuchsias, &c., may be turned out, even early in the month, to get hardened off, or they are safe now if they remain permanently on our south window-ledge. If, however, stood out much earlier than this, it is more prudent to bring them in at night, unless you can contrive any protection for them.

The border, then, under our window, being in a warm situation, ought always to be bright with flowers quite early in the year, and it is very effective to train up some climbers from your border to the window itself. For this purpose you must have strong string, or some wire, secured at each end from your window downwards. Our old Kent or Worcestershire friend, the hop, has an excellent effect as a climber, and is a wonderfully rapid grower, as any one must observe by taking a casual turn in the hop-gardens during the months of April, May, and June. Another elegant climber, though not such a rapid twist-about fellow as the hop or convolvulus, is the wistaria, which can be well trained against a wall, and with this protection comes annually into flower about the middle of April. If in the open—that is to say, without protection from the north and east—it will not flower for nearly a month later.

The blossom always appears before the leaves and is most fragrant. Early in the autumn it will sometimes flower a second time, though not so fully or with such luxuriance as in the spring. It is a well-known and popular old favourite, and was first brought into England from China in the year 1816. It attains giant proportions as time goes on, and will grow half-way up your house.

It is time, however, that we said something of a more general character than that which has hitherto occupied us, for we are now in one of our very busiest months and hardly know what first to be at. The bedding-out time is always a heavy month, and the help just now of the juvenile members of the household will be of great service, for it is a long and tedious operation for one pair of hands. The gardener himself, perhaps, is busily engaged in preparing the beds for their reception of the bedding-out stock. It is better to decide, however, previously as to the colours that are to be by-and-by displayed, and to what part of your garden the different pots have to be carried. If you have had method in your greenhouse—that is to say, if your stock of cuttings was when taken classified and arranged—the whole process now of bedding-out is simple enough; but if during the winter you have been fond of shifting your pots from one situation to

another, you will find yourself, perhaps, in considerable confusion, and the time required for your bedding-out half as long again as it need have been. Master Charlie, then, is now told off to carry a certain number of pots to one particular bed. He and Bob were, perhaps, first taken by the gardener to the greenhouse and instructed generally as to their duties for the morning.

"I want the Mrs. Pollock for the right-hand bed, Master Charlie; you will know the Mrs. Pollock by the pretty and striking foliage. *There* they are, all together, and you cannot mistake them. Then I shall peg down some petunias in the next bed—have some King of Italy, Master Bob, in the next; that handsome-looking geranium, sir, that flowers so much larger than many do, and then a bed of mixed Phlox Drummondii."

Then there will be watering to do finally, and the carrying back of all the now empty flower-pots. In fact, we discover that as there is so much of matter-of-fact walking up and down between the greenhouse and the beds on the lawn, the boys' help is really to-day of great service, and this the gardener quietly admits to himself. "The having to walk so much keeps them out o' mischief, but lor', when the apple-gathering comes, what with larking and shieving the bad 'uns at one another, bruising half the good 'uns, breaking the boughs of the trees, and trampling down the beds, they does more harm than good, let alone making theirselves ill with what they eat." And we are disposed to agree entirely with what gardener says.

To return once more to our bedding-out: we have determined to have one high old sloping bank set apart for a general mixture of flowers in accordance with the old-fashioned system, and in memory of the days of our grandfathers. This old border we generally keep well stocked with perennials, and we have at the top of our bank, by the way, the taller flowers, the hollyhock and the somewhat vulgar-looking sunflower; and lower down we have the dear old Canterbury bells, and we have plenty of mixed sweet-peas in as well, the whole being interspersed with a few bedding-out plants; and we take especial care while putting in these last not to injure any of our hyacinth bulbs that have not, together with our crocus and other bulbs, been lifted yet. Nor must we be impatient with the now somewhat elongated and straggling-looking foliage of this our faded spring show, and by cutting it down for the sake of giving a tidy appearance to our bed, sacrifice our bulbs for another season. It is best for a time, if the bulbs are not lifted at once, to tie the foliage neatly but not too tightly together—for that would bruise it—with an ordinary piece of matting. Two or three weeks later the bulbs can better, perhaps, be lifted than just at present.

But before closing our paper we must have one or two turns round the kitchen and fruit garden. See to the cucumber and melon frames, for it may be, supposing that we have been visited with a spell of cold spring weather, that the temperature of your

hot-bed has got lower than it ought to be, and if so, more fresh manure must, if possible, be added all round outside to husband what heat you still have and to create more.

Peas, of course, we go on sowing at intervals according to our requirements, the state of the ground, and the room we have at our disposal. Cauliflowers can be planted out in well-dressed ground and, perhaps, a trench may be by the end of the month prepared for your celery plants. Let it be about a foot deep, and afterwards fork in a good supply of rotten manure in the usual way. It may be that at

some future time we shall have more to say about our celery, which with so many of us utterly failed last year. Alas! would that celery had been the only failure.

From the wall-fruit remove all the useless little buds and shoots which seem inclined to grow out perpendicularly from the wall. But we see so much to do around us that for the moment our hands hang down. Patient industry is, however, all that we can give, and each day now in the ripening and heaven-like summer seems to bring its own reward for all the pains that we bestow upon our crowded little acre.

ON CHEERFULNESS AS A MEDICINE.

BY A FAMILY DOCTOR.



THE power of the mind and will over the body, either for good or for harm, is very remarkable, and no physician nowadays, when treating any case, whether acute or chronic, thinks of dispensing with the truly curative agent called *hope*. A medical man seldom troubles himself to consider in what particular way, or through what particular channel, either hope or fear acts upon his patient; he only knows that it does act, and he is as careful to give the one as to avoid the other.

The impression conveyed to the mind from external influence, no doubt, acts upon the heart and other internal organs, through the medium of the nervous system. Joy is thus a stimulant to the animal economy, while grief and fear are, on the other hand, depressants. As an example of the effect of the latter, we may mention the well-known fact, that sudden grief or bad news of any kind will often entirely destroy the appetite, which only the moment before was everything that could have been desired. In a case of this kind there would be such a shock to the nerves as would cause a loss of power to circulate the usual amount of vital force, a lowering of their temperature, in fact, and consequent lessening of tone both in stomach and heart. But leaving physiological reasoning for a moment on one side, we have all heard the very old saying, that "imagination can either kill or cure." We have all heard it, and to a certain extent we all believe it; but the worst of it is that scarcely any of us believe it half enough. If we did so, we would take good care not to forget it when sick or ailing, and it would be then that we should reap real benefits from its truth. Let psychologists explain it as they like, it is a curious fact that a person, being well, may fancy himself ill, and become ill; or, being ill, he may fancy himself getting well, and become well. I will tell you one or two of the experiences of

an intimate friend of mine, with regard to imagination. He is captain of a gallant merchant ship. When quite a boy he had to make a journey, several times a year, of some two or three hundred miles in a steamboat, going and returning from school. During the whole of the first trip he was down with sea-sickness, and no doubt suffered severely, and he was no better on any subsequent voyage; but the strangest part of the matter is this—he used to get "sea-sick" before going on board, simply with the thoughts of it. Even when some distance from the vessel, the sudden ringing of the steamer's bell turned him instantly ill. When school-days were over, and it became his lot to be a sailor in earnest, he joined a ship that was going on a very long voyage. He was kindly treated by the captain, and not only due time, but, in my opinion, too much time, was allowed him to recover from *mal de mer*, as the French call it. For no less than fourteen days he lay in hammock, and during all that time nothing at all in the shape of food crossed his lips, and he drank only water. On the afternoon of the fourteenth, however, the captain forced him to get up, dress, drink a glass of sherry, and come on deck. As the fresh sea-breezes blew around him, hope revived in his heart. He imagined he was better, and positively came down to tea. And that same night, some time after turning in, hunger compelled him to get up again and, although half a gale of wind was blowing at the time, feel his way across the reeling deck to the steward's pantry. No wind or sea that ever moved could make my friend sea-sick after that night. So you see that imagination is really a tool that can cut in two directions.

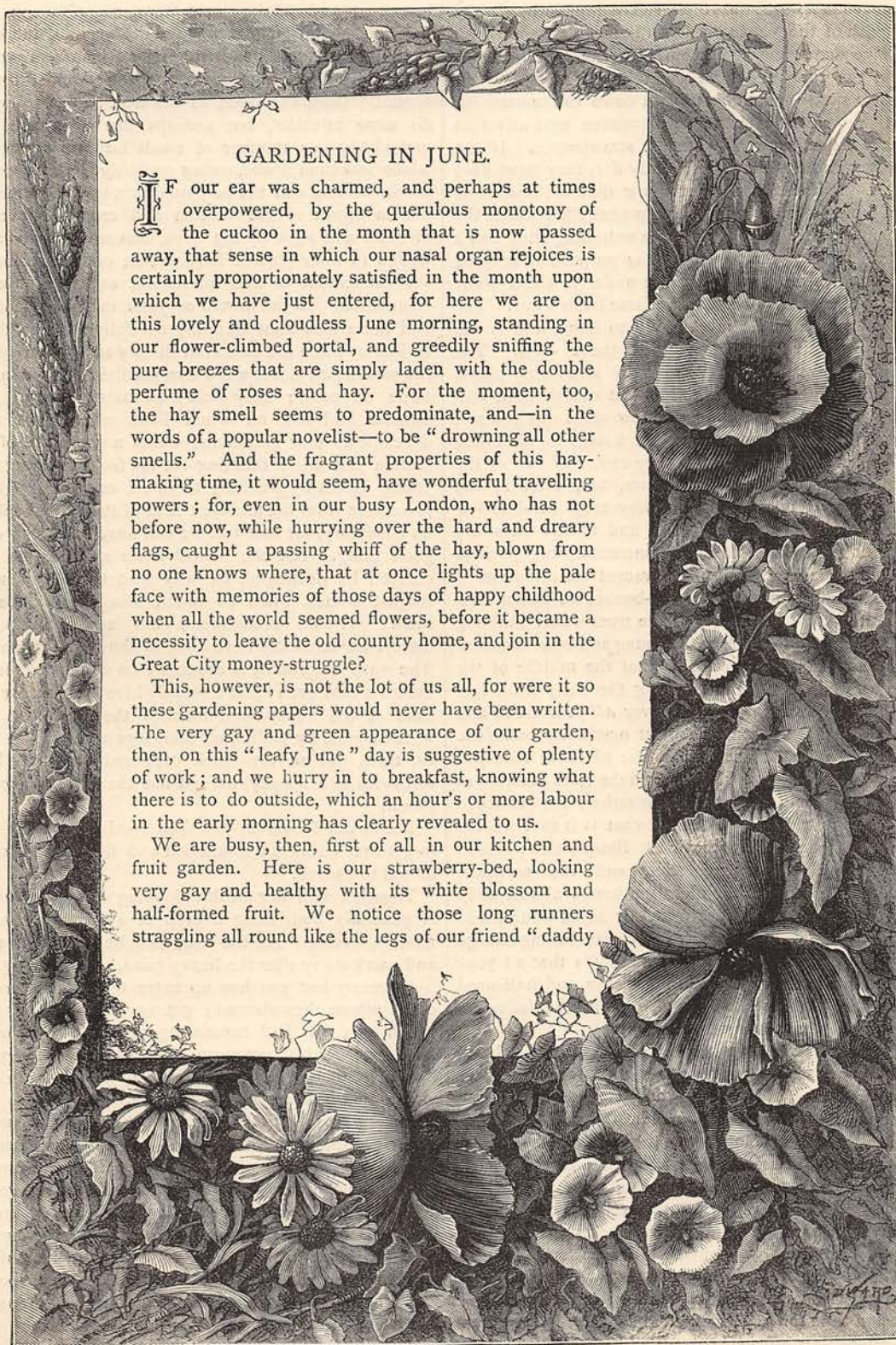
But, the reader may ask me, can imagination actually relieve distress of feelings?—can it, for instance, destroy the pain of an aching tooth? "Pluck" or moral courage undoubtedly will, and a determination to bear up against any illness has a decided tendency to banish its sting. This, then, is the medicine I bring you for this merry month of May. I bring you *hope*. And I desire you to try my medicine, in a common-sense way, of course; I am not going to ask you to

GARDENING IN JUNE.

IF our ear was charmed, and perhaps at times overpowered, by the querulous monotony of the cuckoo in the month that is now passed away, that sense in which our nasal organ rejoices is certainly proportionately satisfied in the month upon which we have just entered, for here we are on this lovely and cloudless June morning, standing in our flower-climbed portal, and greedily sniffing the pure breezes that are simply laden with the double perfume of roses and hay. For the moment, too, the hay smell seems to predominate, and—in the words of a popular novelist—to be “drowning all other smells.” And the fragrant properties of this hay-making time, it would seem, have wonderful travelling powers; for, even in our busy London, who has not before now, while hurrying over the hard and dreary flags, caught a passing whiff of the hay, blown from no one knows where, that at once lights up the pale face with memories of those days of happy childhood when all the world seemed flowers, before it became a necessity to leave the old country home, and join in the Great City money-struggle?

This, however, is not the lot of us all, for were it so these gardening papers would never have been written. The very gay and green appearance of our garden, then, on this “leafy June” day is suggestive of plenty of work; and we hurry in to breakfast, knowing what there is to do outside, which an hour’s or more labour in the early morning has clearly revealed to us.

We are busy, then, first of all in our kitchen and fruit garden. Here is our strawberry-bed, looking very gay and healthy with its white blossom and half-formed fruit. We notice those long runners straggling all round like the legs of our friend “daddy



long-legs." If we wish only for good fruit, we cut these runners off, for they run away with all the strength of the plant; but if, on the contrary, we wish to have some good young plants for next year's cropping, the runners—those of them at least that we wish to save—should be pegged down to the earth, or else into pots. Then the old question next arises as to the expediency of watering strawberries. If the weather is really very persistently dry, they must have water, for if not, the bloom as it dies off, instead of developing into fruit, will dry up altogether under the not uncommon combination of a searching wind and a scorching sun. And then, for the purpose of keeping our fruit clean, we must place under it either some tan, the grass of our lawns, or some fresh straw. The grass is certainly the most ready to hand, and is the least expensive arrangement in these days. The ground between and around your strawberry-plants should have towards the end of last month been well gone over with the hoe; for how often will you see, when there is neglect in a garden, a huge thistle lifting up its head, perhaps in the very centre of one of the plants! Strawberries want care, too, even in the gathering, as not unfrequently, by mere careless impetuosity, half a dozen green and unripe ones are dragged off by a violent and unnecessary tug given to the only ripe one which had attracted our attention.

