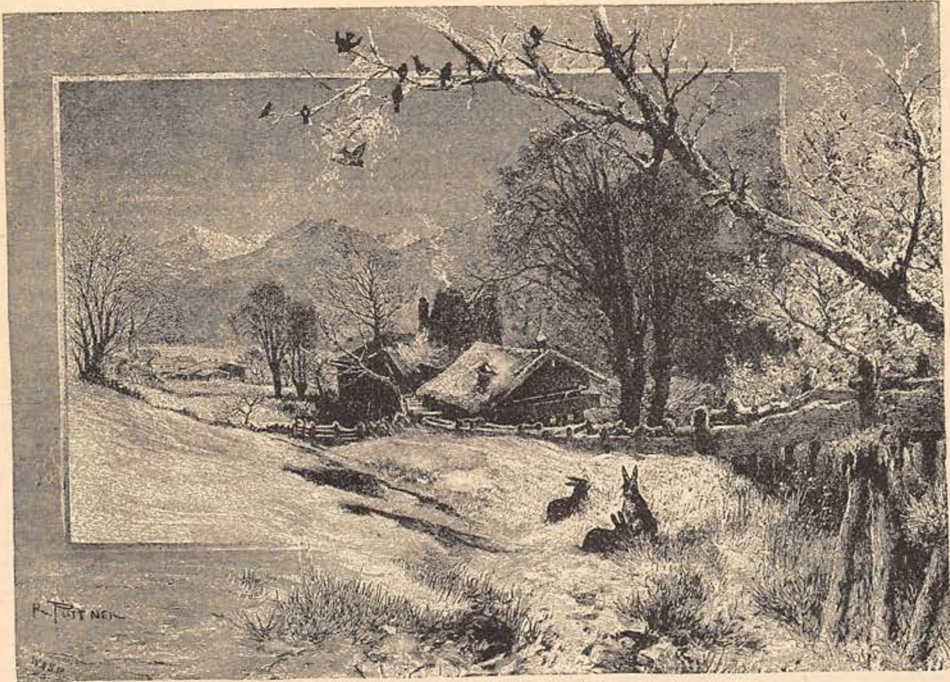
DECEMBER GARDENING.



THOSE of us who can make up their minds to plenty of good bracing and heavy work in the garden these next two months, will have their reward when the summer comes. It certainly requires a little resolution, but total neglect of the garden merely because it is "the depth of winter" cannot fail to involve a multitude of serious failures. One or two illustrations, then, of this will give us a few gardening hints suited to the time of year.

Take, for example, our kitchen garden, from which, perhaps, some of the *débris* of our recent crops has not even yet been removed. "Oh!" says the easy-going gardener, "we will see to that when the days are a little longer, or when this horrid east wind goes, or when the weather is not quite so severe:" there then, for some six weeks or more, stand those withered and desolate-looking, dried-up scarlet-runner stalks and peas-haulm, with the sticks, to which they hardly now cling, swaying about in the gale; and there, again, is the untrenched soil, all hardened and trodden down, instead of being turned up and exposed in long ridges to the action of the frost; or perhaps the entire stock of dead leaves long since stripped from the now naked arms of our fruit and other trees, is to be allowed a month's holiday in which to circle round in a sort of mad ballet, set to mournful music of their own creation suggested by the sound of their crisp rustling, a sudden rush of a lump of them against our window-pane doing duty as the drum. Now, on the other hand, these dead leaves are most valuable to us gardeners, particularly to us poor gardeners, who had rather not too frequently go to the expense of ordering in loads of manure. Here, for example, is one use for our dead leaves:—

Our diminutive greenhouse is already over-stocked, and we are striving, perhaps, to keep alive in some cold frame outside a few of the hardiest bedding-out plants, such as our calceolarias and the sturdiest of our geraniums: these last, probably, we have cut down and potted as dwarf plants, the calceolarias being in cuttings: now, why not cram a good number of these leaves well among the pots under our frame? They will keep out all the worst of the frost, and be a very feather bed for our plants in the winter. Or, take another use for dead leaves: they will do duty as sea-kale pots if we pile them well over the crowns of the

plants in good large heaps, with a fair sprinkling of peas-haulm upon the outside to keep the leaves from afterwards playing truant. Sometimes, again, we dig them in at once as manure, or they can go, if dry and in large quantities, to our pigs first of all. Who, again, does not know the value of rich leaf-mould for potting purposes? how black and nutritive does the decayed and decaying surface soil look as we disturb it with the end of a walking-stick while on a stroll through one of our old English woods! All these things, then, point to the value of dead leaves, and to the recklessness of wasting or burning them.

For our *general* work in the garden in December, have a good trenching, and see to the entire drainage of the garden, that it has no defect: next attend to the rolling of the lawn and the gravel walks. A fine winter day's work, or perhaps a good many days' work, is also afforded by the felling and chopping up of some condemned tree: with all this valuable *débris* in addition to abundant fire-wood, you will be able to secure, if you go to work methodically, lengths of wood suitable for the repair of posts and fences, while the upper portion of your tree will give you a supply of pea and bean sticks in the following season. Only avoid, let us say in passing, operations of this kind that involve treading upon the soil in wet and rainy weather, for not only will your soil turn into a quagmire, but the labour is greater, and all the surroundings, yourself to boot, get into a deplorable tangle and mess.

Rather a change from this process of tree-felling is involved in giving a few hints as to the management of our orchid-house, about which we have not said much of late. A small house devoted to orchids will allow in this month of December of the admission of air, but with great caution. The aperture through which it passes should be perhaps covered with canvas: similarly very little watering will be necessary; but as naturally, at this severe time of the year, any warm spot will attract the presence of insects or other garden vermin, keep a sharp look-out for the approach of all such pests. As for the temperature ot your orchid-house, the glass where you are cultivating the Indian and more delicate species should not stand, even at night-time, lower than at about 55°, and some 10° higher in the day-time. For other species a few degrees lower will do no harm. Of course, the majority, if not all, of your orchids will be now in a state of rest: at all times, however, avoid exposing your plants to any drip, and as flower-spikes develop themselves a little increase of moist heat is advisable.

Then, again, our window gardening often affords at this dead time of year some interesting occupation. Of course we watch the more closely any plants that show the first promise of flowering. For instance, the cinerarias, where they have been carefully managed, will soon be sending up flowering shoots, in which case give all the air the weather will allow, but in gloomy or very severe seasons water very cautiously. Many cinerarias in the greenhouse may be improved by shifting into larger pots; those popular cyclamens, too, that are growing may be improved by placing them in a lighter and more airy situation, but they will like a regular, but not too copious watering. The greenhouse, so long as it contains nothing very tender, will do very well by night if the temperature is merely some two or three degrees above freezing, and a great degree of fire-heat is specially to be avoided.

The kitchen, fruit garden, and orchard must all yet have something said of them. In the first-named, as we have already hinted at the outset, a thorough and deep trenching is indispensable for the future well-being of our next year's crops: have, too, plenty of manure wheeled on during frosty weather, and spread it about where you at all fear that the ground is getting too hard. Some sort of strawy litter also may be strewn over the celery, or, indeed, over the beds of any young plants that you at all fear may be injured by the frost. As for the fruit garden and orchard, some pruning may be done when no frost at all is about.

TWO MUSICAL COLLEGES.

THERE must be amongst our musical readers very few who are unaware of the great and rapid extensions which have been gradually, almost unconsciously, effected in the operations of Trinity College, London. Its growth has been marked by an energy and a rapidity without example in the history of musical art. Established (1872) originally as a voluntary society in the interests of church music and musicians, it set itself at once to the task of improving the general culture of musical people; and working upon these lines, it has now built up, not only a complete faculty of music, but also a fairly complete curriculum of arts. In this respect alone, it differs from most institutions of a kindred nature; but it has other features which are peculiar to itself. Its system of examinations in practical and theoretical music is unique. More than five times the number of students than that of any other examining body connected with the standard notation are annually tested through the medium of the Local Examinations connected with Trinity College, seven thousand being an average of the number who come forward yearly. The College claims to have been the first to institute these local trials of ability, and there are now more than two hundred provincial centres for this purpose, not only

JANUARY GARDENING.

IF there be one month more than another in which the temptation comes strong upon us to let our garden take care of itself, it is this month of January: the ice-bound, or it may be the fog and rain-tangled look of things outside, and the allurements of Christmas festivities inside the house almost determine us to abandon horticulture until the spring comes. Gardeners, however, who are thorough gardeners, know that this is a delusion and a snare. Now, until the winter is actually upon us, we rarely know what kind of a season we are to expect; a very severe one, on the one hand, tries and often kills some of the more delicate plants, while a mild and damp winter is perhaps quite as injurious, as it is generally followed by very bitter spring winds, which are sometimes still more disastrous in their cutting off young shoots that have been prematurely forced on by the milder weather. We are not sure that, of the two seasons, the last-named is not, in the long run, more fatal in its effects in the garden, while the adage as to the "green yule" and the "fat churchyard" is sufficiently familiar.

Well, then, let us put the questions alternately: What shall we do in the garden in a severe winter, and then, what shall we do in a mild one? How then, first of all, are our shrubbery and flower garden to fare in a severe and prolonged frost? For instance, our tulips, and all our bulb collection—such as our hyacinths, &c.—had better have some protection thrown over them in the shape of long straw or peas haulm; it is very important that no frost should reach the bulb itself. Where, however, a deep snow has fallen almost simultaneously with the keen frost, there is perhaps less anxiety about the bulbs or any plants that, with the life still strong in them, are nevertheless asleep under the ground. Indeed, were we to select one day for an idle one in the garden itself, we should choose the day after a really deep snow: though even here, as we are still on the supposition of a severe winter, we might suggest an hour or two's work with a hoe or a long and strong walking-stick, shaking off carefully the heaviest of the snow that you see is simply overweighting your fine shrubs. Many a goodly tree or shrub has simply been ruined and perhaps killed, or, at all events, the shape and beauty of it entirely destroyed by the smashing weight of

snow that has been ruthlessly allowed to remain on it. In the very middle of the snowfall, then, a gentle shaking or tapping of the young trees and shrubs will be of great assistance to them. But by no means remove the snow from your garden beds—whether in the flower or kitchen garden; it is a warm protection of the best kind, and one that nature seems to have provided.

Then as to some garden operations in a mild winter: this often implies soft and drizzling weather, with a damp and muggy atmosphere. Hence we can, in a season of this sort, carry on our heavy garden changes that we began perhaps in October last. It may have been that at that time they were on a scale too large to allow of their being continued; and a season of this sort is the very one in which to carry out and perfect our original design. Or, again, in this open weather we may go on vigorously trimming and pruning our shrubbery, and make it eventually grow and shoot out into any form we please.