Next, among our gooseberry-bushes we notice that about this time the centre of the trees wants thinning out, that is to say, some of the young and over-luxuriant wood should be removed, so that the middle of the tree be well open. In gathering the early fruit, too, for bottling, &c., go generally over *all* your trees, and thin out the fruit from the most overlaiden branches. This will perhaps double the size of those that you allow to remain on your trees, and the trees themselves will be uniformly strengthened, or rather, less weakened by being so treated. Whereas, what is it that we too often see done on the occasion? Simply this:—Cook wants to bottle gooseberries, and the servants, children, or some thoughtless gardeners almost strip two or three trees of their fruit. It saves trouble and the bother of walking about, and chatterboxing can go on more easily. The result probably is that all your other trees have a large crop of sickly and half-sized fruit, the trees are exhausted, and in the following season bear hardly any fruit at all.

Our gooseberries we bottle when they are hard and unripe, not so our currants, yet even from these we remove all the superfluous wood, so that by the free admittance of light, sun, and air, the fruit can have more chance of colouring and ripening, as well as flowering, in its season. Just now we have to guard against the depredations of the caterpillar, which feeds on the leaf only. But do not therefore imagine that the fruit will not be injured simply because the leaves only are attacked, for when the leaves are devoured (as they were so very much last year) the fruit will not properly ripen and will be almost tasteless. If you can find time for it, perhaps the best remedy is to pick the caterpillars off your currant and gooseberry leaves by hand; others use lime or soot, or sprinkle the trees

with white hellebore. It is a mistake to grow impatient and shake your trees, for although you certainly shake off a number to the ground, and succeed in killing a good many, yet numbers crawl rapidly away into other trees, and the mischief is only spread. Then the birds, as the fruit begins to ripen, do some mischief, but perhaps not overmuch, for undeniably our number of small birds is upon the whole less than it was, owing probably to the two last severe winters and the perpetual rain of last summer, not to speak of the wanton and cruel destruction of nests and eggs by the boys, who seem to have no design in their pursuit beyond that of idle curiosity, the excitement of the adventure, and the love of destruction. In the month of June, too, our peaches and nectarines want thinning carefully; where three or four or more are clustered thickly together, remove the weakest; never allow two peaches to grow in the same direction; they would probably destroy one another and fall off when little more than half developed. Our grape-vine wants a good deal of attention just now: thinning out the fruit, stopping the young shoots by pinching them off, or, if under glass, protection from the intensest heat of the sun, should it be necessary, for recollect we can have too much of a good thing. Let the wasps' nests as soon as discovered be destroyed, for why wait to do this until August comes, when so much mischief is done by them? If we recommend our small birds to mercy, we decidedly have none to show to the wasps. The wasp is certainly a scourge; he attacks our fruit, makes a raid even upon a weakly hive of bees, for the sake of the honey, and tortures the flies upon the window-pane by pulling off their legs and wings. Let us, then, put on the black cap, and condemn him forthwith to a speedy, though not therefore to a cruel death.

But in our labour in the fruit garden we must not forget that we have our kitchen and flower garden to attend to as well.

Together with our healthy-looking vegetable crops, is generally flourishing a crop of a self-sown kind, namely, weeds. Let the hoe, then, be actively in use, and particularly after the heavy rains. Caution, again, is necessary lest you hoe up more than weeds, especially where they abound; get up the bearbine, too, which you will find luxuriating under your currants and gooseberries, amongst your rhubarb, in your flower garden—everywhere. This terrible weed, if you do not conquer it, will in time conquer you. In trenching and digging up during the autumn or spring—but especially in the spring—be careful to burn or give to the pigs—who love them—the long white wiry roots; you can never mistake them. When you come across them, take hold of them by hand (do not break them off) and gently draw them out of the ground; they will come away a foot or two long, and often longer. They can be detected by their odour alone, for if you break off a piece and smell it, it is intensely bitter and rank.

Brocoli plantings may be made now. Where the young plants have been previously pricked out in the

usual way, they should be carefully lifted, each with its little ball of earth, and planted out with a trowel. Let the distance between each vary in accordance with the richness of your soil and your knowledge of its capabilities of growth. Perhaps the average distance between each of your brocoli every way should be about two feet. Towards the end of June have another sowing of brocoli, for if we are to have a mild winter it will be found most useful. The winter of 1879-80 cut off the outstanding crops in many gardens; brocoli, and even strawberry-plants, vanished before the intense frost. Our evergreens, too, suffered enormously even in fairly sheltered situations.

The beet-root also will require thinning out and hoeing. Jerusalem artichokes, where they are growing thickly, had better too be thinned out, taking care naturally to remove the weakly ones. The old-fashioned notion of topping them is quite a wrong one.

In the selection of a spot for your celery-bed, recollect that we have now entered upon the first of our three hot months, and that celery is not particularly partial to the glare of the sun; its natural home is an ordinary ditch, and a ditch we dig to plant it in. For the sake of shelter, then, it is well to contrive to have a row of scarlet runners or peas along the south side of your celery-bed. Celery requires a thoroughly rich and moist soil, good rotten manure at the bottom of your bed, with after and occasional additions of liquid manure. The first sowing of celery should be made by the end of February or early in March; do not sow too much, and it should be in any small box or seed-pan, in rich soil and in gentle heat; plant your box, for instance, on the top row of the stand in your greenhouse. As soon as the plants have grown sufficiently large to be moved, prick them out into a gentle hot-bed, but not until they have attained a fair growth must they be finally moved to the bed or long ditch which you have prepared for them. By the end of June choose a dry day, then, for your first slight earthing up. Let the soil which you are going to use be well powdered and broken up first of all, and the mould should, this first time at least, be drawn about the plants with the hand and the trowel very carefully. Avoid also allowing any of the soil at all to find its way on to the top and down into the heart of your young celery-plants. Indeed, it is worth while taking every pains with this most useful vegetable, for we flavour our soups with it, eat it with our cheese, and have it stewed as well.

Lettuces can be planted out in any spare corner of

your garden; the mustard and cress sown every week or ten days, and your peas still fortnightly, so as to keep up your successional supply in accordance with your demand. The onions and parsnips must be properly thinned out, and the potatoes earthed up. We are naturally anxious about this last crop, but as we had for the most part a favourable March for our sowing and planting, we are in good hopes that all is going well with us this year.

But we must not forget our flowers. If our window garden is not gay by this time, it is certainly our own fault. One neglect, however, that of watering, would probably be fatal to its well-being, for you must recollect that your pots are in the full glare of the sun, and that, unlike those flowers that you have just finished bedding out and pegging down, they have no mother earth from which to draw moisture. Then, too, not only is the sun beating down upon your flowers themselves, but also upon the sides of the pots in which your flowers are. And as these flower-pots are often very thin, one remedy is to place the pot in which your flower is inside another, while if you like to try a still better protection, let your *outside* pot be a *good deal* larger than the one which contains your flower, and between the two pots put some moss, and always keep this in a damp state. This, of course, will rather limit your room for a window display; but, on the other hand, overcrowding is a great mistake in your window garden. Or upon your window-stand or ledge you might have your pots arranged plunged all along in a moss bed, the outside being supported by wire. This has rather a pretty effect too, especially if you keep your moss as fresh and green as you can.

In the general flower garden, see to the annuals that were sown a couple of months or more ago. They will probably require thinning out, nor will they blossom half so well if this is not attended to. The half-hardy ones, too, that you have been raising in your frame can now be planted out. A few more of some of the best also can still be sown, so that by this means you keep up a succession of bloom. We generally begin budding our roses next month, so it is well already to have the eye on the look-out early for a bud-supply. The stocks, too, should have all needless branches removed from them.

This is, indeed, one of the most enjoyable months in the garden. Everything around us seems to bespeak the workmanship of an unseen Hand, infinitely beyond and more wonderful than that nature which the wisdom of these modern days is wont to deify.



creation, as amongst birds, the power of articulation, there the intelligence is absent which could employ that power for its own development; and where, as in dogs, we find conspicuous tokens of intelligence, there the power of articulation is totally absent.

This power of articulation forms a distinct branch of the inquiry. By careful study of the human vocal organs, and of the parts which they play in producing the various sounds which are the elements of language, the conditions necessary for distinct articulation have been ascertained. Pharynx, palate, tongue, lips, must all co-operate. And the system of nerves which direct and regulate the action of these portions of the vocal machinery is so complicated, that Sir Charles Bell declares the entire arrangement of tackling and cordage belonging to a man-of-war is less complex. The same authority assures us that if any one of those essential organs failed to perform its function, or either fell short of or exceeded its proper contribution to the combined movement, the intended word would expire upon the lips. Now, whether the required endowment be a particular conformation of the organs themselves, or of the nervous system, the power of articulation is actually possessed by certain species only, which have not the intelligence that could turn it to practical use.

Parrots can be taught to repeat any words, but they can never make up for themselves a new phrase out of the materials in the shape of words that they may have acquired. The natural utterance of many birds, though conveying no meaning (as words) to themselves, is distinctly articulate, and sometimes is identical in sound with words that have a meaning to us. The note of the "cuckoo" (from which the bird has derived its name in widely distant parts of the world) is distinctly articulate, though unmeaning. Of cries that appear significant as well as articulate,

Waterton gives amusing instances. In the woods of America, a traveller may suddenly hear himself greeted by the night-bird's cry, "Who are you, who, who are you?" and while he is looking about for his impertinent questioner he may receive from another bird the command, angrily and imperiously uttered, "Work away! work away!" followed up by the piteous entreaty of another, "Willie, come, go; Willie, Willie, Willie, come, go!" Besides the cuckoo, other birds are named after their cry, as the "Whip-poor-Will," the "Chuck-Will's-widow," and the "Whip-Tom-Kelly."

But it is the nightingale that possesses the power of articulation to the fullest extent among the species below us. There are races of men whose languages do not employ so many sounds as there are in the nightingale's song.* Vowels, consonants of various kinds, sibilants included, even double consonants, as X, Z, are recognised in it by the human ear.

Bird language has, in another respect, a remarkable resemblance to human language. To a considerable extent it has to be acquired, *i.e.*, learnt by each individual. If a bird be separated from its own species very soon after it is hatched, and placed with birds of a different species, it learns the song of the latter. If isolated altogether, its song is much less clear and less varied. Yet canaries brought up by their parents even in the midst of alien birds learn the canary song. The song of birds varies according to circumstances. They are not always saying or singing the same thing. There is the song of joy, the romance of love, the note of alarm, the voice of defiance, the call of the young by the mother to take shelter under her wings, the call to arms when a bird of prey has to be driven off, and many other varieties.

Enough has now been said to call attention to an interesting subject, which may be pursued in detail with very great profit.

W. HARRIS, M.A.



GARDENING IN JULY.



THREE hot days and a thunder-storm" proverbially make up our English summer—so, at least, say our grumblers; but we are in good hopes this season, at any rate, of a somewhat larger share of fine weather than can be crammed into a solitary half-week. Just now, however, we are wondering which of the two requires the greatest devotion to gardening: to sally forth on a crisp January morning for a day's hard trenching—a piece of work sufficiently vigorous to keep the life-blood circulating in our veins—or on one of these "three" notoriously hot July days

to open our garden-door for the purpose of carrying on our favourite pursuit.

Our resolution, however, is fixed. We fear neither January nor July. At the same time we intend to take proper precautions against sun-stroke by putting a large cabbage-leaf inside our hat—not a tall hat, of course, in which, by the way, we are sorely puzzled to know how our cricketers of five-and-thirty years ago, if early prints are to be believed, managed to play—and by having a puggree or white handkerchief concealing the back of our head and neck, which is the part most exposed to the fierce rays

* The Chinaman who attempts to say "France" can get no nearer to it than "Fulantsus."

of the sun, and which is according to all accounts our most susceptible part in this weather. We are conscious of a general tepid humidity of skin, our face is the colour of those giant strawberries or scarlet-runners over there, and by the Alpine appearance of those noble-looking clouds, that seem to be boiling and bubbling up in the south-east, we feel pretty confident that we shall hear the distant boom of the thunder before perhaps our day's work is done.

This, then, is the month for that most interesting operation, budding roses. We have on a former

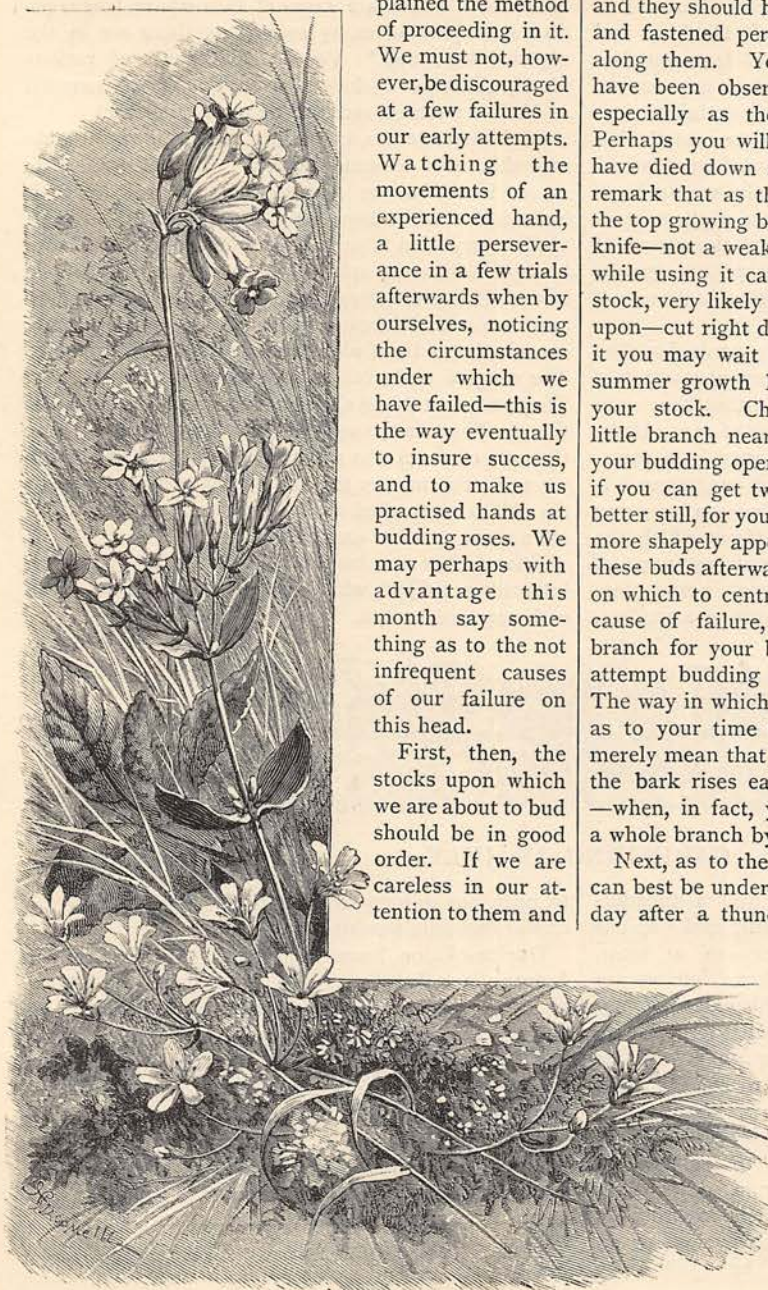
occasion fully explained the method of proceeding in it. We must not, however, be discouraged at a few failures in our early attempts. Watching the movements of an experienced hand, a little perseverance in a few trials afterwards when by ourselves, noticing the circumstances under which we have failed—this is the way eventually to insure success, and to make us practised hands at budding roses. We may perhaps with advantage this month say something as to the not infrequent causes of our failure on this head.