Another grand and important alteration we can now make in our garden is upon the lawn—a part of horticulture too often neglected. We sometimes notice, perhaps, that, after severe thunder-rains, the water in some few spots on the lawn forms for a short time a small lake, and after all has subsided, a little more careful inspection will reveal a decided settlement of the soil. In this open weather, then, see that all this is remedied: have in a sufficient quantity of new turf —for you will find that in many places where the lawn has been exposed to the drip from overhanging trees, some of your turf will be either dead or nearly so. Have the new turfs cut three feet in length and a foot wide, and then each one neatly rolled up in the treacle-pudding fashion of our school-days, otherwise you will find them awkward to handle, and liable to break in the operation. Before, however, laying your new turf, have the ground on which it is to come accurately levelled—and in this you cannot be too particular, even though you go to the trouble of borrowing the carpenter's spirit-level for the purpose—or all your work may have to be done over again. Worse still, you may do positive harm to your lawn by carelessness in making the surface level. Next, having levelled your ground, well roll it so that it may be all solid. This being done, take care that your turfs have been cut all of a uniform thickness, or you will again be in trouble. Assuming, then, that all these precautions have been taken, what remains to be done is fairly easy. When unrolled, lay the turfs side by side and very close to each other, each row being pushed close to its neighbour with the back of your rake, afterwards beaten down well, and finally rolled with a good heavy roller. You will afterwards have the satisfaction of seeing your lawn as even and level as your drawing-room carpet.

Once again, as to the open flower garden: any beds in which there is positively nothing might with advantage be well and deeply trenched and manured, as sometimes we are apt to allow our flower beds to go too long without thoroughly turning the surface soil, which in process of time, must therefore grow exhausted.

Then, as to our window gardening, to which perhaps we find ourselves occasionally more driven this month: we cannot expect to be very gay just yet in the way of bloom; true, we may have a few gay crocuses in pots, and our hyacinths, if we have taken pains with them, will before long be beginning to show; but palms and varieties of the dracena are admirably adapted for the window.

Again, in the fruit garden: new trees of all kinds may be planted here in a mild winter, or during any period of good open weather. Of course the autumn is the better time for this, but we are now supposing that autumn is lasting from October to nearly the end of January—a by no means uncommon thing. In fruit-tree planting, if your soil be rich and moderately deep, there will be no need to manure it first of all.

As to our now well-stocked greenhouse: give all the air you can, choosing the best time of the day for this; yet, in a time of hard frost and east wind, some little caution here will be needful; but give *some* air, tempered if you will through a gauze protection, either by the door or by the lights.

"CHRISTMAS WEATHER!"

THE sleet beats fast on the casement pane,
  The icicles freeze together,
And sharp winds blow o'er the mounds of snow,
  For 'tis right good Christmas weather!

The sleet beats fast, and the sharp wind blows
  Over the gorse and the heather,
But my Lady Bountiful, out she goes
  In the right good Christmas weather.

What cares she for the sleet and the wind,
  And the snow-flakes light as a feather?
In furs well clad, her heart is glad,
  For 'tis right good Christmas weather!

Yet many must suffer, too well she knows,
  When want and cold come together;
So my Lady Bountiful, out she goes
  In the right good Christmas weather.

And wherever she steps a warm light glows
  Over the gorse and the heather,
And hearts that were sad are hearts made glad
  In the right good Christmas weather!

GEORGE WEATHERLY.

deavours on the part of women to gain diplomas and so fit themselves for the battle of life in this particular field, advise them to pursue the following course. When they are qualified to practise they should seek to gain an appointment in some hospital that is set apart for the use of women or children, or they should become an assistant to a dentist of repute.

Another side-walk is that of chiropody. A chiropodist is not required to produce a diploma; at the same time an intelligent knowledge of all that appertains to the art, and real skill in the carrying out of this knowledge, are essential. Now it need hardly be said that chiropody does not rank as high as dentistry, but viewing it merely as a means of making a livelihood, it is much more likely that a woman would be able to gain an independence as a chiropodist than as a dentist. The very fact of the one not being so aspiring will tell in her favour.

I am looking upon the matter through the eyes of the general public, and it is that large body which really gives success or occasions the non-success of those in whom it places confidence or the reverse.

This being so, there seems to be every reason why this particular employment might be more largely taken up by women than it has been hitherto. To look at the matter from a practical point of view, the number of people whose feet are maimed and pained by corns, by bunions, by defective and refractory nails, and other additions or imperfections, is very considerable, and very many of this number would gladly seek for the relief which an experienced chiropodist can give. I myself know people who journey long distances to chiropodists, and also I know that the latter are often requested to go to patients many miles away, whose purses allow them the luxury of paying the extra expense of summoning the operator to their own dwelling.

Fees of five shillings, and seven-and-sixpence, and ten shillings are given to a chiropodist: some arrange to attend a patient for three guineas a year. A diligent study under the supervision of a skilful operator is the best means of becoming a proficient.

The first step is to watch closely and carefully each minute action on his part, and to be told by him the reason for each act as well as how it is to be done. I must give a word of warning and caution—it would be highly dangerous for any one to attempt to practise as a chiropodist who was not fully qualified to do so—it is to be hoped that no one will be so rash as to try to do this; for instead of giving relief to others there would be the certainty of causing them an irreparable injury.

A. S. P.

GARDENING IN THE WATERY MONTH.

ONCE again we find ourselves creeping out of winter quarters into the spring, with the return of which we shall have to redouble our energies in the garden. And before going into detail, let us recollect generally that spring is a trying time for man and beast, and—what is more to our purpose—trying to the vegetable kingdom as well. Last month we spoke a little about lawn-making, or at all events of its renewal where any settlement of the sub-soil had made its appearance. What we should do now is to prepare it for the first mowing of the season by either dragging over it a goodly-sized branch of a bush, or giving it a good sweeping with some new birch brooms: this will have the effect of destroying the endless little worm-hills, and in open weather we finish up with the heavy roller. In a few weeks' time we begin again with the scythe previous to the weekly use of the mowing machine. Enough then as to the lawn.

In the flower garden we shall have a well-spent morning in protecting our spring show of flowers from the frost. Ranunculuses, for example, that we planted in the autumn, ought to be covered with litter: this will keep off the worst of the enemy. Similarly, our tulips and Dutch bulbs will in a severe season want some protection. Yet, in a sheltered situation it is astonishing what some of the hardier bulbs will sometimes stand. Only last season the writer of this paper was mourning, during a bitter frost and snow that followed a mild winter, over a hyacinth bed, which seemed destined to destruction. The green spikes were well through the ground, and some of them appeared, after the ordeal they had gone through, to be turning black or yellow; yet in six weeks' time there was a brilliant hyacinth show: perhaps there were *some* failures; but in fairness it ought to be added that the situation was one wholly sheltered from the north and partly from the east.

Tulips, however, are more readily affected by the frost, and some good authorities attribute every split petal, every notch, and even every discolourment to the action of the frost. Before leaving our flower subject, let us take a turn to the kitchen garden, where perhaps—as we have often recommended—we have been preserving, in some now discarded cucumber

frame that was on its last legs, a few of the hardiest of our geraniums and calceolarias. On a genial morning we shall find, perhaps, if we have taken care to protect our frames in the worst of the frost that has passed, that the plants are shooting out, or getting a little more drawn up than we like, with here and there a disposition to send out a sickly flower: all these little shoots and flower-heads we pinch off; this will throw the strength into the plants themselves, make them more bushy, and add a vigour to their flowering qualities by-and-by.

But it is in our green-house, when perhaps a pelting rain in this "February fill-dyke" is driving, that we find plenty to do. First of all we, perhaps, take fright at the apparently crowded and over-stocked appearance of our solitary glass-room. Well, the fact is, everything is making a start, and this first green push adds a good deal, apparently, to the size of all our stock inside; give then plenty of air, fumigate occasionally, to keep down the green-fly, and pinch off any heads that are going ahead too much.

Re-potting, however, is the subject to which we alluded when we spoke of green-house work this month. We are not now speaking of our cuttings, which, let us hope, are all flourishing in their boxes and pans or large pots — the pinching process is probably all they will require; but any larger plants, and those for general exhibition, will

RE-POTTING.

want looking over; any plant that is what is called "pot-bound," that is to say, the roots of which are all clinging in a welded mass to the sides of the pot, must be taken out and shifted into a larger-sized pot. In some cases where your plant is a strong and vigorous grower, it should be put into a pot two sizes larger. And next about the soil for green-house potting. Here is a good compost that will answer nearly every purpose in the green-house. Equal proportions of the following:—loam with the turf decayed in it, leaf-mould, decayed cow-dung, peat-earth chopped quite small, and some ordinary road-side sand. One remark only we may add here: in the case of growing heaths, use three times the quantity of peat-earth, so that for all plants of the heath order we have these three parts of peat, and one of the before-named soils. And in shifting a plant from one pot to another, take care that it is not sunk deeper into the new pot than it was into the old one, and see also that the new compost goes uniformly all round the old ball of earth that encompassed the roots of your plant just lifted from the old pot. A little water will settle the soil well round the roots.

Heavy work again will shortly be entailed upon us in the kitchen garden, but in the two months just gone by we have probably prepared our soil for early seed reception in favourable weather, by a good and thorough trenching and manuring. March is of course our general seed-sowing month, but about the middle of February in an open season a beginning may certainly be made. At all events our successional pea-sowing may take place. Some round-leaf spinach also may be sown, and this should be got in like the peas, successionally. In mild weather it will grow rapidly, and where it comes up very thickly it may be thinned out; yet even this thinning should only be sparingly done, because when each little plant of it has four good round leaves, it may be drawn bodily, and in that way thin the rest, and enable what remains to attain a better size. In all seed-sowing this month and the next—and especially in the kitchen garden—take care to have the soil well over your seed, though avoid the other extreme of sowing too deeply. For at the end of a long winter the birds are very busy forage-hunting when their berry supply has become exhausted, and will soon find out a weak point in the kitchen garden sowing. A few exposed seeds will tell the feathered tribe that more are to be had by a little perseverance in scratching up, hen-fashion. Hence we now see the importance of early trenching, and afterwards reducing the soil to a thoroughly pulverised and friable state, in which state only can we properly manipulate it when sowing-time comes.

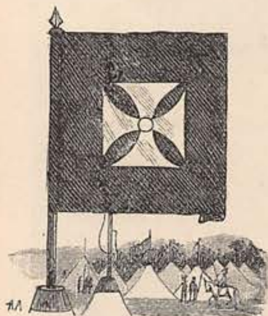
And then about our fruit garden. Pruning, if not finished by this time, should be instantly done. It is a month in which it is almost out of place to hint at the operation, but we merely do so, as it is simply imperative to complete it forthwith. But the gooseberries and currants should be gone over, and all the weakly wood cut out; this will let in air and sun. If these trees be allowed to get into a tangle of wood they will fail. Similar observations likewise apply to the planting of new fruit-trees; do it at once if it is to be done at all.