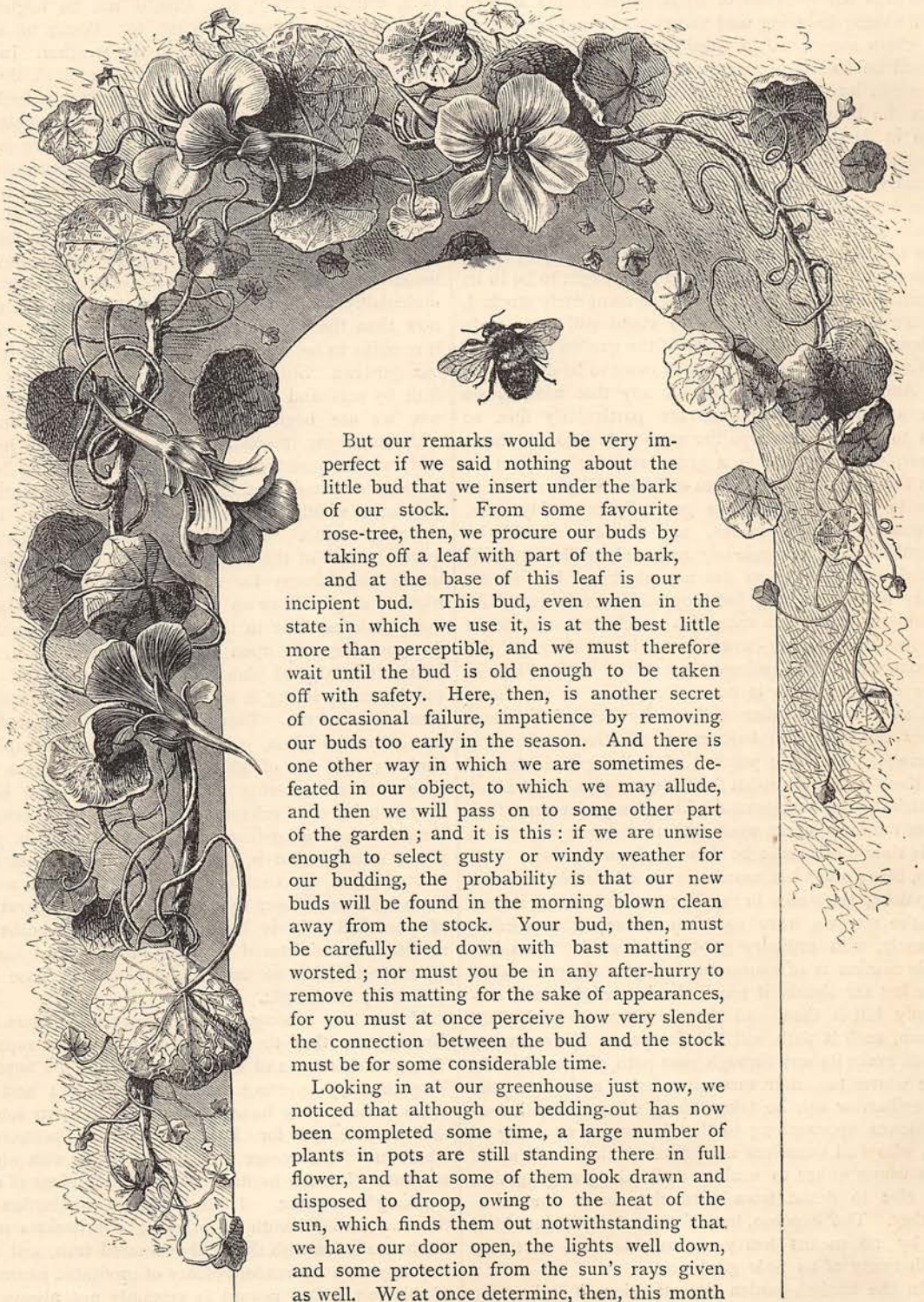
First, then, the stocks upon which we are about to bud should be in good order. If we are careless in our attention to them and

—more especially after our operation of budding is over—allow little buds deliberately to develop themselves at different points all down our stock, we shall be sure to fail, for all the strength, nourishment, and growth that we can have is wanted for our little bud, which we are daily watching with so much interest, and consequently if we allow these little lower buds and shoots to develop themselves, only a divided strength finds its way to our bud at the top. Your stocks, then, were got from the hedge-rows, or more probably from the nurseryman, in November last. They should have been planted in good open situations, not under the drip of trees. It is well, too, to have them of a uniform height, and they should have been properly secured by sticks, and fastened perhaps to a rail that should run all along them. You will naturally from time to time have been observing the condition of your stocks, especially as the season for budding approaches. Perhaps you will have noticed that some of them have died down a good deal, and you will at once remark that as they can be of no possible use *above* the top growing bud, you may with a strong and keen knife—not a weak and blunt one, that would perhaps while using it cause you to break and disfigure your stock, very likely below the point that you had fixed upon—cut right down to this top bud, or if you prefer it you may wait before you do this until the early summer growth has more developed the buds on your stock. Choose, then, the healthiest-looking little branch nearest to the top of your stock for your budding operations. One of course will do, but if you can get two, that is one on either side, it is better still, for your tree will afterwards start off with a more shapely appearance; and besides, should one of these buds afterwards fail, there still remains the other on which to centre your hopes. Another occasional cause of failure, then, is this choosing a weakly branch for your budding. It is, again, better not to attempt budding until quite the first week in July. The way in which the bark rises will be the best guide as to your time to select for budding. By this we merely mean that the best time for budding is when the bark rises easiest from the wood of your stock—when, in fact, you feel that you could easily peel a whole branch by stripping off the bark.

Next, as to the sort of weather in which budding can best be undertaken. A hot but cloudy day, or a day after a thunderstorm, is the best for this work.

But to select a time when we have a cloudless sky and a burning sun is undeniably a mistake. The reason is obvious enough. Your little bud becomes simply scorched and dried up. Indeed for the double purpose of keeping moisture on your bud and keeping off the rays of the July sun, it is well to tie a small bunch of moss over all when complete. Getting scorched up, then, is an additional cause of failure.





But our remarks would be very imperfect if we said nothing about the little bud that we insert under the bark of our stock. From some favourite rose-tree, then, we procure our buds by taking off a leaf with part of the bark, and at the base of this leaf is our incipient bud. This bud, even when in the state in which we use it, is at the best little more than perceptible, and we must therefore wait until the bud is old enough to be taken off with safety. Here, then, is another secret of occasional failure, impatience by removing our buds too early in the season. And there is one other way in which we are sometimes defeated in our object, to which we may allude, and then we will pass on to some other part of the garden; and it is this: if we are unwise enough to select gusty or windy weather for our budding, the probability is that our new buds will be found in the morning blown clean away from the stock. Your bud, then, must be carefully tied down with bast matting or worsted; nor must you be in any after-hurry to remove this matting for the sake of appearances, for you must at once perceive how very slender the connection between the bud and the stock must be for some considerable time.

Looking in at our greenhouse just now, we noticed that although our bedding-out has now been completed some time, a large number of plants in pots are still standing there in full flower, and that some of them look drawn and disposed to droop, owing to the heat of the sun, which finds them out notwithstanding that we have our door open, the lights well down, and some protection from the sun's rays given as well. We at once determine, then, this month

to turn everything out. And our object in doing so is twofold, for we shall thus decorate our garden-paths, perhaps our windows or some flower-stands as well, with these flowering and showy pots; and by making a clean sweep, so to speak, in our greenhouse, we shall be able if necessary now to have it painted, or we can have it washed down and prepared all ready for the busy time of taking cuttings, which comes on in August or thereabouts; by the end of which month, or a little later if we are hard driven for time, we shall again have our house crowded. And so the horticultural year goes on, each month, each week, each day bringing its "common round." Never let it be said then, as is sometimes the case, that July being the month in which the garden is or ought to be in its perfection, or the land being now completely stocked, there is nothing to do but to stand still or to walk about and admire the beauty of the garden in general. We shall soon see that there is more to be done yet.

Among the annuals, remark any that have blown or are now blowing that are particularly fine, so as to secure when ripe the seed-pods; do not, however, pull these off in a green and unripened state. In this luxuriant month you will have all your work to do to keep your borders generally in a tidy state. Decaying plants, leaves, and flowers should be regularly and scrupulously removed, while any half-hardy flower that you did not plant out last month may now be set out, for they will come in especially handy to supply the vacancies which very soon begin to occur of early-sown annuals as they go off. Crocuses and snowdrops are often better left in the ground; there is no real occasion to lift them, as we do most other bulbs. By being left where they are they will look more effective each early spring as the little patches of bulbs get thickened.

Keep a sharp look-out for the earwig on the dahlias, which, by the way, generally like plenty of water. Run over the lawn every week with the mowing-machine: this should of course be done early in the day. This too, being a dry hot month, is an admirable time for repairing the walks in the kitchen and fruit gardens in the way we have so often before recommended, namely, with ordinary gas-tar and sand. Considerable caution is of course necessary in the process, as the hot tar should it touch the box edging will certainly kill it then and there. Once properly laid down, such a path will last for years. Nor can any weed make its way through your path afterwards. In the winter too, after successive frosts and thaws, the wheelbarrow can be taken along without any inconvenience approaching to that known to so many of us, who find ourselves compelled at the break up of the winter either to work or walk along a quagmire, or else to desist from gardening for a time altogether. The expense, too, of the whole undertaking is by no means heavy—a consideration certainly with many of us poor gardeners.

In the kitchen-garden our attention, if it has not been already attracted before this, should at once be given to the getting in of our chief crop of winter greens and other vegetables; a little salt also may

be scattered over the asparagus-bed, and the general successional sowing of your mustard and cress, lettuce, spinach, turnip, &c., should not be neglected. The celery will want seeing to. Water or some liquid manure will benefit it in dry weather. In administering a dose of this latter compound, do not pour it upon the head of the celery: indeed let nothing get into the heart of your crop, and similar caution must therefore be had when you are earthing up. Nor may it be too late for another sowing of peas if made early in the month. We can never in our jolly little island tell with any degree of certainty what sort of weather may be in store for us.

In our fruit-garden we shall find the birds as busy as usual—those of them, that is to say, that are left, for undeniably there are fewer small birds on the wing now than there were two or three years ago. And it remains to be seen what effect this will have upon our gardens. Still just now we wish to protect our fruit by nets and other appliances. Every morning, too, we are beginning to watch our melon-frame with increasing interest. When we open our lights early we find ourselves now occasionally bending down to poke our nose inside, to catch the first whiff of fragrance which is so delicate and delicious in a ripening melon. This, however, will not be till quite the end of the month. Keep a sharp look-out inside your frame for snails and slugs. In one night a single fellow on your melon will eat a large hole, perhaps close to the stalk of your best melon, for you may rely upon it the slug will go to the best. It is a good plan to keep your fruit off the soil by gently lifting it up and placing underneath it some slate or tile. This too will bring your melons nearer to the glass, which when they are rapidly ripening will be of great advantage to them, as they want no watering and all the sun and light they can have. Perhaps, after all, the most critical time for the melon-frame is when the fruit is just about setting—that is, perhaps, ordinarily about the end of June. Be cautious at that time not to water them with any water that is not of the temperature of your bed. It is by these cold shower-baths so recklessly administered by idle, careless, and indifferent hands that so much labour and expense go eventually for nought.

If you are rooting any strawberries in pots for forcing, see that they also get their water supply. The gooseberries and currants can often be kept a long time by covering them with matting; and in some seasons they have been known to keep sound and unshrivelled for long without any protection whatever. This seems especially the case with white currants. But our limited space will not admit of our "talking" any more. There is a great satisfaction in this harvesting month in bringing our baskets into the house laden with the richly-coloured fruit, and we can only wish our readers plenty of profitable journeys of this sort. Our reward is certainly not always in proportion to our labour. But it is still more certain—and on the best authority—that if we refuse to labour we shall have no reward at all.

alteration afterwards, you will very quickly have some sort of resting-place. I have found that dining-rooms and bed-rooms very seldom require any material re-arranging, as the furniture is of a nature that renders it easy to see at a glance how it may be most suitably placed.

And here let me say a word in favour of square carpets and stained floors. The saving of expense and worry when moving to a new house is incalculable if you have adopted this plan. You may have to turn your carpets over to other rooms, but you will generally find that they will all come in with little or no alteration, and thus the mortifying process of cutting about good carpets is entirely obviated. Besides this advantage, the plan is so much more clean and healthy that for this reason alone it is most highly to be recommended. I consider it most desirable for bed-rooms, and in my own experience have arrived at the conclusion that fitted carpets are an entire mistake. These loose squares or strips can be taken up and shaken whenever required, and dusty corners need never exist. For bed-rooms I have found the best plan is to have one straight long piece made to go along the length of the room, and two pieces detached, up the sides by the bed, leaving the space under the bed uncovered. Thus, in an ordinary-sized room you will have three moderate-sized pieces of carpet instead of one cumbersome affair, the shaking of which is quite a formidable undertaking.

The staining of floors round the edges of rooms is not a very difficult matter, and can very well be done by the boys of the family if thought too time-taking for the maids. A regular cabinet-maker or French-polisher will usually charge a great deal more than he ought. Vandyke brown and linseed oil may be used for the staining, taking care to mix it to a full dark shade, which looks better than a lighter tint. It can scarcely be too dark, and should be applied evenly with a small sponge, care being taken to leave no unsightly patches. When this is dry a coat of size must be laid on if you propose varnishing your floor. The polishing with turpentine and beeswax is so time-taking that I prefer the varnish for small establishments, where the servants' time is pretty fully occupied. The size is prepared by being placed in a saucepan with a very small quantity of water, and allowed to dissolve. It must be applied very hot with

a brush, and I should add that the result will be better if a coat of size be placed on the floor before the staining as well as after. When this is thoroughly dry, one or two coats of hard varnish must be added. One will look very well, but two will look better—only pray be careful to let each application dry thoroughly before the next is put on. A great wrinkle with a varnished floor is to give it an occasional rub over with the very smallest quantity of linseed oil on a soft rag. This will keep it in beautiful order, and if done every two or three weeks, at the end of a year it will look brighter and better than it did at first.

If you have been wise you will have taken care to have some coals in the cellar of your new house. Should the season be winter, it would be well to instruct the charwoman to have fires ready kindled in the rooms you intend to use immediately. The kitchen furniture should have been the last articles put into the van, as they will now be the first to come out; and your servant can very soon begin to busy herself in preparing a meal, the knives and forks and spoons for which, if she be sensible, she will have carried in a hand-bag. In the case of your new abode being some distance from shops, tea, pepper, salt, and several other commodities may be added with advantage. If your carpets are already placed you will very quickly have a habitable dining-room—probably by the time the meal is ready to be served. The men will speedily put up your bedsteads, and with some one at hand to instruct them will readily place wardrobes, chests of drawers, &c., in their respective places. You will be surprised to find how soon one or more bed-rooms may be put in quite nice order if the carpets are already placed.

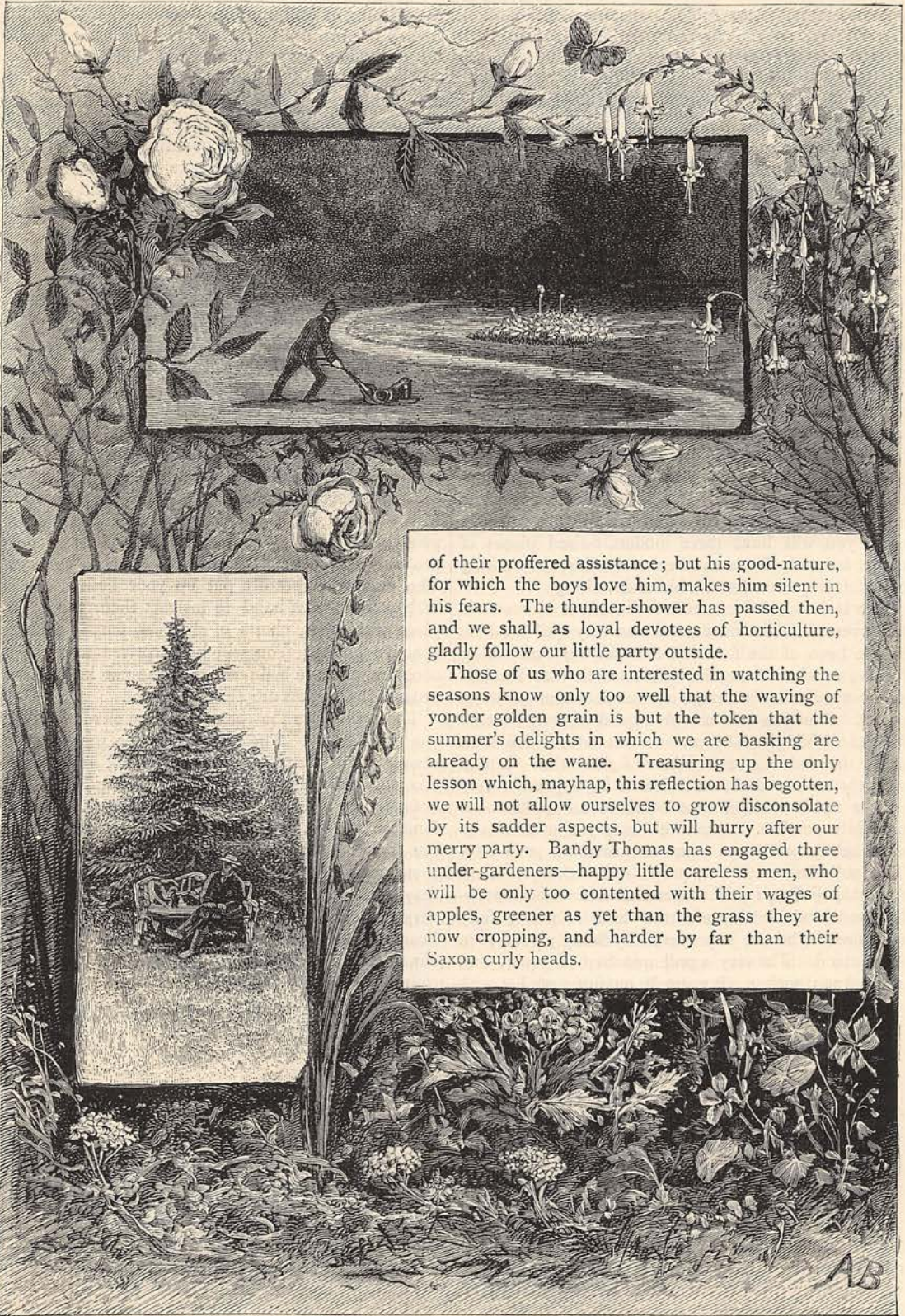
Those windows that have Venetian shades will give you no difficulty. The curtains can be put up at any convenient season; but if they are not so furnished you will find great comfort from having blinds fitted before your arrival. Such arrangements, by a little forethought, can easily be made on a previous visit to the house. And now, having the kitchen, dining-room, and sleeping-rooms in comfortable order, you may retire to rest, feeling that it has not been such a very formidable affair after all, and with very good heart to set to work on the morrow to reducing such chaos as still exists into the proverbial "apple-pie" order.

GARDENING IN AUGUST.



WE are in the full career of our summer enjoyment. The boys are home for the holidays, devoting the bulk of their time to cricket and the largest of the hairy gooseberries; or should they be driven in-doors under protest by stress of weather, it is but to terrify the old nurse by carrying off the baby, tormenting their sisters at the piano, and then distracting papa in the library by jumping down eight or ten stairs at

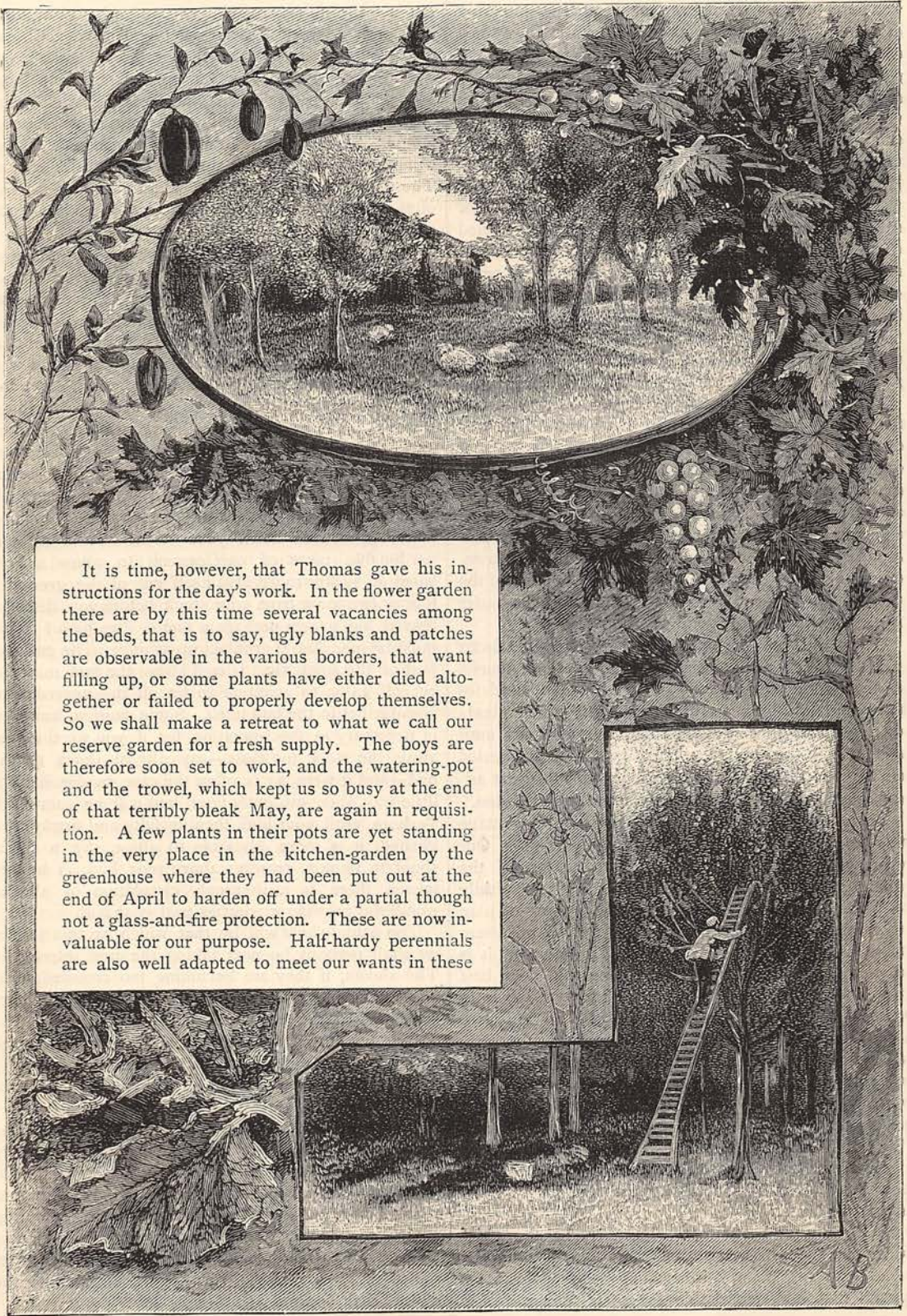
a time. The sudden appearance of *Paterfamilias furiosus*, *Times* in hand, scatters them far and wide, to congregate presently in the pantry, from which however they as quickly emerge on catching sight of Bandy Thomas, the old gardener, going to the kitchen for his lunch. Bandy Thomas is quite a favourite and has already acceded to their request to be allowed to help him, though he has his usual secret misgivings, not to say alarms, as to the value



of their proffered assistance; but his good-nature, for which the boys love him, makes him silent in his fears. The thunder-shower has passed then, and we shall, as loyal devotees of horticulture, gladly follow our little party outside.

Those of us who are interested in watching the seasons know only too well that the waving of yonder golden grain is but the token that the summer's delights in which we are basking are already on the wane. Treasuring up the only lesson which, mayhap, this reflection has begotten, we will not allow ourselves to grow disconsolate by its sadder aspects, but will hurry after our merry party. Bandy Thomas has engaged three under-gardeners—happy little careless men, who will be only too contented with their wages of apples, greener as yet than the grass they are now cropping, and harder by far than their Saxon curly heads.

AB



It is time, however, that Thomas gave his instructions for the day's work. In the flower garden there are by this time several vacancies among the beds, that is to say, ugly blanks and patches are observable in the various borders, that want filling up, or some plants have either died altogether or failed to properly develop themselves. So we shall make a retreat to what we call our reserve garden for a fresh supply. The boys are therefore soon set to work, and the watering-pot and the trowel, which kept us so busy at the end of that terribly bleak May, are again in requisition. A few plants in their pots are yet standing in the very place in the kitchen-garden by the greenhouse where they had been put out at the end of April to harden off under a partial though not a glass-and-fire protection. These are now invaluable for our purpose. Half-hardy perennials are also well adapted to meet our wants in these

A.B.

vacancies, and will answer better just now than annuals. As the month advances, and the heat is well and perhaps finally set in, see to the gathering in of the choicest seeds as they ripen. They must not be picked off too soon or in a green state. On your sweet-peas, for instance, you will notice, strangely enough, how variably advanced they are even in the same bed sown at the same time. Some are just coming into flower, some are in full flower, some are dying off, and there are some seed-pods quite green, while there are some brown, dry, and evidently ripe enough to be picked off by hand at once. Pick only then these last, and have them thoroughly dried off in the sun. For this purpose they can be set out in the at present little-used greenhouse, in trays or earthenware saucers. This is a grand job again for one of the boys, and he can do little harm at it. Seeds in most cases should be removed from their husks, and when well dried should be packed in dry paper and laid by—labelled, of course—in a dry closet.

Perhaps there is more watering done this month than during any other month of the year. This was certainly the case in 1879, but then the watering-pot was in the sky. In 1880 we shall probably have recourse to our artificial appliances. When watering is done keep the surface of the soil a little stirred, otherwise you will find it get afterwards hard and cracked. It is, by the way, of little good to water your lawn, supposing it to have got brown from the heat of the sun, unless you can afford the time and the water to give it a thoroughly good soaking.

Generally popular, too, are those fine double dwarf stocks, especially in the early spring. These, of course, at that time are under glass. If, then, seeds of these varieties be sown about now, the young plants as they come on can stand safely out of doors until quite late in the autumn, when they should be carried off to your frames, and they will exhibit to great advantage afterwards in your greenhouse in succession.

Something perhaps may be said with advantage this month relative to window gardening. Our window garden is naturally at this season of the year gay enough, but as the summer begins stealthily to decline, we must be devising some sort of plan of preparation for the winter exhibition. Now, where there is a small greenhouse to fall back upon, it is of course very easy to transfer at intervals your best and most showy pots of flowers from your house to your windows, but it seems most common to find more attempts at window gardening where a greenhouse is a luxury which cannot be afforded. Indeed, in many of our humbler abodes the window garden is not wholly intended for ornament, but is a sort of desperate attempt to supply the want of a greenhouse. Well, it is certainly possible with some judgment, and care to keep some flowers in a living state through the winter, but from necessity the number of them cannot be large.

If beauty and ornament, however, be the chief object in the window garden, and there is only the window to rely upon, it is certainly better to go in for plants that are remarkable for their foliage rather

than for their florescence as the winter season comes on. There are, for instance, several varieties of the daphne, the small-leaved myrtle, and other evergreens admirably adapted for your window display. Choose nice shrubby plants rather than tall and lanky ones. The foliage, too, is often fragrant, particularly those old-fashioned pelargoniums, the leaves of which when slightly rubbed or pinched are suggestive of citron or lemon. Some even are in a way rose-scented. Raise some musk plants from cuttings late in the season. These and a few ferns, &c., under a bell-glass will often afford some interesting occupation in the dead season of the year.

We must now have a turn in our rose garden and see how those that we budded a month ago have progressed. But, indeed, so long as the bark continues to rise freely when the attempt is made, budding may still go on. Now when you see that the buds of your July operations have thoroughly well united and have made a good and healthy start, the matting or worsted ties may be removed; but perhaps it would be as well to re-tie them, only let it be more loosely so as to obtain a greater freedom of action. Some attention, too, must also be paid to the stock; continue to rub off carefully and systematically all little buds and shoots that will be perpetually making their appearance down your stock. It is an unpardonable piece of carelessness to allow a long shoot or sucker to develop itself out of the ground a foot or two away from your stock before you discover that it has grown perhaps a foot or two high! This must be mercilessly grubbed up at once. The growing part of the stock that is well above the bud must be cut off so as to continue to let all the nourishment possible get to the bud itself. Some caution, however, is necessary in the operation, for if you were to cut away the stock too close—say almost down to the bud—and it were, as is often the case, to die back a little way, then evidently your bud will be sacrificed. Perhaps until your bud, then, is fully and firmly established, it is more advisable to allow, say, a single shoot to remain growing above your bud, as by this means there is a thorough circulation of all the wonderful growing properties past your bud.