Preparations also may be made for grafting by procuring shoots and cuttings of anything new or very desirable; but when you have got them, bury them nearly in the ground until they are wanted for their purpose.

FAMOUS FLAGS OF FIELD AND FLEET.

BY "NAUTICUS."

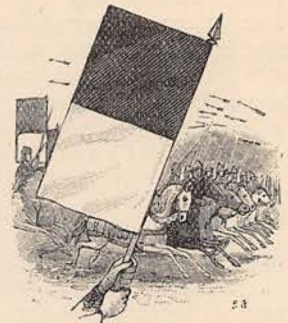
I.



BANNER OF THE KNIGHTS OF ST. JOHN.

We propose to notice briefly some of the less-known flags which in past years have played a far from unimportant place in the making of history, and will then give some account of the origin of a few of the more important modern flags. Anything like a complete treatment of the subject would lead into the mysteries and technical language of heraldry, a matter not lightly to be undertaken by simple lay folk, and would moreover require far more space than can be here allotted to it. However, it is hoped that this sketch of a subject not much studied will prove instructive and interesting.

The Banner of the Knights of St. John.—In the middle of the eleventh century some merchants of Amalfi obtained permission from the Caliph of Egypt to build a hospital at Jerusalem, which they dedicated to St. John, and in which they received and sheltered the poor pilgrims who visited the Holy City. They were expelled from Jerusalem in 1191, and established themselves successively at Acre, Cyprus, and Rhodes. At the last-named place they maintained their headquarters for two centuries, but in 1522 they were driven out by the Turks. The order then retired to Candia, Sicily, and finally to Malta.



THE BEAUCEANT.

Their banner con-

THE GARDEN IN THE STORMY MONTH.

TWICE a year we have a really heavy time of it in the garden; we get it in the autumn and fall of the year, when our flower garden is largely stripped, and a rush is made to house all tender things under glass for winter quarters, and at the same time we are having our orchard harvest, stripping also our kitchen garden of decaying matter, and trenching the whole of it, while we are as busily engaged in shifting shrubs, felling trees, and making, perhaps, large changes in our shrubbery, and in the shape of our lawn and beds. All this is autumn work. The other, and by far the more agreeable of the two heavy times, comes in this first really spring month of March, when we seem to be beginning everything *de novo*, and in the kitchen garden especially from end to end we are busy seed-sowing and setting out young plants. And, next to the word "bread," perhaps the most homely word akin to it is "potatoes." We cannot do better than say something about them at once.

In the first week or two of the month, if you set out the early sorts such as those now recommended, let them be in proportionately warmer quarters of your garden: the main stock, however, of potatoes we do not care to put in before the third week in March. After a winter of an undecided character, and no particular continuance of frost and cold, we occasionally have a little burst of semi-summer weather in March, followed by a startling return of almost winter weather in April. More ruinous mischief is then done in the garden than we can conceive; hence it is well not to plant potatoes too soon, if we want to escape the risk of having them cut off by a spring frost and east wind. Have some two feet between your rows, and should a genial season afterwards bring them on too rapidly, and the cold weather then return, the most expeditious plan, perhaps, is to cover them over again quickly with a little soil, although they have put their green tops through, and let them once again work their way through the second super-soil. This will save them.

Of course, if you are disposed to force some, plant a few whole sets in a slight hot-bed, and in mild weather give them air as soon as they are up, always, however, protecting them at night. Or, again, there is a second method of bringing them on by a kind of forcing, yet without having recourse to the frame for the purpose; it is this: dig a small trench a foot deep, fill it with hot stable manure, and afterwards tread it in so as to make it occupy about half the space. Do this until you come to within some three or four inches of the surface soil, when upon the trodden manure fill up to the surface with your ordinary pulverised soil. On this soil lay out, a foot apart, good early seedling potatoes, and let your rows be some two and a half feet apart. Next, cover over your potatoes with the soil which you have dug out in order to form your trench, only take care that it is thoroughly well pulverised, and that there are no lumps in it. Let this covering be to the depth of four inches, while upon the whole put an additional protection of peas-haulm of a thickness sufficient to do three things—first, to keep in the heat; secondly, to keep off the approach of frost and east wind; and thirdly, *not* so thick as to exclude light and air. As soon as your potatoes under these circumstances have come through, keep them earthed up, protected as advised, during frost and wind, but during really warm spring rains and sunshine they may be uncovered. Should the season prove a very dry one, a little water will be advisable, but it is more likely that this will not be required. A fair and an early crop of potatoes ought to reward you for your pains.

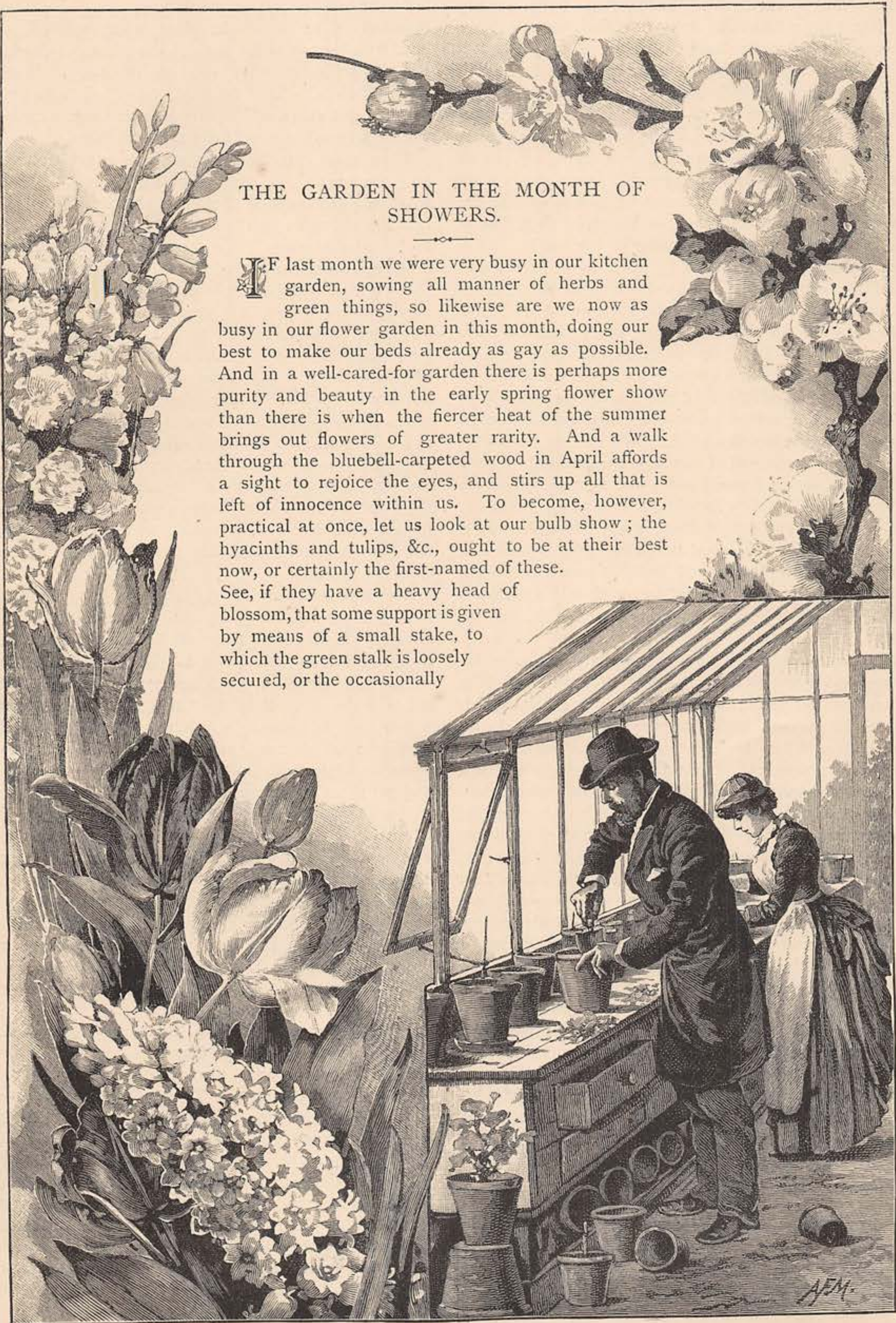
Jerusalem artichokes, too, we plant in rows very similar to those for our potatoes. Not only are these vegetables of great value in the household and kitchen, but the plants themselves, being somewhat of the miniature poplar order, serve very conveniently, for a large part of the year, as a blind to hide any eyesore or ugly background; while they are also so good-natured as to be willing to thrive under the trying circumstances of forlorn and bleak localities, having north or easterly aspects where most of our other garden inhabitants would only be willing to enter on terms of an exceedingly short lease, or might even expire before the lease itself.

Still busy at work in our kitchen garden, we must next attend to our asparagus-bed. This will want a little cautious forking over, not too roughly, lest you damage the heads, which in a short time will be pushing their way above the surface; the bed should afterwards have a slight top-dressing of manure.

Then we must see to our carrots; for these we have our ground well dug, trenched, and pulverised: the seeds should be but thinly sown on the surface, and should then be well raked in. It might be worth remarking that as carrot-seeds are woolly, and have therefore a tendency to stick together, it is a good plan first of all to rub or well mix them with some sand or quite dry mould, so as thus to separate them; you will then avoid the annoyance of their coming up in little bunches instead of uniformly. There is, however, less trouble in separating such seeds as those of parsnip or beetroot. We have hitherto been so devoted to the fruit and flower garden, that this important month we shall devote our remarks exclusively to the kitchen garden, where there is so very much of a domestic character to attend to. Our spinach again we now sow; the round-leaf kind we sow either broadcast or, better

perhaps, in drills; these drills should be a foot apart, nor should we sow thickly in the drills. So much seed is often wasted by this unnecessary habit of cramming, and half choking our drills with seed. Each spinach plant must eventually be some six inches from its neighbour, but it is a good plan to draw the spinach when quite young, as soon as it is at all fit to pull whole for kitchen use; indeed, the smaller they are the more delicate they are to eat. Our old crop of winter spinach is, perhaps, this month still furnishing a supply. Keep it clear of weeds, and pick only the larger leaves for use.

All the early kinds of broccoli may be sown now, and if in a warm situation, you may sow also some celery seed; but if you have a cold frame, a declining hotbed, or a hand-glass, the celery will do better in that.



THE GARDEN IN THE MONTH OF SHOWERS.