The dahlia-show will be that which at this season we shall perhaps be next taking the most interest in. The shoots, if they are becoming too crowded, must be thinned out a little, and the whole plants themselves must be properly staked and tied.

If it has not already been done, finish layering the carnations this month; and if the weather remain dry and hot, it will well repay you to give your stock of layers both water and shade.

The kitchen and fruit gardens and the melon-frame must not, however, be passed by. There is certainly in this harvesting month considerable satisfaction in a general survey. We seem to see the reward of our year's labour all around us, in the shape of colouring apples, rosy-looking and fragrant peaches and nectarines, not to speak of the endless variety of vegetables in all stages of growth, proportionate to the date of their sowing.

Thomas, as he walks through the kitchen-garden, calls the boys' attention for a moment to that most useful thing of almost daily consumption—parsley. He says it is well to pull out first by the roots all the parsley that has only plain leaves—it will always be of some sort of use—but that which has the most crumpled foliage is allowed to remain, being of course that which is the most effective for decoration. Passing along, he says of the onions that it is a mistake, he thinks, to break their green tops—an old-fashioned custom arising from the notion that it makes the bulbs themselves larger. This habit is neither more nor less than a piece of impatience, and in this way: onions are generally supposed to be ripe when the foliage decays, but as this breaking of their green tops naturally entails the earlier decay of the foliage, it is argued that it will also entail the earlier ripening of the onion itself. This, however, is a delusion, for we are evidently violating the ordinary process of nature. Let our odoriferous friend the onion alone then. He will in his own time and in his own way ripen better, and—what is more—he will keep better than if you prematurely broke his neck.

There, however—proceeds Thomas, looking at the broad-beans—we shall break off their tops altogether: these tops would otherwise keep on growing taller and taller, but now by breaking them off we shall throw all the strength of the plant into the bearing part of it.

Winter greens must now be planted out, and salads, turnips, &c., may yet of course be sown. This month, too, we gather in our herb stock. It is well to gather the herbs just about the time that they seem to be coming into bloom. When gathered, store them away at once in a dry place, or some of them indeed can be tied up forthwith in little

bundles, and hung up in the place in which they are to remain.

The celery, again, will require careful earthing-up. Choose a dry day for this work, remove suckers, and, as before, avoid letting any of the earth get into the heart of your plant.

As to the melon-frame, we may with advantage repeat our warning given, we believe, last month—to withhold watering as your plants are getting ripe. By this means the quality of the fruit will be materially improved. A melon more almost than any other fruit tells you itself when it is fit to be gathered. Fragrance is the first symptom of ripeness, but only of *approaching* ripeness. Do not therefore go and hastily cut the first melon that has a pleasant smell about it. When it is fully ripe, you will see it very often crack a little near to and all round the stalk, while it shows a disposition almost to separate from the stalk of itself.

Let the strawberry-beds in August be cleared of all their runners, and dig well between the rows—digging in, by the way, these runners and *débris* for a manure. Indeed, rotten fruit is a good manure itself, but the pigs might complain of its being so used. The solitary pig, in fact, is a valuable help to your garden, especially where no other animals, such as horses, &c., are kept. It has been said—and there is surely much truth in it—that no poor rustic cottager should be without his pig and his bees.

These last however, the bees, remind us of an uglier and more unwelcome neighbour—the wasp. This is the month in which he is our greatest torment. There is no end to his audacity, and no keeping him out. Woe be unto you if you attempt to take the nest by daytime! Let the sun go well down first of all, and then go to work.

 BREAKING THE NEWS.


BEDIENT to the latest words
His dying comrade spake,
A toil-worn soldier sorrowing came

The heavy news to break:
The heavy news to break to her
Who long had looked in vain
For that fond partner of her life
She ne'er would see again.

The warrior's face grew blanched as he
Drew near her cottage door;
With faltering step and quaking heart
He crossed its threshold o'er.

The hero of a hundred fights,
He felt a coward now;
A death-like dampness stood upon
His weather-beaten brow.

And when the young wife met his gaze
The comer's eyes grew dim;
She read disaster in his looks,
And thus appealed to him:

"Oh, soldier, soldier, tell me true,
What of my husband dear?
Say, is he wounded? is he sick?
Or will he soon be here?"

"You do not—do not answer me!
Oh, say! he is not dead?"
Tears coursed them down the hero's cheeks;
He mutely bowed his head;
And then with one heartrending wail
Which spake her deep despair,
The poor young widowed mother sank
Half fainting on her chair.

The little one that ne'er had seen
Its gallant sire drew nigh,
And fondly clinging to her gown,
Besought her not to cry.
She put her arm about her child,
And pictured him afar,
And in her heart of hearts she felt
The wickedness of war!

"I shall never forget till you do," was the whispered reply. Their eyes met for a moment, and Masie's glance was so reassuring that Harry was perfectly happy for the remainder of the evening.

For many a long evening after, whether unintentionally or by design, Mr. Matherly did not again invite

him to the Croft; and he saw, or fancied he saw, a marked diminution in his cordiality even in their business transactions.

But after all what did it matter? He had Masie's promise to *wait* and *trust*, and that was all-sufficient.

END OF CHAPTER THE TWELFTH.



GARDENING IN SEPTEMBER.

HOT morning, say, in the early days of September, finds us once more at our honest trade or our healthy occupation in the garden. And as a further proof that we still wish to call it summer, we have thought it perfectly safe to postpone taking our stock of cuttings until the early days of this month, although as a general rule it has been for the most part recommended to have the cuttings all taken by the month of August. The fact is, we find our work in the garden so overwhelming in the summer months that we are glad to postpone a job of this kind as long as we prudently can. Cuttings, then, should certainly be taken before the

really autumnal weather sets in. Of course they *can* be taken as early as June, if we prefer doing so, but there is little object in this, except perhaps we are wishing to increase our stock of any one or more flowers in particular; and a further reason—more especially for those whose greenhouse or pit accommodation is limited, which unhappily is the case with too many of us—for not taking our cutting stock at an earlier date is this. If our cuttings are all got in, say, by the first or second week in August, by the time that Michaelmas arrives our new stock of young plants will probably in a warm season have attained such proportions that we shall shortly be thinking of shifting into larger pots, and then, when autumn has fairly set in, and we are crowding into our house everything that we want to save from the first frosts, we shall find ourselves terribly cramped for room. All we want, therefore, is to have not later than the middle of September a healthy stock of cuttings that have

rooted, and that bid fair to be even in the spring of the following year nothing larger than dwarf and shrubby plants. Cuttings, then, taken too early in the season give a great deal of trouble a few months afterwards, by reason of the size to which they naturally attain.

The ordinary process of taking cuttings has been, we think, described on a former occasion, so that we need do little more than generally advert to it here. Your cuttings, too, should be selected from the shoots that have not produced any flowers. Be particular in avoiding any sort of injury to the upper portion of your cuttings, that is to say, do not pull off the small leaves. One or two of the leaves near the stem of your cutting may perhaps need removal, merely for the purpose of enabling you to fix the stem more firmly and with greater facility into the soil.

We may again, perhaps, advert to the importance of using a sharp knife, so as to make a clean and not a rough and jagged cut. Cut right through, having your blade in a horizontal position, parallel with the surface of the soil. What we mean is, do not think that the end of your cutting which you insert into your prepared soil should be brought to a point. While busy over the cuttings you will want plenty of sand. If you rejoice in a sandy soil, so much the better, for this is undeniably in favour of all propagation by cuttings. Indeed, plants that are delicate and difficult to root are very often struck *entirely* in sand. In any case, then, use sand very largely. Have next in your hand, after the cuttings have all been selected from your parent plants, a small dibble or piece of stick a trifle larger in its bulk than the stem of your cuttings. The soil which you use, by the way, should first of all have been moderately moistened and well pressed together. Then with your dibble pierce little holes for the insertion of your cuttings, and take care when you put them in that the *end* of each one may thoroughly touch the bottom of the little hole which you have made; but here again use a little caution and skill, lest in your anxiety to get your cutting well home, you by pressing it too hard break it off short. And this will entail loss of time and loss of temper, and you have to begin over again.

Your cutting then being put in, press the soil a little, closely and very carefully, about it, so as to get it well fixed and established in its place. A little watering—not much—and all is done, only do not afterwards let your stock be exposed to the glare of the sun.

It will easily be seen that we can get several cuttings into one good-sized flower-pot, but indeed, if we find ourselves running short in this commodity, we can readily have recourse to old wooden boxes.

Well, then, enough has no doubt been said about our cuttings; nevertheless, the subject is of sufficient importance, for upon the wellbeing of these cuttings depend all our hopes for the next summer. And what a terribly long way off does that seem! The rains and fogs, the snows and frosts, and then those east winds that pierce our very marrow even when under the bed-clothes, those poor cuttings and we poor gardeners have to face all this before another summer. Once, however, let our cuttings be well rooted and established before the advent of the cold, and with ordinary care and attention there is little to fear.

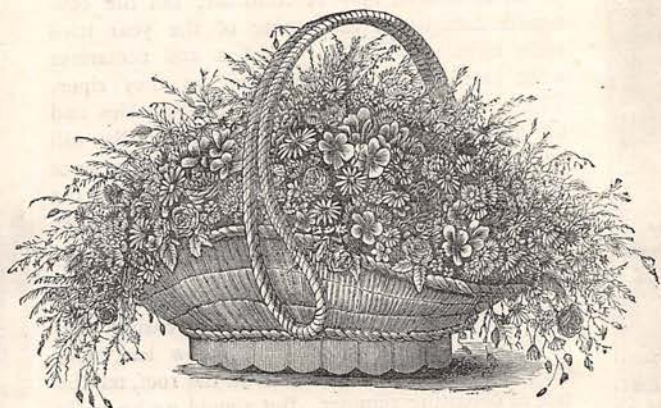
A little later on, many of our healthiest-looking geraniums, &c., that are now in the open flower-beds we shall cut down, pot, and stow away somewhere in the greenhouse. This operation, however, we may perhaps with safety postpone to the early part of the following month. We may notice our dahlia show in passing; probably they are now at their best, but the very first frost will try them severely. Now that they have got so large, two or even more stakes are necessary for their support; indeed, these and any other large plant, particularly top-heavy ones like standard roses, ought just now to be well seen to, as the first severe gale might be liable, unless they are thoroughly well secured to their stakes, not only to blow them down, but break them off short, the mass of foliage being under these circumstances all to their disadvantage.

Carnations that were layered last month, if done properly, will by this time have struck root, and by about Michaelmas, or at any rate some six weeks from the time they were layered, had better be severed from the parent plant and potted off; indeed, when once they have thoroughly well rooted, the sooner they are potted off the better. Have the pots well drained, for damp always tries the picotee and carnation collection more than anything else. When damp sets in dabs of mildew appear on the foliage. Fresh air is the true preservative against damp and mildew, and yet some gardeners will persist in being frightened at the very notion of opening the lights. And it is provokingly hard to get the idea of the positive necessity of ventilation into their heads. Occupation of "a well-aired bed" does not mean merely sleeping between a pair of sheets that have been scorched for

a quarter of an hour before the kitchen fire, while the mattress and all the attendant paraphernalia have been lying for weeks in the same position in the unused "spare room," that has a mouldy tea-caddy smell by reason of the *unopened window*.

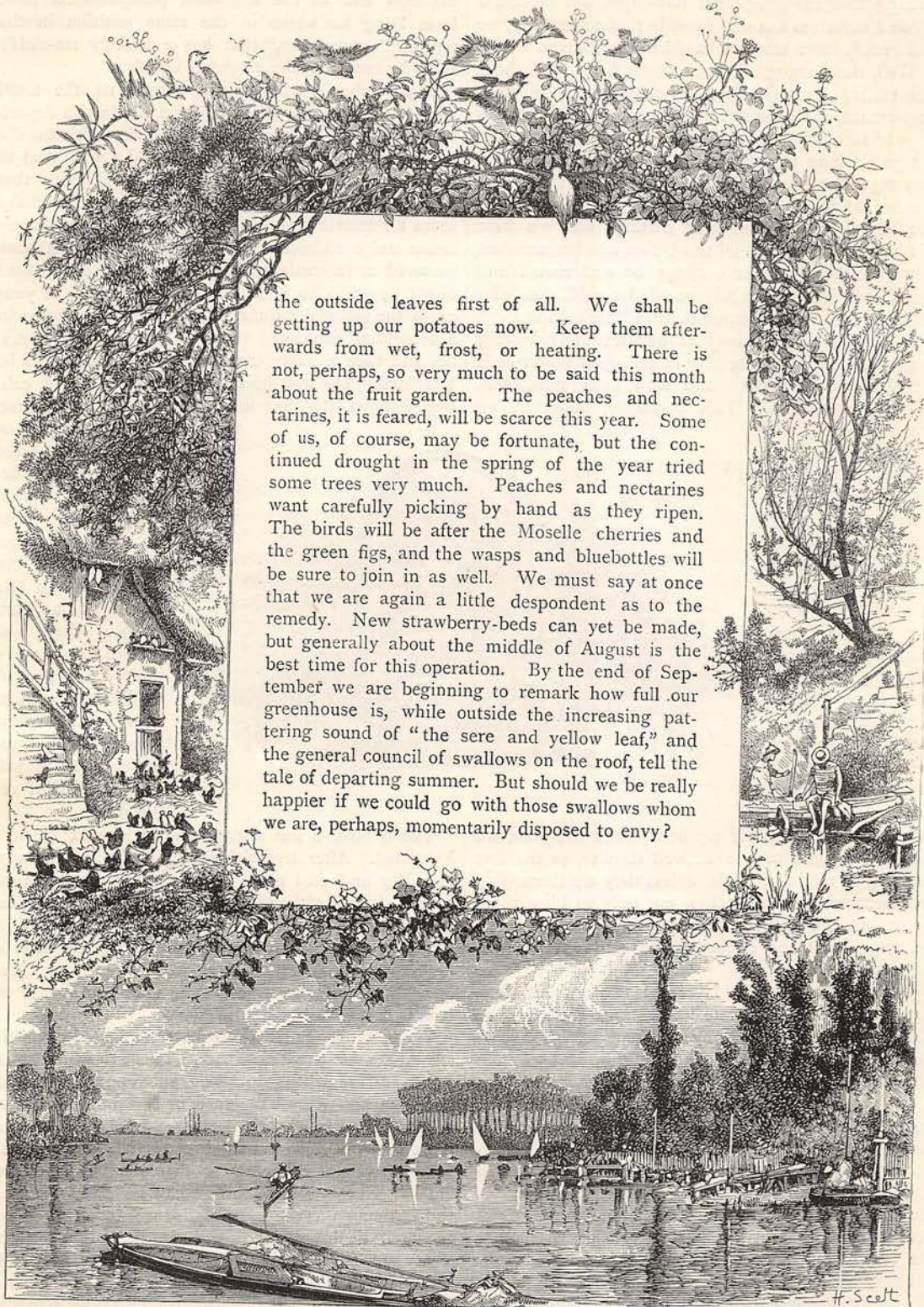
The kitchen garden, again, affords us the usual routine work at this time of the year. In this department, however, perhaps there is heavier work for the most part next month, but still we find a good deal to do in this, for doubtless there are some crops that have done their work, that can be cleared off to make room for something else; indeed, peas and cabbages, beans and cauliflowers, have for some time past been removed at intervals, we should hope, for the ground ought never to lie idle. Upon the removal of your crops the soil will naturally be in a certain degree in a somewhat exhausted state; a little manure dressing and then a hasty trenching if necessary will be beneficial. Do not, however, despise the old cabbage-stumps after they have been got up. Of course,

as we have just said, you want the space they have occupied, but plant them all together in some out-of-the-way corner of the garden. In the event of a hard winter they will come in very handy, and give us a dish of excellent greens at a time when in all probability there will be a dearth of vegetables.



The onions, if not already got in, should be now harvested. After drying they want to be stored away in a dry and cool place; indeed, they require more careful keeping than is generally supposed. The other extreme, however, should be avoided, of putting them, for example, in some upper floor where after a time they would be liable to get heated, and when once they begin to vegetate their use as an article of food is thought to be injurious.

Young cabbage plants may now be planted out with advantage for a winter stock. Those to whom it is important to husband up all the room possible should put them pretty close together, or certainly some five or six inches apart, and let there be only sufficient room between the rows for hoeing and walking purposes, say fifteen inches or thereabouts. Then in the winter every other cabbage can be drawn for use, and further on as the season advances let every *other* one again be drawn. This will give those that are left plenty of what the sailor calls sea-room, and they will get well developed. The usual routine, again, of earthing up the celery and thinning out the winter spinach must not be passed over; and in pulling spinach let us once again notice the importance of gathering for use



the outside leaves first of all. We shall be getting up our potatoes now. Keep them afterwards from wet, frost, or heating. There is not, perhaps, so very much to be said this month about the fruit garden. The peaches and nectarines, it is feared, will be scarce this year. Some of us, of course, may be fortunate, but the continued drought in the spring of the year tried some trees very much. Peaches and nectarines want carefully picking by hand as they ripen. The birds will be after the Moselle cherries and the green figs, and the wasps and bluebottles will be sure to join in as well. We must say at once that we are again a little despondent as to the remedy. New strawberry-beds can yet be made, but generally about the middle of August is the best time for this operation. By the end of September we are beginning to remark how full our greenhouse is, while outside the increasing pattering sound of "the sere and yellow leaf," and the general council of swallows on the roof, tell the tale of departing summer. But should we be really happier if we could go with those swallows whom we are, perhaps, momentarily disposed to envy?

GARDENING IN OCTOBER.



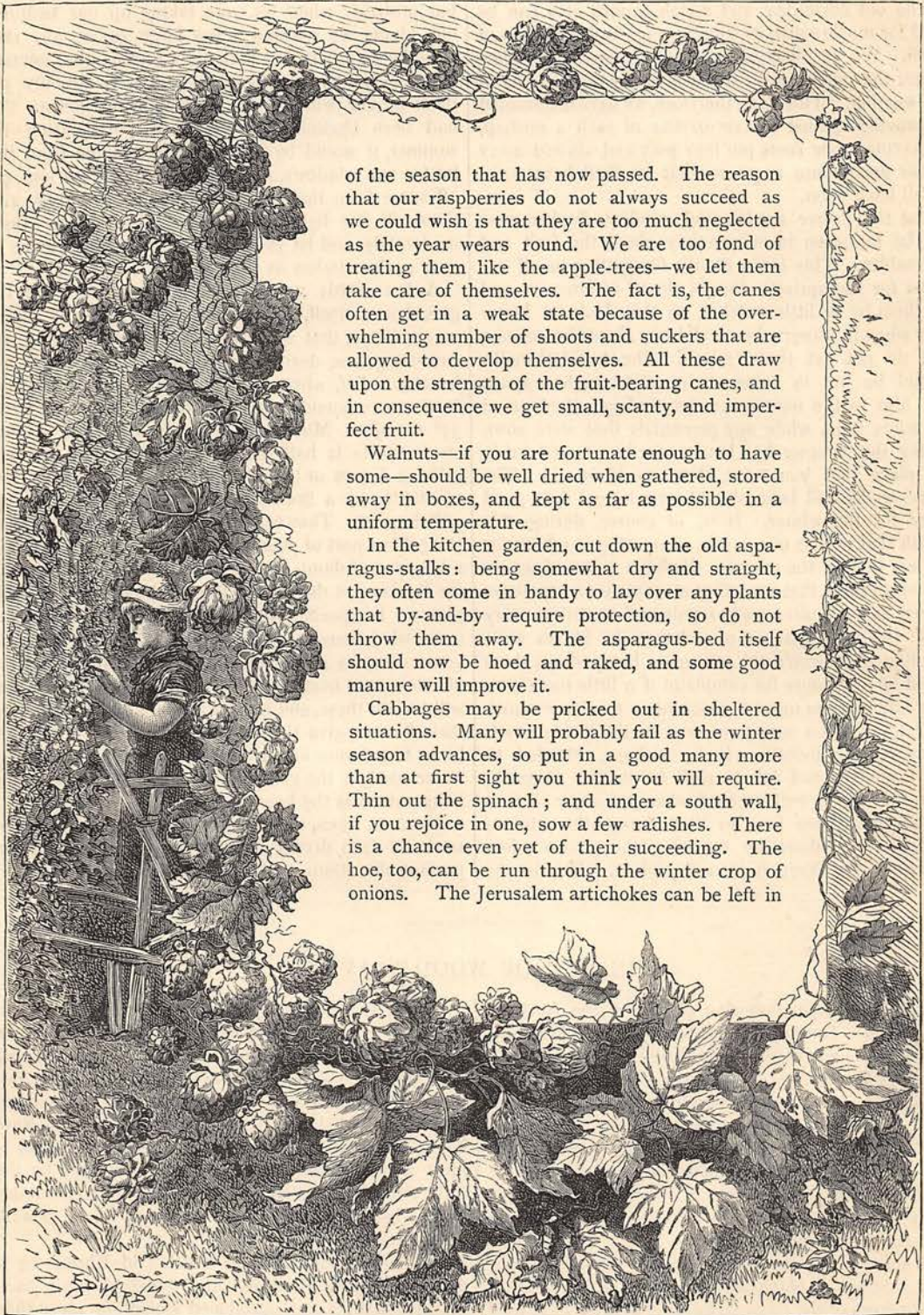
OCTOBER is undeniably a satisfactory month—so, at all events, think more especially our juvenile gardeners—for it is a very busy harvesting month in the orchard. The apples as the year advanced certainly looked better than they promised to do in the months of May and June. That parching and violent east wind that blew with such force for the first three weeks of May carried off prematurely most of the blossoms, while the entire absence of rain during the same period was a terrible pull-back in the garden generally. Nothing would make a start, and the peaches and nectarines in many places dropped off even before the stoning-time had come, although the blossom gave us such promise in the month of April. We expect, therefore, that our fruit will nearly all run small this year. Such, then, are the fortunes and misfortunes of gardening. We could not, however, complain of the strawberry crop. Those abundant rains in June and July made this most serviceable fruit swell off to perfection.

But our chief business in the garden is not retrospective, saving only when by a glance backwards we can see clearly what our mistakes were, what was the result of those mistakes, and lastly, what we should consider the remedy. Just now, then, we are once again apple-gathering. And first we are, as before, most particular in choosing a dry day for our operations, for it will never do to gather the apples, say, *immediately* after a wet night. Nor, even supposing it has been quite a fine night, is it quite prudent to begin apple-gathering very early in the morning, because of the heavy dews that we recollect are so constant now. An exceptionally fine and dry season might perhaps, nevertheless, embolden us to set to work a little earlier than usual. And, next, the apples must not be bruised or lumped down anyhow on to the ground below. It is well indeed to have one hamper entirely set apart for windfalls and mishaps, and all those in this hamper should be used the first. Let the apples, then, be carefully hand-gathered: have a good-sized strong bag or small sack tied round your waist, in which to put the apples, so as to have both your hands free; and do not overload your bag, and then perhaps lie with all your weight pressing roughly against a large bough or branch of the tree, and thus bruise the apples in that way. Unhappily, too, for our patience and our powers of contrivance, the finest fruit generally hangs at the top of the tree, from one or two small and slender branches perfectly incapable of supporting either the ladder or the climber. The ladder, nevertheless, enables you to get well into the middle of the tree, and with a long stick having a hook at the end you can draw these long and slender

branches near to you. Sometimes also a juvenile under-gardener or two standing under the tree can catch a few of those that are most difficult to grasp with the hand. An apple falling against the trunk or large bough of the tree must go into the windfall hamper. Well, and it may be said that we are very particular in our detail, but surely, is it not this very particularity and carefulness in small matters that is the secret of our after-success, and the want of this particularity that is the cause of failure and disappointment? Next, then, our fruit-room, or store-room, should be clean, well ventilated, and dry. And perhaps we sometimes wonder that our apples, that we know have been carefully hand-gathered, do not keep properly. Look them over at least once or twice a week, pick out immediately all those that show symptoms of decay, and be particular about the ventilation of your fruit-room. Indeed, it is very unpleasant in some old-fashioned country houses to have all the year round a peculiar smell of apples—apples—apples—that seems to have the power of penetrating, if not through the ground-floor, at least all among the bed-rooms. And all this comes perhaps from storing apples in some large old lumber-room at the top of the house, where an open window is never thought to be a necessity. The best time, too—now that we are on the apple question—for the restoration of old trees is about the end of October, that is when the fruit is all gathered, and the leaves are down.

It sounds a bold, and indeed an impossible experiment, to attempt to turn old age into youth, but in our orchard this is to a certain extent possible, by giving a good coating of rich manure, some four inches in fact, the surface soil to the depth of about half a foot having been first of all removed for the purpose; this done, turf over the whole, and give a sharp pruning to the old trees at the same time. By doing this at intervals of every three or four years, the strength and fruit-bearing properties of your orchard will be prolonged and maintained.

Get the leaves off the apricots, peaches, and nectarines now, or certainly by the end of the month—where, at least, you observe that the leaves are thoroughly ripe. Otherwise it is astonishing to notice how long the leaves remain on our wall-trees, very often up nearly to Christmas, probably by reason of their being in such sheltered situations. We remove our leaves because allowing them to remain on too long deteriorates from the strength of the tree, and keeps the wood itself from coming to perfection. Get the leaves off them by drawing a broom lightly but sharply over the trees, or they can be picked off by hand. Do not go on with your work, however, if you find that the leaves offer much resistance, which would imply that they are not quite ripe enough for removal. Among the raspberry-canes cut away all the old ones, and tie up to each of your stakes some four or five of the healthiest and best-developed ones



of the season that has now passed. The reason that our raspberries do not always succeed as we could wish is that they are too much neglected as the year wears round. We are too fond of treating them like the apple-trees—we let them take care of themselves. The fact is, the canes often get in a weak state because of the overwhelming number of shoots and suckers that are allowed to develop themselves. All these draw upon the strength of the fruit-bearing canes, and in consequence we get small, scanty, and imperfect fruit.

Walnuts—if you are fortunate enough to have some—should be well dried when gathered, stored away in boxes, and kept as far as possible in a uniform temperature.

In the kitchen garden, cut down the old asparagus-stalks: being somewhat dry and straight, they often come in handy to lay over any plants that by-and-by require protection, so do not throw them away. The asparagus-bed itself should now be hoed and raked, and some good manure will improve it.

Cabbages may be pricked out in sheltered situations. Many will probably fail as the winter season advances, so put in a good many more than at first sight you think you will require. Thin out the spinach; and under a south wall, if you rejoice in one, sow a few radishes. There is a chance even yet of their succeeding. The hoe, too, can be run through the winter crop of onions. The Jerusalem artichokes can be left in

the ground, and only dug up as they are wanted; but if they occupy space that will be useful to you, get them up and serve them as potatoes, keeping them dry, or in sand.

The old cucumber and melon frames also can be used for mushrooms, as soon as your fruit is got out of them. We recollect, also, that in many places last winter the parsley crop was cut off by the severity of the weather. This year, therefore, we have determined to provide against the recurrence of such a mishap, by having a few roots put into pots and stowed away in our greenhouse or pit, so that we shall have some to fall back upon.

But the flower garden and window display must not be forgotten in our anxiety about the fruit and vegetables. This is the month for getting in all our bulbs for the spring. Put in plenty of crocuses and let them be in little patches, as they look far better thus when in flower; be careful too about the colours, and do not get them mixed. The hyacinth-bulbs should be put in some six or eight inches apart. See also to the narcissus-roots, and get them in at the same time, while any perennials that were sown during the summer had better now be planted out in the place that you want them to bloom in. The gravel walks and lawn should now be got into good order for the winter. It is, of course, during this month that we use our scythe or mowing machine for the last time in the season. Perhaps some of us are getting to think that a mowing machine is an expensive luxury, as it requires some repair and attention every year: the chain gets out of order, or the knives want grinding, or it won't act properly; but perhaps there would be less cause for complaint if a little more care were taken of the mowing-machine in this very month of October, when we put it away in the shed or tool-house for six months. It is, perhaps, wheeled in and forgotten, and left to shift for itself. Have it, then, thoroughly well greased when put away; see to the machine from time to time during the winter; keep the rust down by renewing the grease when necessary, and keep it in a dry place. This is the

most practical way of avoiding an ironmonger's bill for machine repairs in the following April.

The greenhouse alone will soon now be the only source from which to supply our windows with flowers, but probably when we were taking up our bedding-out plants we selected a few large or, at any rate, shrubby geraniums, or perhaps a fuchsia that seemed disposed to go on blooming, and have already put them in our window. If we had some flowers that had been blooming in the open pots during the summer, it would be better to choose some from this lot for our windows, rather than to take up and pot off some from the beds. Once in the window, give them all the light you can, and only water them moderately, and let your myrtles and evergreens be as near to the window as you can.

A few words must, however, be said about the greenhouse itself, for it is shortly here, as much as anywhere, that we shall hope to be spending our gardening-time during the next few months. Do not be alarmed if, when the first, and perhaps a sudden frost comes outside, your thermometer falls as low as 35° at night. Much, and perhaps nearly all of your stock inside is half hardy—camellias, even, do not mind a degree or two of frost, and if you get too fond of making up a fire in your stove, the camellia-buds will drop off. They cannot stand heat, so put them in the coldest part of your house. Give air daily, and in a long run of damp or muggy weather, have a fire and the lights open during the best of the day, to dry your plants. Be sparing with the water-pot, for damp—in a crowded house more especially—is quite as much your enemy as frost. Our chrysanthemum display is, of course, our next hope. A little weak manure-water will benefit these, and as they are now about to expand their flowers, give them plenty of light and air. Nor let us forget once again to remind our readers that the water used in the greenhouse should be of the same temperature as the house.