IF last month we were very busy in our kitchen garden, sowing all manner of herbs and green things, so likewise are we now as busy in our flower garden in this month, doing our best to make our beds already as gay as possible. And in a well-cared-for garden there is perhaps more purity and beauty in the early spring flower show than there is when the fiercer heat of the summer brings out flowers of greater rarity. And a walk through the bluebell-carpeted wood in April affords a sight to rejoice the eyes, and stirs up all that is left of innocence within us. To become, however, practical at once, let us look at our bulb show; the hyacinths and tulips, &c., ought to be at their best now, or certainly the first-named of these. See, if they have a heavy head of blossom, that some support is given by means of a small stake, to which the green stalk is loosely secured, or the occasionally

heavy hail and snow-storms of the spring will very likely break them off. Bulbs that have already finished their blooming may be lifted, so as to give room next month for the bedding-out plants. But still it is best to let the foliage die down a little first of all before moving the bulb bodily ; though on no account cut the ugly foliage down—though it is a sore temptation to do so—or you will kill the bulbs outright. And, as we in the kitchen garden always try to sow so as to have a succession of vegetable crops, so now we begin to continue a succession of bloom among the flowers. To do this, in fact, we began, or should have done so, a month ago, by sowing in our hot-bed, or in our greenhouse, or indeed in both, some hardy and half-hardy annuals. The hardy ones of these, sown a month ago, we turn out into sheltered parts of our open garden by the third week of April, in favourable weather, while those sown in the open three or four weeks ago will be ready to bloom immediately afterwards. And there is the usual large choice of these flowers : lupins, sweet-peas, mignonette, candytuft, larkspur, convolvulus, &c., with many more that a good seedsman will at any time recommend. Pansy beds, too, can be formed now ; and next month, or by the end of this, they should be very gay. Plant out some struck cuttings of these every fortnight. In a dry season they will want watering, and indeed can never stand any prolonged and hot sunshine ; yet a little protection and a good watering will sometimes enable these to go on blooming through the greater part of the summer.

By the end of April we find ourselves taking an increasing interest in the condition of our roses. It is then that we begin watching for the grubs, which about this season begin making vigorous attacks on the buds. When this is the case, give a good syringing with a preparation of soft soap and water with a dash of turpentine in it, following this up immediately afterwards with a second syringing with plain water. Sometimes you will find small caterpillars comfortably rolled up in a small leaf quite close to the buds. This you can unfold, and then destroy the caterpillar. If the grubs are allowed their own way, they will entirely destroy all the beauty and shape of your flowers. Some recommend cutting back roses that are much attacked by the grub. This, of course, will retard the blooming. Next, examine the whole of the stock, and carefully rub off from it all the growth that is detracting from the health of the rose-plant itself, and also grub deeply up all those red-coloured suckers which still more terribly exhaust your standards. These old-fashioned favourites will, however, doubtless in time give place to the custom, now becoming more popular, of growing roses lower and pegging them down. This certainly is more suggestive of the idea of a "bed of roses."

Our picotees and carnations we pot this month in sizes proportionate to the number of plants that we wish to have in a pot. Put plenty of crocks in the pot, somewhat sunken in the middle so as to form a basin ; then add some of your previously prepared compost, and finally pot your picotees, taking carefully the whole ball of earth from the old pot and then having the soil of the plant, when repotted, on a level with the top of the pot. A few pieces of charcoal will do no harm when you are repotting. Protect your picotees, when finished, from all attacks of vermin and slugs, which, if you give them a chance, will be sure to climb up for a meal off them.

Then again, our biennials, such as sweet Williams, and perennials, we may sow this month. A well-selected assortment of these it is always well to have in a garden, more particularly where there is little or no greenhouse-room. For these perennials make us so much more independent of the bedding-out system, and really a well-sheltered garden and a couple of good-sized frames, without any greenhouse at all, can give us plenty of produce and delight. Sowing, then, our perennials this month enables them to acquire plenty of growth for the next four or five months, and the autumn is by far the best time for moving them to spots in which they are to remain permanently. Poor old columbines, hollyhocks, and Canterbury bells ! We shall never tire of them, for they remind us of the old days when, with a few annuals, they formed the staple of our whole garden supply before the more formal and artificial systems set in. Indeed, what can now be prettier than this combination we have so often suggested ?

Our little overcrowded greenhouse—if we rejoice in one—will perhaps be giving us this time a good deal of anxiety. Plenty of air daily will be most essential, and by the end of the month we may begin selecting some of the hardiest of our stock and putting them outside, either under a south wall, or in a shed, or on a stand which we can protect at night. This we call the hardening-off process, and in the middle of May, when we begin bedding-out, these we set out the first, and get them out of the way.

Much that we said last month, relative to the kitchen garden, will apply also to this. Probably March alone would not suffice for operations there. The fortnightly and successional sowings we continue as the best means of giving us a continuous supply of vegetables. No family can possibly consume a dozen pecks of peas in two or three days ; but the same dozen pecks made into two dozen dishes are very much more satisfactory ; and successional sowing enables us to have these.

Perhaps there is less to do in the fruit garden this month than in any other. Our orchard is in full blossom, and the bees are enjoying their oratorio among the overhanging boughs. To the large wasps, however, we show no mercy this month : every wasp you kill in April saves you from a swarm by-and-by. Yet, last year, we all remarked the absence of wasps, but the consequent abundance of flies of all sizes, which the wasps destroy, and which do more harm than the wasps. Who knows that, could we succeed in actually *exterminating* any one class of insect we are wont to regard as a pest, we should not be the losers after all? Our wisdom is often foolishness.

sincerely trust we shall, in some way, be able to repay you for the trial which a return to Dernside may at first prove. At any rate, let us try. Do not grieve us by refusal, but come quickly to

"Yours most truly,

"GERALDINE CORBETTE."

Such a yearning sprang up in her to see the old place once more, she quelled her first proud rebellious inclination to refuse, and went. And this is how she was met.

The evening was closing, stars frostily shining overhead, the house glowing with many lights from within, as she was driven up. At the wide-open door a kind motherly face smiled welcome on her, and one of Cyprian Wentworth's sisters led her to another widow lady, who kissed her and thanked her, with an emotion which was very catching, for all she had given them back, and bade her go warm herself after her long drive, in the library, and see if she could find no one else among them whom she knew.

To the library then she went, and lo! in the sparkling light of the old yew logs stood—Hubert Grahame!

He, hurrying to meet her, took first one hand, and finding that was shaking, then the other; then, since she seemed nowise less nervous, boldly steadied her trembling figure with his two strong arms, and made confession of much which, until now, had been incomprehensible.

"I found, when first I came to the Crosbies, that like them you knew nothing of us Grahames, or that my mother was one of the discarded sisters. So I thought I would stay on, and see what our supplanter was like. I started with trying hard not to like you, but that soon came to an end; I could not manage it. Then I stopped when I ought to have gone away, and grew to love you more and more. But I'd never have told it while you were my uncle's heiress, and we were all so poor; and most and best I loved you when you were in such trouble, and I felt I ought to bid you keep the whole of Dernside; and yet, for my mother's sake and all the others, I was torn two ways at once. And, sweetheart, Honor, if you've not learned to think me a poltroon, will you have me now? I had not enough to dare to ask you then. But I'm getting on; I don't think we shall be so very poor. Last month a rather great gun took me for his partner. And a little bit of your own will be yours again. There are four of us Grahames, six sons and daughters of Aunt Geraldine. So you will take a tenth of your fortune back with me, Honoria. Is it worth having?"

Worth having! She clings to him as they stand there in the red firelight; "worth having!" Ah!—with him, worth all the other ten times told, she says.

HOW TO SECURE FLOWERS EIGHT MONTHS IN THE YEAR.

THE open flower garden occupies us very largely this month. In its opening week our small greenhouse, the nursery for the winter of our entire stock of bedding-out plants, seemed very likely crowded to overflowing; and should a chilly April have rendered it more prudent to retain our stock still under glass to the end of the month, we must forthwith commence at once the hardening-off process. At the best of seasons it must have always been noticed that bedding-out plants taken, albeit in weather we think quite hot, from the greenhouse to the open beds, after a single night's exposure look terribly thrown back; and perhaps some fine promising head of flower shows symptoms of turning nearly black instead of breaking into early bloom. The truth is, flowers, even the hardiest of them, like ourselves, are apt "to take cold" if exposed to sudden and violent changes. Hence, then, the great importance of this hardening-off process. The best plan, then, is to transfer a large and the hardiest assortment of your bedding-out plants from your greenhouse to your tool-house, shed, or any locality partially under cover; or something of the kind could be readily improvised by means of a few strong stakes and some matting or tarpauling. A little rough or partial protection for the first few nights wonderfully inures plants to their change; and a few precautions of this kind will, after awhile, prepare your bedding-out plants to face all the strange vicissitudes of an English summer.

Our object from the first of May is to keep up a brilliant show of flowers for at least six months in the open garden. But, indeed, taking into consideration our bulb show, we ought to have plenty of colour in our beds for seven or eight months of the year—that is, from the crocus and hyacinth months down to the dahlia and chrysanthemum show in the autumn. How, then, do we go about this? This shall be our chief question for the deceitful month of May. We shall bring into requisition our greenhouse, our cucumber-frame or pit, our potting-shed, or it may be some lumber or garden-seed room of our house—any locality, in fact, that offers a half-way house between the heated conservatory and the open flower-beds. Now, of course, some time ago we had sown some tender annuals in pots: they should now, therefore, have a shift to the pots we intend them to bloom in. These we either place as near as possible to the glass in our greenhouse or put them in our frames,

which would be better still. And these, later on in the season, we could plunge, just as they are, in our flower-beds. Indeed, if we intend to carry out our resolve to the very letter—to have our open beds gay for two-thirds of the year—we should have had our hyacinths also in pots and plunged likewise, so that the very day they have done blooming the pots could be raised; whereas, if your bulbs had been in the open ground, you could not without fatal injury to the bulbs have cut down the foliage or lifted the bulb itself so speedily. Indeed, in the case of small gardens, or gardens in exposed situations, where flowers are liable to get an occasional check, the system of pot-culture is very advisable; and with some of our bright and pretty annuals we can thus work wonders in our open garden by successional and judicious sowing. And then, again, annuals are often of little good to look at until they are on the very point of flowering. By a little contrivance, then, we can have three or four sets of flowering annuals in one season: some we sow in the open as early as the middle of March; some we

also sow then in heat; and some, again, we may sow in the open in the very first week of May; these last will easily thrive, bloom, and cast their seed, all before the appearance of the first autumn frosts. A good deal of confusion of idea exists as to what really is a *hardy* plant. Some people imagine a plant to be hardy merely because it is exceedingly well known, grows quickly, and is to be found in most gardens; or again imagine that because a plant is a slow grower it is, therefore, non-hardy. This is all a delusion. The common nasturtium, for example, will blacken up on the approach of frost; whereas a camellia will positively stand a degree or two of frost, and cast its buds if exposed to too much fire-heat in the winter.

There is another method of assisting plants to continue blooming, and that, strange as it may sound at first sight, is to gather flowers pretty frequently, whether for table or drawing-room decoration. Many particular gardeners are niggardly in this respect, and, in consequence, have to put up for a large part of the year with a plant that is little better than an evergreen shrub. Roses, for example, more particularly, if well gathered from the time of their first bloom in June, will go on blooming until late in the autumn.

All the better class of sweetwilliams may be propagated now by taking off the shoots round the bottom, and striking them under a hand-glass. Of course we select only the double ones; but, indeed, biennials of every sort can now be advantageously sown. And then in this month of May something must certainly be said about the herbaceous plants which figure so prominently in the gardening system we have always advocated. We can, then, either sow perennials now, or, if we also intend to propagate them, by parting the roots; this we can do with any, as soon as their blooms decay. All our old friends, then, such as the penstemons, campanulas, columbines, lupins, delphiniums, &c., can be thus manipulated. When we part those that have gone out of bloom, we must not take too small a piece of root. Yet a piece with a good heart to it and some root will make a good plant afterwards, if you take the additional precaution of giving it room to grow, a fair situation, and a properly prepared bed. But still it is astonishing, and it has, doubtless, often been observed by many, under what apparently unfavourable circumstances some of our perennials seem capable of flourishing in a most respectable way. Who has not often noticed perennials in bloom along a carriage-drive, where trees and tall shrubs on either side half exclude the sun, and afford a plentiful drip into the bargain? In parting perennial roots, then, give at first plenty of water, and let the operation be just after the sun has gone down; but take care to have the parting and the planting done at one and the same time, so as to avoid the risk of your pieces of root drying up. No particular care is necessary in sowing perennial seed. Sow in patches or drills, but thinly. The seed always comes up strongly, and thin sowing will give you, therefore, less trouble when the thinning-out time comes afterwards.

ON THE SOCIAL POSITION OF DIVERS ANIMALS.

BY C. F. GORDON CUMMING.

AMONG the many interests of travelling in far countries, few have for me a greater attraction than the singular difference in what I may call "the social position" of animals in divers countries. In Britain, for instance, there are comparatively few homes which are not shared by a moderate (very often an immoderate) number of dogs, of various sorts and sizes, while somewhere in the background we may be almost sure that one or more cats are domiciled. Then, is it not almost part of an English country gentleman's religion to follow up his Sunday luncheon of roast beef and plum pudding by going the grand round of the kennels, the stables, and the farm, lingering lovingly at the stall of each favourite hunter, discussing the merits of the various hounds, leading his guests in slow procession up and down the long lines of stall-fed cattle and beautifully-kept pigs and piglings, and gazing in rapture on the monstrously distorted forms of prize hogs, too fat to rise even at the approach of the squire?

I confess I have no love for such, and am apt to shock my hosts by shirking this part of the Sabbatical routine, but I really have a strong feeling of sympathy with the poor Highlanders and islanders, whose humble fireside is often a true menagerie, for not only do the cow and her calf sometimes lodge under the same roof, in the outer half of the bothie, but the cocks and hens and pigeons all roost on the rafters, enjoying the nice warm peat-smoke which fills the house, and occasionally playful kids or a pet lamb have the run of the hearth, and live on terms of intimate friendship with the sagacious collie dogs. Across the channel, our neighbours in the Emerald Isle are, I think, apt to be a little *too* friendly towards their porcine pets, but there is no accounting for tastes! In the same way, it seems rather odd in the Hawaiian Isles to see the women neglecting their babies, that they may be able to bestow undivided affection either upon small dogs or young pigs. The latter, when they arrive at months of discretion and full growth, are apt to be exceedingly inconvenient household pets.

Of genuine reverence for animals in its most wonderfully developed form, we had some strange glimpses in Egypt's memorials of the past, as seen in the splendid museum of Boulac, and elsewhere. But it was not till we reached India that we fully realised to what excess such reverence for living animals is carried—not till we were familiar with the bazaars

reply that he is "quite sick," or "verra sick"; the precise fact being, perhaps, that he has the toothache or a cold. A fellow-guest at a hotel, wishful to know whether he can have a newspaper, asks, "Are you through?" and a waiter will put the same formula as to whether you have ended a meal. If a remark be lost, or misunderstood, the listener will probably say, "How?" instead of "Excuse me," or "I did not understand"; and if he has met some statement with a flat contradiction—a circumstance not uncommon—and afterwards discovers his error, he will probably say, "I take back what I said." A jug is always a "pitcher"; and in some sections of society people have no legs, for these are alluded to as "limbs," and a guest is asked whether he will take the "second wing" of a fowl. Yet the word "bug" is freely applied to insects of all descriptions; and an elegant young lady will say that she is "mad" when she is vexed or disappointed. If she wishes to refer to the garment usually known as the bodice, she calls it her "waist"; her overshoes are "rubbers"; what is understood in England as print, she styles "calico," and a piece of the latter is asked for as "a web of muslin." Her mantle is a "sacque," and she unhesitatingly describes the unmentionable garments of her husband or brother as "pants," while the braces are "suspenders," or, in vulgar parlance, "gallowses."

Diversities of pronunciation have often been commented on, and the criticism is sometimes heard, "He speaks the English language very well—for an Englishman." Apart from local dialects, already referred to, there seems to be in the United States a national fashion in the open sounds given to the vowels, in the use of the rising inflection, in the abrupt and jerky way of dividing sentences, and in the pronunciation of many words. In the public schools, children are taught to utter what may be described as the American sounds of certain letters, involving peculiar action of the mouth and lips, which cannot be said to impart grace or beauty to young ladies. Concerning many of these it may be remarked that they are accustomed to speak in loud, pronounced, and ringing tones, which might even be called strident. Doubtless this is acquired unconsciously from the sterner sex, whose public and domestic utterances are not, as a rule, characterised by mellifluous tones. Life in America seems too busy and urgent to permit the cultivation of graces of style. It sounds strange to English ears to have to listen to such tones, and to observe the peculiar orthography and pronunciation given to familiar words. For example, "traveller" is spelt with one "l"; but "skilful" often appears with four. "Meagre," "centre," and similar words have the last two letters transposed. A "cheque," for money, is spelt "check," and the letter "u" is always omitted from such words as "honour" and "favour." "Schedule" is spelt and pronounced "skedule;" the accent is placed on the initial letters of such words as "Arabs" and "Italians"; the indefinite article "a" receives special attention in speaking and reading; and, happily, much care is bestowed upon poor letter "h." In many places such words as "first" and "mercy" are pronounced with a peculiar and almost indescribable twist of the tongue, producing sounds like "fur-eest," "mer-ee-cy." The accent is often placed on the first syllable of words like "inquiry"; a "vase" is made to rhyme with "case"; and the sound of "ay" is heard in "tomatoes" and "charades." "Cannot" is always uttered as if it were the name of Kant, the German metaphysician; "psalm" is hard to recognise in "sam"; and for "half-past" the hour one is informed that it is "haf-paast." All good Americans long to go to "Parrus"; and a young lady calls her parents "popper" and "mommer."

Such are some of the colloquialisms and pronunciations which strike an English visitor to America, although, of course, the ear soon becomes accustomed to them, and he may even unconsciously acquire them himself.

THE GARDEN IN THE LEAFY MONTH.

"LEAFY June"—perhaps, after all, the most enjoyable month in the year—is certainly in the garden the time when everything clamours for attention at once. There is nothing, however, very novel in the statement that we are only capable of doing one thing at a time. But yet if we are fairly active and observant, and have plenty of *system* in our gardening routine, we shall find that in twenty-four hours a large and very varied amount of work can be got through.

Briefly let us sketch a representative day's gardening in June. Up with the lark then, we naturally turn at once to the green-house, and to the cucumber and melon frames, and quickly open our glass and doors. Probably the next thing that will call for our attention will be some careful watering in both houses and frames, for a little moisture will certainly be most essential in order to enable the occupants not only to face but to gain benefit from the midsummer sun. Another early morning operation, though not a daily, but a weekly one at the least, will be an hour with the mowing machine, and very invaluable just at this time is that short grass which is gradually filling our wheelbarrow. When your heap of grass has been lying two or three hours in any corner in which you have temporarily perhaps deposited it, thrust your hand deep into it and you will soon see its value as a help in lining hot-beds. Or again we shall find another great use for this

short lawn grass at this time, and that will be on our strawberry beds. We strew it, then, carefully and pretty thickly around and among our strawberry plants for the purpose of keeping the now forming fruit from injury from the soil. It is a very unpleasant thing to find just as we have put a melting and rosy strawberry between our lips that we are biting a number of small grits, and perhaps chipping a tooth over a tiny flint stone. Yet if we do not take some precautions and protect our ripening fruit in some way, we shall be liable probably to the experience

of the disagreeable adventure at which we have hinted. A load of tan is better than grass, for slugs strongly disapprove of the tan ; yet, on the other hand, a load of grass costs us nothing at all, and tan may not very easily be had in some localities. Moreover, the colour of a slug is more or less the colour of the tan, but the fresh green grass is in strong contrast with the dusky brown body of a slug, and thus we are able, perhaps,

on the grass to capture him more readily than on the tan.

And in the next place, we are doubtless busy in the full completion and decoration of our flower-beds. Hardly by the end of May, at all events in some cold localities, is the bedding out quite finished, but an English summer is short enough as it is, and the most must therefore be made of it; and the bedding out system, without any other ingenuity in the garden to come to its assistance, makes summer terribly short in the flower-beds. Tall-growing flowers, then, that want support should be carefully tied to stakes: any early-flowering annuals that are well past their best may be taken up, and some new and bright substitutes from the green-house that we have, perhaps, been forcing on, should come in their place. By these means, by successional sowing, and with the aid of a good assortment of perennials, we shall keep our flower-beds gay for a large part of the year. The lately bedded-out plants will require a careful watering; feeble, early or imperfectly developed blooms should be pinched off, and as far as possible have the plants themselves pegged down, so as to allow of the whole growing finally uniform in height.

A capital and elegant creeper or climber, good for training either to hide an eye-sore in the rear of the garden, or to grow over trellis-work, or by a wall, is the Japanese hop—*Humulus japonicus*: it grows vigorously, is fairly hardy, and gives very little trouble: plenty of sweet-peas, too, as low-growing climbers, there should always be in the garden; but as in a dry season they are not very long-lived, the successional sowing of them is important where their gaiety, brilliancy, and delicious perfume are properly appreciated.

Thus far, then, we shall find that these operations will make a very large hole in any one morning's work, and yet we have not touched upon the fruit and kitchen garden, saving only the strawberry bed. The currants and gooseberries perhaps are occasioning us some trouble by the presence of the caterpillar. If you had time and patience for it, when you find that the caterpillar has really made its appearance, hand-picking, carefully done, is perhaps the most effectual remedy: a bowl of hot water placed on the ground under the tree during the operation will give you both hands free, and the caterpillars will be instantaneously killed as they drop into it.

Coming finally to our vegetable crop we will notice, as first in order, those that may be growing immediately under the wall fruit of which we have just been speaking, and for the sake of the latter see that the vegetable crops, within a foot or two of the wall, are of a small and light character. Have, then, near the wall no crop that quite covers the surface of the soil, but merely perhaps a few lettuces, radishes, small salad, or at most some French beans.