Summer, then, is gone, but not necessarily our work, as even dreary November, the month for important alterations, will probably reveal to us.

THE ART OF WOOD-WEAVING.

THE manufacturing district of the Austrian Empire lies in the north of Bohemia, where miniature Birminghams and Manchesters are congregated together by the dozen, and hundreds of thousands of "hands" are actively and ceaselessly employed. For miles the high road is bordered by houses, chiefly one-storeyed wooden buildings with roofs of thatch or shingle, where the rattle of looms may be heard without intermission from early dawn till late at night.

In some of the towns numberless chimneys pour forth volumes of black smoke by day, while by night the windows of the large factories glow with light as if there were a general illumination.

One of the busiest of these little towns and villages is Ehrenberg, which lies close to the Saxon frontier, and is distinguished from the rest by a peculiar industry which appears to be carried on in only two other places besides. The long straggling village, which is divided into Upper, Lower, Old, and New, has a population of more than 6,000 souls, and is most pleasantly situated in a valley watered by the little river Mandau which rises close by, the wooden houses being half buried in fruit-trees, limes, or well-grown oaks.

The peculiar industry for which Old Ehrenberg is distinguished is wood-weaving—*sparterie*-work, as it is called—which was introduced something more than a century ago by a carpenter named Anton Menzel.

little child who is blind of one eye. You give her nothing.

At Ardrishaig we are transferred from the little *Linnet* to the great *Columba*, and the voyage from Loch Gilp, down the broad reaches of Loch Fyne, and through the fairy scenery of the Kyles of Bute, by Rothesay to Greenock, is a sail that presents a new picture every few minutes, one engrossing point in the landscape becoming quickly subordinate to another, and apparently land-locked water suddenly opening out an entirely unexpected sea-

path to fresh scenic charms, that come in such rapid succession that the views never become monotonous. But the trip demands a special paper all to itself.

The water churned by the swift paddles of the *Columba* between Greenock and Glasgow will not be health-inspiring until the western city has solved the problem of the purification of the Clyde. Suppose we go down into the dining-saloon? An Englishman's heart is reached through his stomach. It is to the Englishman's stomach, as well as to his eye, that the Scottish *Columba* appeals.

E. B.



GARDENING IN NOVEMBER.



STRANGE as it may sound, it is perhaps in this the first of our dark and dreary winter months—a month of short days and long nights, of fog, and wet, and gloom—that our heaviest work is often done in the garden. We do not mean quietly taking the rake over the beds, or wandering happily among them with the watering-pot, but good *bonâ fide*

hard work—labour with the pick and the spade, and perhaps with the axe—labour that, despite the cold fog, will make our forehead moist, our hands horny, and our muscles strong. Indeed, if we were asked which month of the year we would choose to take possession of a new garden we should certainly say November, and for this reason—November is the month of the year best adapted for making any great or radical change and alteration in a garden. For instance, we are wishing to make a shrubbery or to remove some shrubs into other parts of the garden, to prune our orchard or to cut down large trees, to lay in new raspberry canes or to get new stocks for our rose garden. All such operations as these, and others akin to them, we carry out in the mild and open winter weather (not in the frost), for the sap is all down, everything is in a dormant state—nature, in fact, has gone to bed for the year, and we can move our large shrubs, &c., now without waking them up. We all of us know the almost certain result of attempting to move bulky evergreens from one spot to another in July or any hot and dry

weather; probably all the watering that we could then and there give them would not save them from dying. In moving shrubs, then, have first of all dug a good pit or hole, amply sufficient for the reception of the roots and ball of earth surrounding the roots of the shrub that you are removing. Nor is it merely necessary to have this hole exactly large enough, but let all the surrounding soil be loosened as well, for this surrounding soil should not be in a consolidated state. Trench it well over, then, so that the roots of your shrub will strike the more readily. In moving the shrub be careful to get away, without breaking them as far as possible, all the roots; some few very likely you will find it difficult to avoid sacrificing, but the fewer these are the better chance do you give your shrub. After it has been got up, by the way, if you have some considerable distance to carry or wheel it to its new abode, it is as well to bind round with some matting the ball of earth which is about the roots, as the mere motion of your wheelbarrow or cart, or even the jolting as you walk along with it—supposing it to be portable—is liable to detach some of the soil, and this means the breaking off of many of the fine roots, or spongioles, as they are called, and these it is most important for the wellbeing of your plant to preserve. Before re-planting your shrub or evergreen, notice first carefully the size and depth, &c., of the "ball;" then, when it has been placed in its required position, throw in soil and ram it down all round the lower part of the ball, so that the whole plant stands of itself at once upright. Spread out next the roots as it

were in layers, and cover them over with fine soil, which should afterwards be trodden or rammed well about the roots. Even should the soil be moderately moist it is well to give a good watering when you are transplanting, and in this way: when about some three-fourths of the soil has been thrown in over the roots—when, in fact, the hole is three-parts filled up again—pour in a good quantity of rain-water—enough, indeed, to thoroughly soak the whole mass of earth and roots. Let it well soak in, and afterwards fill up with the remainder of the soil loosely. This will prevent the evaporation of the moisture. If some days afterwards, for instance, in a dry season, or from the general appearance of your plant, you should think it advisable to give an additional watering, it is well first of all again to remove the surface of the soil and then to water, afterwards, of course, carefully replacing the super-soil.

Many shrubberies if allowed to go ahead too much, or where the shrubs were originally put in perhaps too closely together, will, after the lapse of a very few years' growth, begin to show symptoms of decay in all directions. The reason is sufficiently apparent. The soil becomes almost exhausted, the larger and taller shrubs keep out the light and the sun from those under them, and the constant drip in and after wet weather does also much harm. Then, again, the boughs of your young trees grow into one another, and a walk along, and perhaps by, a path almost underneath your shrubs, in July particularly, revealed to you endless dead boughs. Some few it may be are not evergreens, and the whole has a very unsightly appearance, and you feel that something must be very promptly done in the autumn. You mark out then what you will remove, and you may then take a stroll into other parts of the garden, and notice where any good gaps are into which it may be expedient to remove your spare shrubs, while any dead (unmistakably dead) wood that you already see may be at once—we are now speaking of the summer months—removed. The use of the knife, however, when the sap is up requires extreme caution, as some trees will bleed much if there be a very free hacking about with the knife at this time of the year. And yet when we are well into this gloomy month of November it sometimes requires a practical eye to distinguish a dead bough from a living one—in the case, that is, of trees that are not evergreens.

Such further heavy alterations in the garden as the making of a new gravel walk, or getting new turf laid down, may be done at this season of the year. But it is well when possible, in the case for instance of taking possession of a garden, to retain all the original gravel walks. The labour of destroying the old ones and of making new is very great; it is hard, too, for a time to keep down weeds, &c., in the old walk, and as hard to get anything to thrive well at first when planted where the old walk was.

We have before spoken of the expediency and of the economy, both of time and of expense, which is to be had by combining in our flower garden the bedding-out system with the old-fashioned one of perennials, in

the days when our grandfathers were content with cabbage-roses. For really, taking a glance at the present time over our beds and over the entire surface of what in the front of the house we are still pleased to call our "flower" garden, what a desolate scene presents itself! We are supposing now, of course, that the modern bedding-out system has been strictly adhered to. And where the expense and time involved in getting in crocus and hyacinth bulbs in October for flowering in the early spring is out of the question, these poor flower-beds are positively destined to be destitute of flowers from Michaelmas until the middle of May. Have your garden, then, well stocked with Canterbury-bells, hollyhocks, the old tiger lily, and many other such that need not now be named, and when the bedding-out season comes round intersperse among them your few bedding-out flowers; these and a few hardy annuals, sown in the proper time—early, that is, in the month of April—will give your garden a very showy appearance at half the expense of the modern system. And just now do not let us forget the Christmas rose, which in a month's time we ought to be able, under favourable circumstances, to gather for our table decoration.

And decoration may remind some of us of window-gardening, in which amusement and delight, now that we are driven more in-doors by stress of weather and the bleak season, we shall probably take increasing pleasure. What many of us like to do if we can is to have at least *some* flowers in our windows all the year round. It seems such a triumph, we say, over nature, when we see the snow beginning to fall for the first time in the winter, to have at the same time two or three veritable pots of flowers on which to gaze inside, and especially when we have no greenhouse. Just now, then, we are taking especial pains over our chrysanthemums, raised, perhaps, from late cuttings or layers, and which we have got blooming in small pots. Our evergreens and myrtles, too, we are careful with, and we give them very little water indeed now; while if we have some fuchsias that we are hoping to keep alive through the winter, we shall not be alarmed when their leaves fall off, for this is their nature, but we shall keep them *almost* dry for months, and shall be especially careful to keep them free from all frost.

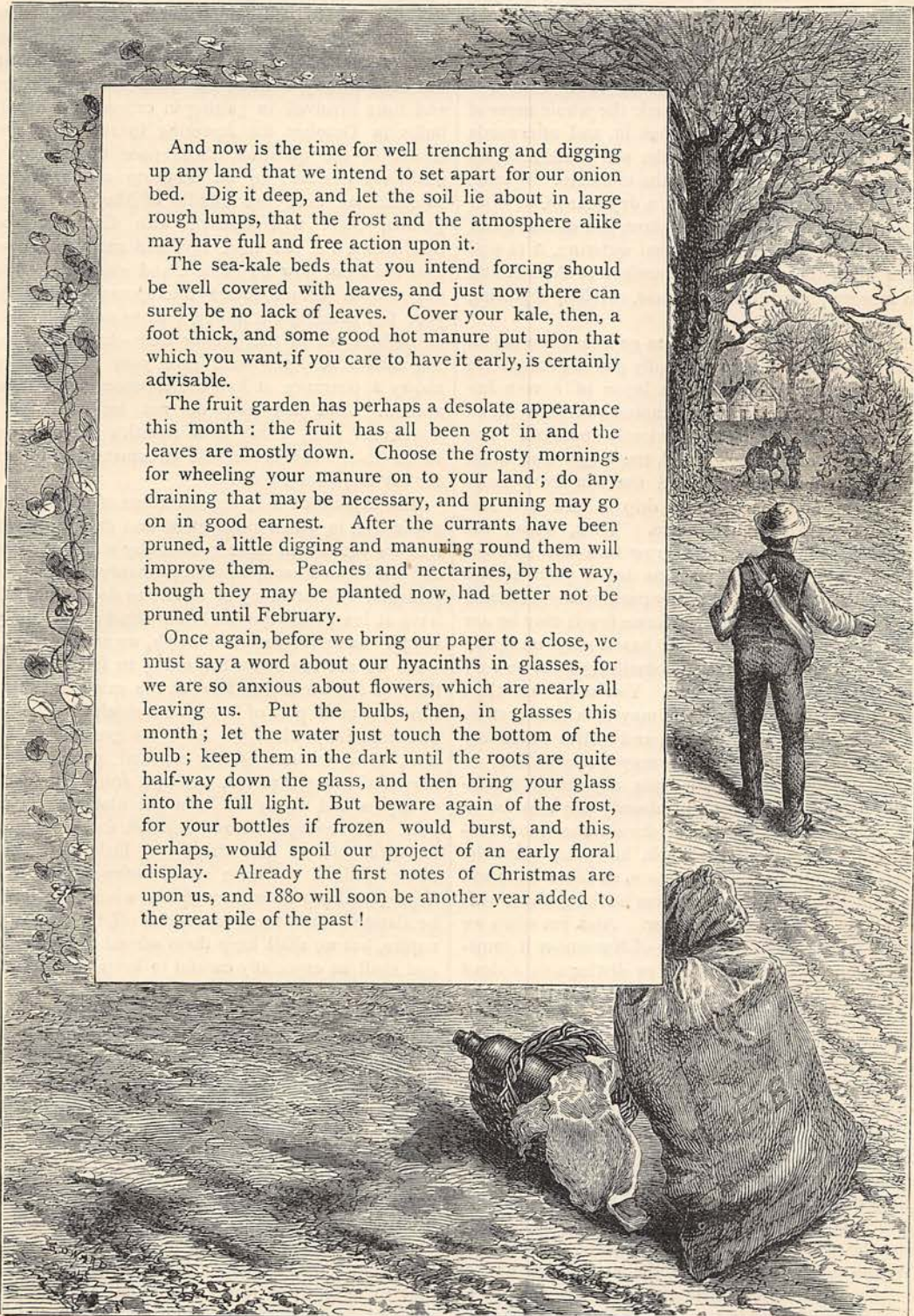
And in our general flower-garden routine, of course, it is needless to say that anything that ought to have been done last month and has been as yet forgotten, had better now be done at once and early in the month—such, for example, as the putting in of a few hyacinth bulbs. And should we have a sudden severity of weather, as is sometimes the case in November, we shall perhaps protect our newly-planted bulbs by covering over the soil under which they are with a little decayed leaf-mould or dry sawdust; but this, of course, must be removed in the spring. Matting is better; but the best remedies, although it is very nice to have them always at hand, are not always adapted to our pockets—those pockets in which the hole is so large!

And now is the time for well trenching and digging up any land that we intend to set apart for our onion bed. Dig it deep, and let the soil lie about in large rough lumps, that the frost and the atmosphere alike may have full and free action upon it.

The sea-kale beds that you intend forcing should be well covered with leaves, and just now there can surely be no lack of leaves. Cover your kale, then, a foot thick, and some good hot manure put upon that which you want, if you care to have it early, is certainly advisable.

The fruit garden has perhaps a desolate appearance this month: the fruit has all been got in and the leaves are mostly down. Choose the frosty mornings for wheeling your manure on to your land; do any draining that may be necessary, and pruning may go on in good earnest. After the currants have been pruned, a little digging and manuring round them will improve them. Peaches and nectarines, by the way, though they may be planted now, had better not be pruned until February.