Early in June, too, sow on rich ground, and if after a long wet night so much the better, your turnip crop: a second and a third successional sowing might be made of them this month. To be thoroughly serviceable, turnips ought to be quickly grown. The potatoes will, too, now require constant earthing up; if this be not done you will soon see their produce exposed on the surface of the soil; and bear in mind that all which are so exposed, and even those which are imperfectly covered by the soil, will be quite useless for anything but seed. The onion bed will want weeding, and another sowing made for small drawing. Altogether, then, we have had a heavy day in the garden, and "the labouring man" who has accomplished it will be entitled to his "sweet sleep."

SUMMER SKETCHING.

DARK cloudlets trail across the sky,
Like home-bound cranes, in line extend
The fires of sunset flare and die,
In pageant brief and splendid.
The rippling gold is darkening grey,
Save where white foam-breaks fleck the bay;
And sky and ocean far away
Are softly blended.

She haunts that salt-aired heathy seat;
She loves to sink her feet in grasses,
And hear the long waves roll and beat,
And watch the great cloud-masses,
And strive, with ardour over-bold,
Some lovely look to catch and hold;
Some violet shade, some gleam of gold,
That peeps and passes.

"Ah me!" she sighs, "to make my own
Those mystic shades that evening etches!
To catch that wistful twilight tone
O'er all the dim sea-stretches!"
Nay, lovely dreamer, clear your look,
And haste to yonder leafy nook,
Where some one waits to take the book
And praise the sketches.

FREDERICK LANGBRIDGE, M.A.

THE GARDEN IN JULY.

A DAY'S gardening under the sweltering glories of a July sun requires, perhaps, as great a devotion to horticulture as a day's trenching in January, so that here again, when our thermometer is registering 80° or 90° in the shade, a little judicious arrangement of our time and work is, to say the least, advisable. And, as we hinted last month, we should make an early beginning of our day, and endeavour in the middle of it to find something that will carry our work accidentally into the shade. And, taking things in their natural order, we should remark that, if through press of work the lawn has been allowed to go two or three days longer than usual unmown, the scythe will be preferable to the mowing machine. Pushing a mowing machine through grass that has gone long untouched is heavy work, and moreover, you will find that strong daisy or dandelion stalks will often not get removed by it. Early in the month, again, there is another somewhat laborious operation, which we cannot afford to shirk, and that is our hedge and box clipping. This, if too long delayed, will give us in after-weeks a rusty-looking border, with probably here and there dead patches in it. And then it will be found that in dry weather the hedges and the box afford a shelter and retreat for slugs and all such vermin, and as we go along on our work we shall be able to get rid of numbers, and thus save quantities of our now fast-ripening fruit. Indeed, it is astonishing to find how artfully snails and slugs contrive to hide themselves underneath the foliage of our box-edges, never venturing to sally forth across to the strawberry bed before the moon is well up; and after a supper off the "British Queens," taking care to be home before the thrush has sounded his morning bugle, or the music of the gardener's scythe-sharpening warns them of their danger.

Nor can we too often recommend during this month a half-hour's walk at ten o'clock at night with a lantern across the strawberry bed, and particularly by our wall-fruit, for then all the largest slugs will be out, bent on mischief, and more particularly after a thunder-shower. And in a long dry season take care that your flower-beds do not have the surface of the soil caked hard and dry, and presenting merely a series of ugly-looking cracks. Even a regular watering—which, of course, we give during a drought at least once a day—does not always prevent the caking of the soil. Keep the surface gently stirred, so as to pulverise the whole, which will have a far neater appearance in the garden, besides being much more conducive to the health of your bedding-out plants.

By this time some of the earlier-flowering annuals will have seen their day, and we should in that case at once remove them and replace them with others that, according to the method of successional growing that we have always advocated, should now be ready to take their place; while a further sowing of annuals in the open flower garden may still be made. Notice any that flower with unusual brilliancy or fulness, and endeavour to save some for seed. Of course, in this case the plant must be allowed to remain for awhile where it is.

The rose-garden will, of course, occupy us largely this month. Here we may say it is good to have a few briars and stocks in the kitchen-garden on which a few budding experiments may be made. In a good old-fashioned country garden it is rare to find that *all* flowers are forbidden to put in *any* appearance in the kitchen and fruit garden. And in addition to the budding operations, do not be niggardly in picking roses for table and drawing-room decoration. When there is a good show, save all the petals of your roses as they fade, and fill your old china basins with them; their power of retaining fragrance is notorious, and of their kind and in their way nothing is more beautiful in death than these dried-up rose-petals.

Next in order among our flowers come our dahlias, as in August these begin to give us their gaudy blooms, while the single dahlias, formerly so despised by our grandmothers, are now all the rage, and certainly most effective they are for hand-picking and decoration. For brilliancy of colour nothing surpasses them, and they possess another advantage, that when picked they do not quickly fade, or cockle up immediately in the hand, like the convolvulus. The older-fashioned ones will require still more support, and if the side branches are not properly secured, there is every likelihood of their breaking; the flowers will come finer in proportion as you remove the weak and useless buds, and, as we know, will continue blooming until late in the autumn, when nearly everything else is getting into a tangled and desolate state. This, however, in a properly-cared-for garden, ought never to be the case.

And from our small greenhouse this month we turn nearly everything out; indeed, some time during July or August we should generally recommend for any painting or repairs, so as to have all in readiness for the reception in the early autumn of our stock of cuttings and plants that are the least hardy.

This, again, is the first month of our fruit harvest. When gathering strawberries, raspberries, or, indeed, any fruit for preserving purposes, take care to insure that it be gathered dry, or your whole stock of jam will afterwards ferment and be worthless.

The kitchen-garden this month, too, gives us very

heavy work; weeds alone come up, and seem to be scattering their seed about almost before we are aware of their existence. Sometimes we shall be astonished to find a fine poppy on the point of flowering in the very midst of a collection of cabbages or cauliflower. Peas may again be sown; they will soon be up, and will grow quickly enough for use. The winter spinach, too, may now be sown for standing the whole winter; when using it, only pick off the ripened leaves from time to time.

The fruit-garden also must not be lightly passed over. Go carefully over your out-door vine and remove all shoots that are not required. This will strengthen the vine. When you see fruit, stop all shoots one joint beyond the grapes, and carefully nail to the wall all growing and fruiting shoots. Then among the wall-fruit, perhaps early in the month, you may find, where at least there is a heavy crop, that a little more thinning out may be advisable, but, of course, a very little. Or where there are any shoots that seem to be exceedingly vigorous, they had better be removed, for not infrequently they will exhaust much of the strength of the tree. The melons, by the end of the month, will be rapidly advancing. It is a good plan then gently to lift the fruit, placing them on slate or on a brick nearer the glass.

but no trace of the missing jewellery could he discover. Then he measured the sides of the trunks in order to see if they had false bottoms, but all to no purpose.

"I don't believe the jewellery is here, miss," he said, looking terribly disappointed. "I think, if the lady doesn't object, that perhaps you had better —— "

"Search *me*," said Miss Ord, as the detective hesitated. "Yes, do, I don't mind in the least," with a winning smile.

"I really don't quite like to," I said, "but if you are sure you don't mind—— "

"Indeed I don't; let us go up-stairs at once."

"Might I suggest, miss, your taking one of the female servants with you as a witness," said the detective, as we prepared to leave the room.

Miss Ord was so anxious we should do our work thoroughly that she even insisted on unfastening her hair and taking off her boots. The search, however, proved fruitless, and I began to feel thoroughly ashamed of the base suspicions I had entertained towards my former favourite. Embracing her tenderly, I begged her to forgive me.

"I was so shocked to find the jewellery gone, that I think I must have taken leave of my senses," I said, by way of apology; and then I left her to finish her toilet, and ran down to speak to the detective.

He was still examining the boxes, while their contents lay scattered about.

"We're on the wrong track, miss," he remarked despondingly.

"Yes, that we certainly are. I think we must put these things back. Miss Ord will lose her train if she does not start soon. The books had better be put in the bottom, as they are heavy," I remarked, as I noticed two piles on the table. They were uncovered, being very securely strapped together in two lots of six volumes each. As I handed them to the detective, I glanced at the titles, and found that the twelve volumes comprised one work, a large Encyclopædia. Now, it so happened that Uncle George had a copy of the same Encyclopædia, and I often had occasion to refer to it. Uncle's had been received in monthly parts, and afterwards bound, and was a full-sized edition.

"Well, that's strange," I remarked, as I looked at the volumes carefully.

"Eh, miss? what's strange?" asked the detective eagerly.

"Why, our Encyclopædia is in only ten volumes, and this is in twelve, and the volumes are much larger too. I wonder how that is?"

Just at that moment Miss Ord entered, and overheard what we were saying.

"Put my things back quickly, please; I am afraid I shall lose my train." Her voice shook, and she was very pale. Altogether her bearing had completely changed. The detective noticed this. Springing to the door he locked it, and put the key in his pocket. Then he returned to the table, and began unstrapping the books.

"Oh, have mercy, have mercy! take the jewels back, and let me go!" Miss Ord fell on her knees, and clung to my skirts, as the detective opened one of the make-believe volumes, and displayed some of the missing jewellery carefully wrapped in cotton-wool.

"Get up, Miss Ord," I said sternly; "it is useless to plead for mercy."

Volume after volume the detective opened, till at length all the missing jewellery was laid on the table, together with a key, evidently a duplicate of the one which fitted the iron chest. The books were really boxes. Cleverer imitations I have never seen; the marbled leaves and morocco backs might have deceived a binder.

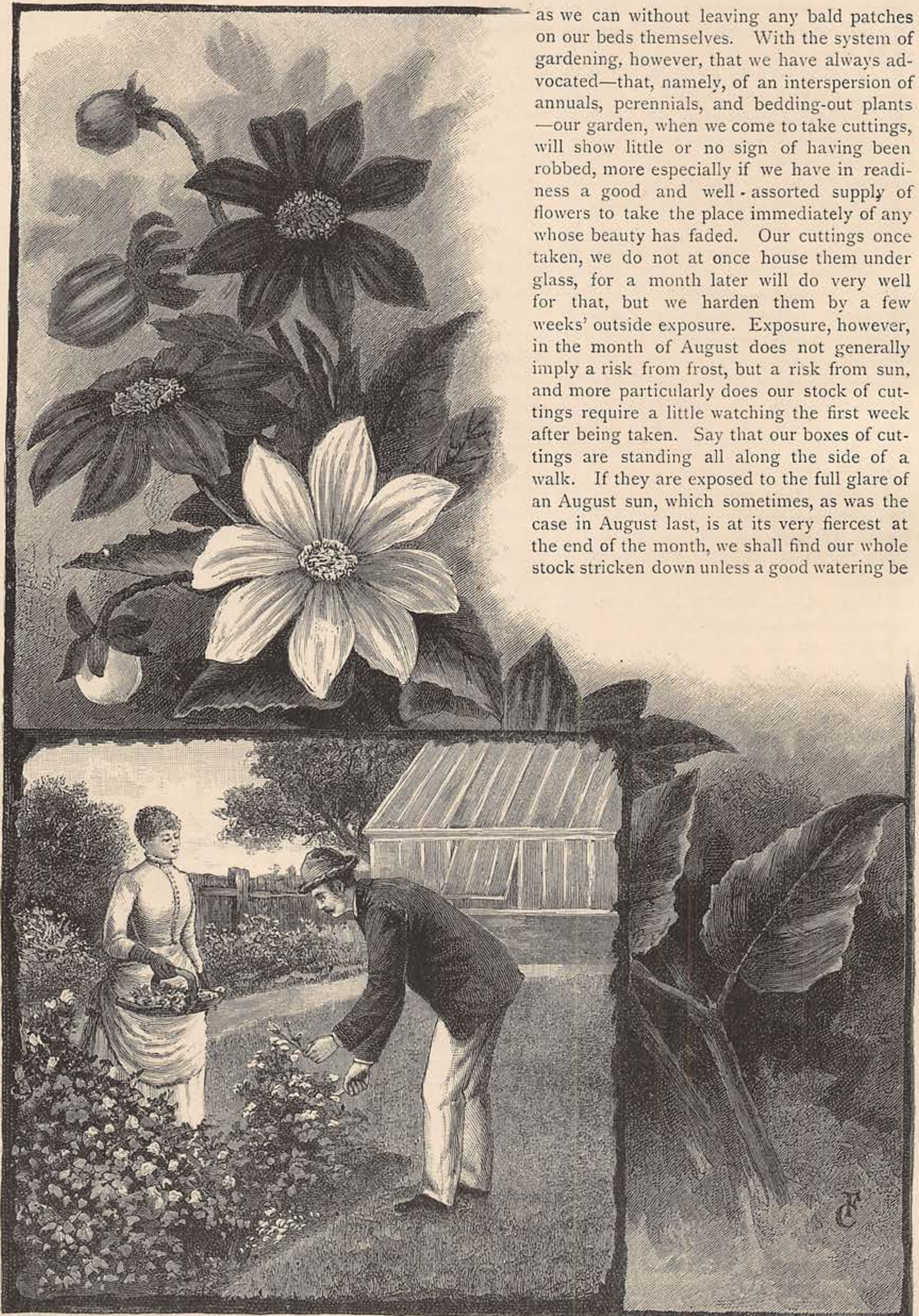
I gave Miss Ord in charge. She was afterwards tried, found guilty, and sentenced to a long term of imprisonment. In the evidence, it transpired that her brother, who at one time was a lawyer's clerk, had seen the will bequeathing the jewellery to my aunt. Getting into bad company, he and some others vowed they would become possessed of the jewels. For months they watched their opportunity, but as none of our servants knew where the jewellery was kept, gaining information on the subject was a difficult matter. At length Peter, whilst being treated to "six of whiskey hot" at the "White Horse," let out that Uncle George was about to advertise for a governess, hence Miss Ord's appearance upon the scene. Poor old Peter was publicly reprimanded for his share in the affair, and it was some time before he was his dignified self again.

I need scarcely add that Uncle George never again engaged a lady presenting herself in answer to an advertisement, without first ascertaining that she was worthy of his confidence.

THE GARDEN IN AUGUST.

NO excuse can be given for not having a garden as gay and radiant as possible in the month of August. Not to mention our hardy and herbaceous plants, our half-hardy and tender ones are one and all now contributing their share of the gaiety of our little half-acre.

Foremost, however, amongst the operations that occupy us just now, are the preparations for another season of bloom, and not later than the middle of the month should, at all events, the commencement of these operations be delayed. We refer, of course, to the taking of our stock of cuttings. For this purpose we go round our flower-beds with our keen knife and garden truck-basket, and take off our cuttings as far



as we can without leaving any bald patches on our beds themselves. With the system of gardening, however, that we have always advocated—that, namely, of an interspersion of annuals, perennials, and bedding-out plants—our garden, when we come to take cuttings, will show little or no sign of having been robbed, more especially if we have in readiness a good and well-assorted supply of flowers to take the place immediately of any whose beauty has faded. Our cuttings once taken, we do not at once house them under glass, for a month later will do very well for that, but we harden them by a few weeks' outside exposure. Exposure, however, in the month of August does not generally imply a risk from frost, but a risk from sun, and more particularly does our stock of cuttings require a little watching the first week after being taken. Say that our boxes of cuttings are standing all along the side of a walk. If they are exposed to the full glare of an August sun, which sometimes, as was the case in August last, is at its very fiercest at the end of the month, we shall find our whole stock stricken down unless a good watering be

given. A better plan is to have our stock for the first week in a shady situation, and when we see, by the fresh and upright position of our little plants, that they have "struck," they can be moved again to a warmer aspect before they are finally removed about Michaelmas, or a little earlier, according to the season, to their winter quarters in our greenhouse. As for the soil we use when taking our cuttings, let it be fairly rich, or at all events such as that we use when we give our February repotting, only take care that plenty of silver sand be used, and that this be on the surface of your soil and firmly pressed round and against the little stems of your cuttings themselves.

In August our single dahlias will be at their gayest. These and all flowers that require stakes must now be properly secured; the chrysanthemums, for example, will require this attention, for as the autumn comes gradually on, so also will these showy flowers, the last hope, for the most part, of our out-door flower-show. Then, again, for those who like to raise bulbous-rooted plants, this is a good month for sowing such seed, which can be done as soon as it is ripe; the seed, for example, of all sorts of lilies, hyacinths, tulips, crocuses, &c., may now be sown either in large pots or in the open ground; if in the last-named, take care that the seed be not afterwards disturbed. Have it well raked in, and a little light earth sifted afterwards over the whole. If you sow in large pots, place them in a cool frame until the seeds germinate in the spring.

August is also the month for that interesting operation of layering our carnations and picotees, and though this should not be done until the bloom has passed its prime, yet it is important to have the layering done early in the season, as unless the shoots get well rooted before they are cut off, they will run a chance of being "cut off" in a very different way by the severity of the winter. Then, again, in the rose garden, budding in a warm and thundery season may still go on, but a constant and careful examination of those stocks that were budded last month should be made; and most important is it for the first two months after budding that all growth be rubbed off the stock. Failing this attention, your buds will only fall off altogether.

Camellias have by this time made their growth and set their bloom-buds. They should be stinted of moisture, but not, of course, housed for another month yet. Should it chance to be a wet summer season, the camellias, now that their growth has been made, should not be exposed to the rain, which might induce a second growth that would not be at all beneficial to their success.

In the kitchen garden we shall find plenty to occupy us. Now that our cucumber supply will soon be beginning to fail, we can well utilise our frame for a while as a mushroom-bed. To do this, from the declining hotbed scrape off all the mould but the last two inches that lies upon the dung, and then make holes in it some six inches apart, taking care that these holes go down to the dung itself. In these place the mushroom spawn; cover them over afterwards with the mould you have taken from the holes; close your frames, but give occasional air, and also shade off the sun by means of matting or some such protection. A good month is this, too, for making up an asparagus-bed, if you have not already got one. And that very important and domestic matter, the cabbage-bed, should at this time be seen to. Seed should be sown in the first half of this month, on good ground and in a good open situation, to raise for the supply of next year, while any seedlings that you have already strong enough should be planted out in any vacant spot, planting them thickly, so that some may be used as greens, or rather coleworts, in bunches. By this means you will have the remainder thinned to proper distances.

Horse-radish does not generally occasion us much horticultural trouble or anxiety, and yet we do not like to be without it when the roast beef season comes round; so we plant some about this time, putting in pieces of root, an inch or so long, at the bottom of trenches fifteen inches deep. In properly manured ground each piece will make a plant. And as for salads of all kinds, we still go on sowing them: mustard and cress, lettuces and onions, for drawing when quite young. One large onion-bed, however, we now draw and store for winter supply, allowing all to lie on the ground for a while before carrying them off, so as to let them harden and dry; but if, after having been drawn, much rain sets in, they had far better be carried off and dried under cover.

The celery also from about this time will need constant earthing up as the plants go on growing. This should be done on dry days with earth well bruised, and not in large lumps.

In our fruit garden, but not later than the middle of the month, we make up our strawberry-beds, by taking off the strongest runners and planting them out six inches apart in rows a foot apart, or we can edge the warm side of the kitchen garden with young strawberry plants. And as for our now rapidly-ripening wall-fruit, we do all we can to keep off the wasps and large flies by day-traps, such as bottles of beer and sugar, also by the hand-picking of slugs and snails in the evening time, the most effectual, though a tiresome remedy.

THE GARDEN IN SEPTEMBER.

HE uncertainties of our English climate are proverbial; but yet, when we hear of our neighbours across the water and even our brothers in Australia complaining of droughts, wet seasons, and May frosts, we are, depend upon it, not so badly off after all. "Forewarned is forearmed," so we intend this September to prepare for any contingency. A year such as this has been, with winter itself almost holding on by the skirts of midsummer, often finishes up with summer prolonged up to Michaelmas, or even as late as Guy Fawkes' Day. Time, however, will show.

All gardening is, of necessity from its very nature, a preparation for the future, and one varied operation that occupies us this month is the storing of our greenhouse, not only with our supply of cuttings—taken last month, or, at the latest, at the beginning of this—but with a selection of a few plants able to prolong the gaiety of bloom up to Christmas, and of a few others that will begin to bloom as soon as Christmas is upon us. Thus, at all events, we shall be able to keep up under our glass a succession of bloom all the year round. Early in a hot September we do not recommend the immediate removal of our stock of young cuttings into the greenhouse; but so long as the boxes, pots, and pans which contain our stock stand in a well-chosen spot where slugs and snails cannot get at them, they will be much more hardy, and run a far better chance of facing without damage the rigours which—who knows?—may be in store for us during the coming winter. The cuttings, however, if they are in the open during the later part of September, had better have some slight protection given them at night-time. All this will afford us a good opportunity of carrying out painting or any other repairs necessary in the greenhouse before the winter. Notice here particularly, too, after rain, where any drip comes through, as woe be to the plant which is afterwards exposed to it!

About Michaelmas—or a little earlier in a rough or chilly season—house your stock, having the cuttings on your lower range, where you can the most easily manipulate them; as you will find that were you to have your cuttings on the top shelves, they would, as the season advances, have a tendency to become drawn and weakly, and give you a good deal of trouble in the early spring. Any cuttings, of course, that you regard as the most delicate you might have nearer to your stove end, and, on the other hand, the most hardy the farthest removed from it. But on no account have your camellias exposed to artificial heat, as, if you do, you will get no bloom, the buds perhaps dropping off just as they are on the point of opening. Some salvias, a few fuchsias, one or two long-lived geraniums, and your chrysanthemums, will give you bloom well through the autumn; and mignonette, if sown for successional flowering, will also scent your greenhouse at the same time.