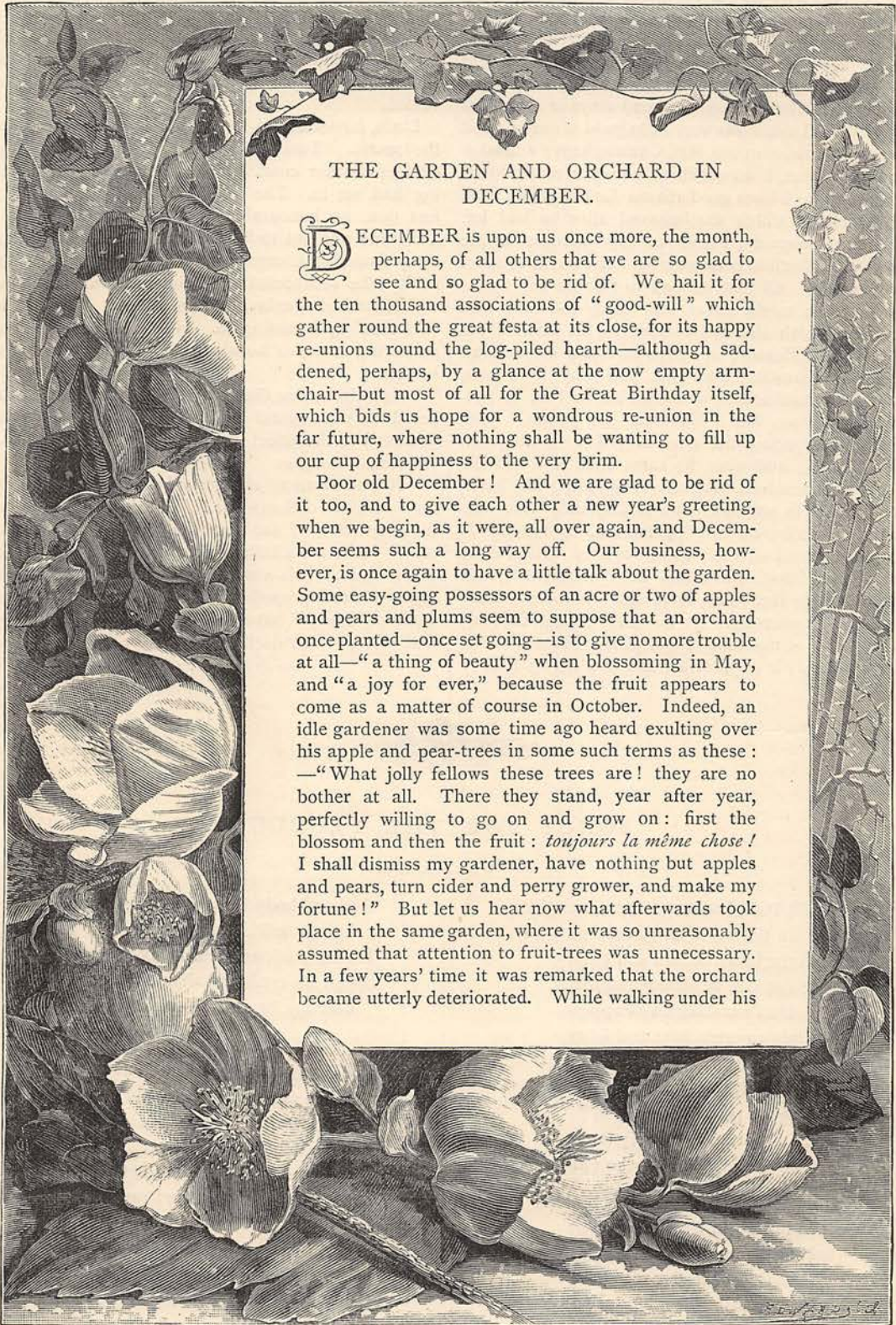
Once again, before we bring our paper to a close, we must say a word about our hyacinths in glasses, for we are so anxious about flowers, which are nearly all leaving us. Put the bulbs, then, in glasses this month; let the water just touch the bottom of the bulb; keep them in the dark until the roots are quite half-way down the glass, and then bring your glass into the full light. But beware again of the frost, for your bottles if frozen would burst, and this, perhaps, would spoil our project of an early floral display. Already the first notes of Christmas are upon us, and 1880 will soon be another year added to the great pile of the past!

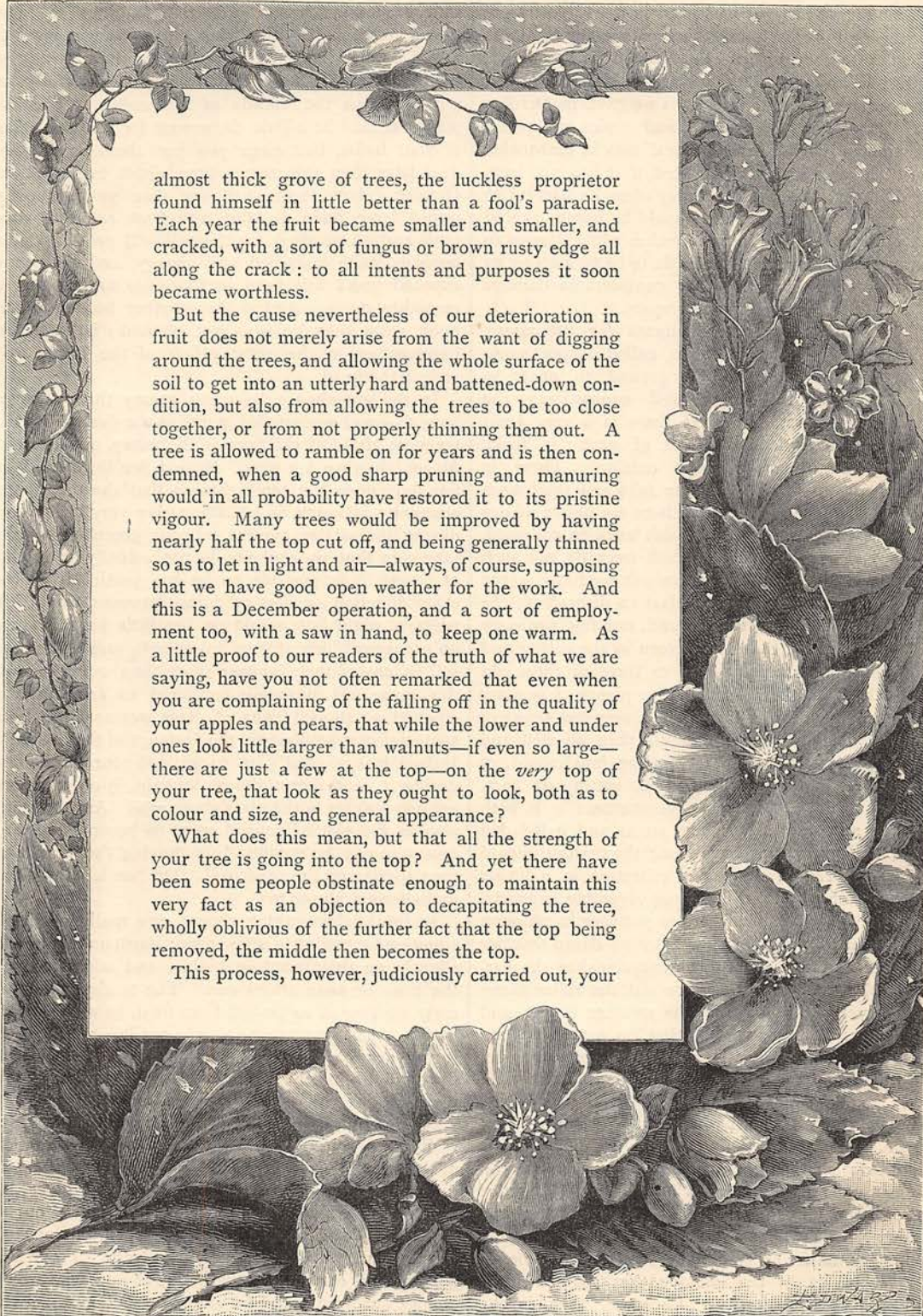


THE GARDEN AND ORCHARD IN
DECEMBER.

DECEMBER is upon us once more, the month, perhaps, of all others that we are so glad to see and so glad to be rid of. We hail it for the ten thousand associations of "good-will" which gather round the great festa at its close, for its happy re-unions round the log-piled hearth—although saddened, perhaps, by a glance at the now empty arm-chair—but most of all for the Great Birthday itself, which bids us hope for a wondrous re-union in the far future, where nothing shall be wanting to fill up our cup of happiness to the very brim.

Poor old December! And we are glad to be rid of it too, and to give each other a new year's greeting, when we begin, as it were, all over again, and December seems such a long way off. Our business, however, is once again to have a little talk about the garden. Some easy-going possessors of an acre or two of apples and pears and plums seem to suppose that an orchard once planted—once set going—is to give no more trouble at all—"a thing of beauty" when blossoming in May, and "a joy for ever," because the fruit appears to come as a matter of course in October. Indeed, an idle gardener was some time ago heard exulting over his apple and pear-trees in some such terms as these:—"What jolly fellows these trees are! they are no bother at all. There they stand, year after year, perfectly willing to go on and grow on: first the blossom and then the fruit: *toujours la même chose!* I shall dismiss my gardener, have nothing but apples and pears, turn cider and perry grower, and make my fortune!" But let us hear now what afterwards took place in the same garden, where it was so unreasonably assumed that attention to fruit-trees was unnecessary. In a few years' time it was remarked that the orchard became utterly deteriorated. While walking under his





almost thick grove of trees, the luckless proprietor found himself in little better than a fool's paradise. Each year the fruit became smaller and smaller, and cracked, with a sort of fungus or brown rusty edge all along the crack: to all intents and purposes it soon became worthless.

But the cause nevertheless of our deterioration in fruit does not merely arise from the want of digging around the trees, and allowing the whole surface of the soil to get into an utterly hard and battened-down condition, but also from allowing the trees to be too close together, or from not properly thinning them out. A tree is allowed to ramble on for years and is then condemned, when a good sharp pruning and manuring would in all probability have restored it to its pristine vigour. Many trees would be improved by having nearly half the top cut off, and being generally thinned so as to let in light and air—always, of course, supposing that we have good open weather for the work. And this is a December operation, and a sort of employment too, with a saw in hand, to keep one warm. As a little proof to our readers of the truth of what we are saying, have you not often remarked that even when you are complaining of the falling off in the quality of your apples and pears, that while the lower and under ones look little larger than walnuts—if even so large—there are just a few at the top—on the *very* top of your tree, that look as they ought to look, both as to colour and size, and general appearance?

What does this mean, but that all the strength of your tree is going into the top? And yet there have been some people obstinate enough to maintain this very fact as an objection to decapitating the tree, wholly oblivious of the further fact that the top being removed, the middle then becomes the top.

This process, however, judiciously carried out, your

tree will be found to bear twice as well. Endeavour also to give your tree a good shape and appearance while pruning. Remove all the weak-looking brushwood and leave all your best branches. If your trees are growing too closely together, remove any branches that run into one another. For this reason, in the first planting of an orchard, the trees should be well apart in accordance with the directions we gave in October last. Enough has been said about apples and pears. The vine and wall-fruit in general may in seasonable weather be also pruned and nailed, if it has not been already done; this, however, may often be carried on all through the winter, but it should be borne in mind that any unnailed or loose branches while allowed to remain in that condition are liable to be torn about by the wind, and in all probability considerable damage will accrue to the tree in consequence.

This, again, is a capital month for tidying-up, as well as for what may be called heavy work, by a good trenching of the ground in order to leave the soil thoroughly well exposed to the action of the frost. And yet there is a very great temptation to neglect this sort of work: it looks so dull and dreary perhaps outside. There is plenty to be done also with the rake and the broom and the old garden-roller, for there are plenty of dry leaves all whirling about yet which must be collected, for many of our good old English trees do not shed their leaves till December: the oak perhaps is the last to come into leaf and the last to discard it; the horse-chesnut, on the other hand, ranking probably among the earliest to become green in the spring and naked in the autumn. Two or three of these old friends there on the lawn will give plenty of occupation from Michaelmas to within a very few weeks of Christmas Day. Get your leaves then all well and tidily together in a heap for rotting into mould, or put them all into a pit or hotbed for getting up heat. Remove, again, all decaying vegetation: it is both offensive and unhealthy. The stems and half-faded leaves of flowers that have done their work should also be got rid of. Make a collection in a fitting place, too, of all sticks, flower or vegetable supports, &c., then you will know where to put your hand upon them in the following season. During damp weather and after any frost—for frost always makes the surface of the ground rotten—have out the roller along your gravel paths. When the weather is wet and the borders in a sloppy condition, do not walk upon them, as no matter how keen a gardener you may be, you will by so doing do infinitely more harm than good: you sink into the soil, it clings to your boots, and you carry it about with you wherever you go. Repair now all hedges, fences, ditches, &c., or your neighbours' pigs and poultry mayhap will assist you to clear off remaining crops in an incredibly short time; every garden gate should be kept shut and labelled "To be kept shut." Such a direction may sound very matter-of-fact, but is it not the experience of most of us in the country that such a piece of advice is a necessity? December then is the month for all this sort of gate-repairing, merely

because it is a time when we are naturally not so busy in the garden as we shall be again in the early spring. It is time, however, that we said something about the flowers. Let us hope that bulbs of all kinds were put in last month; if not, let them be seen to at once: it may not be too late: tulips, for example, should generally be put in about the middle of November. The experiment may be a little dangerous for the well-being of your bulbs, but when you put them in a good deal later than the proper time, which begins about October, plant them shallower than you otherwise would have done. After any frost examine your pink and pansy bed, for the soil will probably have become much disturbed and spongy, and the partly exposed roots will need in that case to be pressed smoothly down. And if the weather be genial and open, roses may be even yet planted; be cautious, however, as to the preservation of the roots, and reduce the head.

In the greenhouse the worst enemy that we often have to guard against this month is the damp: we are far more afraid of the frost in February, and even in March, than we are now. Have a fire lit, then, on a fine day, open the top lights so that the damp may evaporate as much as possible; give very little water during the winter months in your greenhouse, only take care that your plants do not actually dry up, as of course it is possible to be too particular in the other direction: excess of damp, however, would kill where a slight frost would do but little harm. Have an occasional look at your flower-pots, and should the soil in any of them appear more than usually moist, the cause will probably be found to arise from a cracked or slipped pane of glass overhead, or from some defect or stoppage in the drainage of the pot itself. Indeed it is a good plan to go into your greenhouse during a good smart shower of rain, in order to find out any leakage in the glass above you. Any tendency also in the soil of your flowers to become green or mossy should be rectified by removing the moss, and then stirring up the super-soil. Do not let your thermometer get above 40°.

In the kitchen-garden choose any really sheltered situation for getting in a few peas: earth up the ground slightly on their north-east side, and stick them at the time or soon afterwards. The tendency of this early sticking is to protect from frost, as well as from birds. A few carrots may also be put in—again choosing a warm corner: they may fail, but if they succeed they will do nicely for early spring drawing. As a piece of general wholesome counsel for the end of the year, and by way of encouragement to those who are really regretting their past idleness or procrastination in the garden, we will remind our readers that many directions that we have here and hitherto given, for specified times, may very often be also carried out at other periods of the year, more especially in our uncertain and wayward clime. But with all our wet seasons and our fogs, is there one of you who would change our little island for any other nation under the sun?