Meantime, our open flower-beds should yet be gay with dahlias, and such tall growers as the tobacco-plant, the culture of which has of late years found more favour amongst us, will keep our beds gay and showy until late in the season. From the first-named, however—the dahlias—take off the dead and faded blooms as they decline. Indeed, about this time of the year you will find that a tour round the garden with basket and scissors for the purpose of decapitating decayed flowers will probably encourage the blooming of others on the same head that would otherwise never—the season being late—develop themselves. This will be particularly the case among the roses, which in a mild winter can often be induced to go on blooming until nearly Christmas, if they have been pretty generously robbed for house decoration.

But the kitchen garden will demand this month a full share of attention, where in a well-ordered garden "seed-time and harvest" seem to be coming constantly in the course of a year.

Make up now a good cabbage-bed; your young plants of this most homely English vegetable can, indeed, be planted out in any spare quarters, some five or six inches apart from each other, and the rows themselves only sufficiently distant from each other to allow of your walking between them; yet first of all they may be moderately close together if you so contrive as to draw every alternate one afterwards as winter greens, and later on, *again* every alternate one. Those that then remain will have room to cabbage finely in the early spring. It is by these little artifices, indeed, that we can make the most of a small garden.

The potatoes by the end of the month we shall begin to get up for harvesting; some we have doubtless been digging for use as we want them, but the main crop should not remain longer under ground than certainly the first week in October, and then be housed where neither frost, nor wet, nor heat can get at them.

Cauliflowers that you want to stand the winter will need protection alike from heavy rains as from frosts. Choose, then, a sheltered spot in the garden—not a damp, but well-drained, piece; have it dressed, and then over it place your garden-frame; rake all the surface even, and from your seed-bed plant out in it as many young cauliflower-plants as your frame will hold, letting them be some three or four inches apart. When they get large enough they can at the proper time be planted out in their final places.

Then, again, our fruit harvest, commenced with the strawberries in July, is still going on until we finish off in October with the apples and pears, and perhaps

with our nut grove. In passing, let us notice, *àpropos* of strawberries, that if we are still wanting to make up new beds, not a day must be lost, as this should have been done in the middle of last month; yet, should it chance to be a warm and genial season, there may yet be time for it.

White currants in some seasons will hang on unhurt for a long time; a whole tree protected by some matting will sometimes keep fruit unshrivelled until November. The writer, on one occasion, remembers gathering a fine dish of these currants from a tree that appeared to have been forgotten; it was unprotected, save by a few things that had grown around it and somewhat crowded it—a row of scarlet runners being on either side of it, and the tree a rather dwarf specimen; the season was a fine one, and the currants were discovered in November.

The wall fruit this month will be got in; this it is far best to gather only as it is wanted, but it should never be allowed to fall to the ground; a little network, if the crop be a fine and a heavy one, being the best arrangement underneath, so contrived as to save the fruit from bruising when it drops. Some protection will be necessary from birds, large flies, and wasps; bottles of beer and sugar, a saucer with a little treacle in it, or perhaps honey or some rotten fruit, may be a good thing. Sometimes, however, in using such decoys we also destroy unavoidably some of our bees as well. It is certainly a difficult matter, but with a little care no very great harm ought to be done.

greeted her with a "How are you? Better? That's well!"

He said no more; and a welcome Mysie had painstakingly thought out froze on her lips.

Poor girl! She was very grateful to John for saving her life. She was afraid of her husband still, whenever in his presence; but absent, the thought of his care and kindness softened her heart, and she would have liked well just to thank him. "Father said true. John's a good man; but, oh, he's terrible hard to speak to!" Mysie sighed.

The night of her master's home-coming, old Effie had grumbled—"Well, John Cosby; are ye content now with your roving the world? Maybe you'll bide quiet a wee now." She spoke as if poor John was a confirmed prodigal: he who had never before left his farm for more than a week in his life.

"I'm likely enough to stay still now, Effie," said John, in a voice weighted with heavy foreboding, or so Mysie's ears, nervously listening, interpreted the sound. "But I'm glad I went; *I felt I'd like to see London before I died!*"

Mysie gave a shiver. Oh, poor John! Did he then have some foreknowledge of his doom this year? For, she had *not* died—the warning for him must come true!

THE LITTLE KERCHIEF.

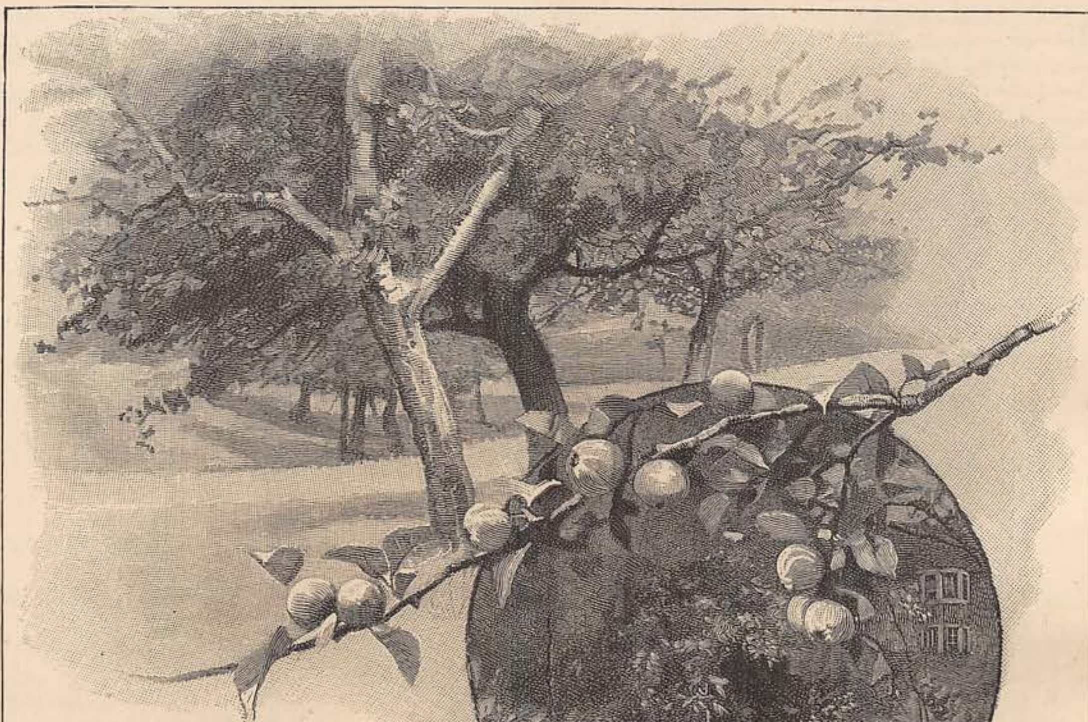
It was only a wee worn kerchief that lay in my trembling hands,
As I sat by the window dreaming, and looked on the moonlit lands;
It was only a wee worn kerchief, but it filled my heart with tears,
For it spoke of my belovèd, and the unforgotten years.
I thought of the old, old garden, where many a happy night
She stood in the summer moonlight, and waved that kerchief white,
As she watched in fond confiding, for she knew that it would be
A beacon of light to guide me, a signal of love to me.

But the moon rose over the meadows; the night grew hushed and still,
And methought that my belovèd came down from the old sweet hill;
Once more her hand was waving, once more that kerchief white
Flashed like the wing of an angel out of the silent night.
So I keep the little kerchief, with a trust that can ne'er grow cold,
For I know that my love is waiting as once in the days of old,
And out of the blue bright heaven, there will come in the years to be,
Her message of old to call me, her signal of love to me!

FREDERIC E. WEATHERLY.

THE GARDEN IN OCTOBER.

WITH October comes the wind-up of our harvesting operations, the October peaches, and then the apples and pears, completing the reward of our task. And there is something, too, very satisfactory in carrying off to our store-room one basket-load after another of roseate fruit. Now, a good deal has been written or said as to the best method of preserving our apples through a long winter. One thing, however, is quite certain: *bruised* fruit will not keep for any length of time worth naming. When busy, then, up the orchard ladders, take care to have on the turf below one or two good large baskets labelled "bruised," so as to avoid mistakes, and into these place every apple that is unavoidably knocked over on to the ground, or that has come in for a blow by any other means, and you will be amazed at the end of a long day to find what numbers of defective fruit you will have got together. It is well also to have some one below to catch apples that are falling, as well as to throw them to, one by one, when they are a little difficult to reach. Then, again, some fruit is not infrequently bruised in the following thoughtless way: the gatherer is up a ladder, having round his neck secured a small sack or bag, so as to leave both hands free with which to fill his bag; very soon it is almost full, and he is unconsciously leaning all his weight against the bag, which is between him and the ladder, or between him and a



thick branch of the tree, thus terribly crushing not a few fine fruit that are presently destined to go into the preserving baskets. There should, then, be no hurry when orchard harvesting, but plenty of caution and deliberation. Next, the store-room should be dry, and ventilation should certainly be given in favourable weather. This will not only prevent any accumulation of mildew, but will also carry off that wonderful smell of apples which, in the absence of plenty of fresh air, will sometimes pervade the whole house, and become not only exceedingly unpleasant, but exceedingly difficult to get rid of. And, lastly, let the fruit lie as close together as you can, but without touching each other; look them over occasionally, say every ten days, and pick out all that are disposed to decay. For domestic use the "Blenheim Orange" and the "Wellington" ripen the latest, while the "King of the Pippins" comes in amongst the earliest for dessert and table use.

The fruit all down, and a fortnight or more later on, when the sap is quite down and the falling leaves are giving us their melancholy concert, we may with advantage find ourselves again in the orchard, though somewhat differently employed. The latter half of October is a grand time for trimming our trees, and doing what we can to give a new vigour to any that show signs of declining strength; the quality of the fruit, too, that we have just gathered will in a great measure guide us as to what trees should be the first to operate upon. Where the fruit has been scanty, small-sized, cracked, or rusty, we may be sure

that something is wrong. Wood is perhaps too plentiful, or the trees are interlacing their boughs in some places. There is, however, no *necessity* for pruning our orchard at this season of the year, though, at the same time, those trees may be marked that have failed in the quality or quantity of their fruit; many prefer waiting until the worst of the winter has passed, and about February attend to this orchard trimming. Here is a way in which a long-neglected pear-tree is recommended to be treated in the early spring. Cut every branch back to within about nine inches of the main stem from which it has grown, using a thin fine-toothed saw, and cutting in a sloping direction. Remove also from the remaining part of the tree every spur, no matter whether good or bad, and cut close and smooth, only avoid touching the ring of the bark at the base. This, however, would apply more to a standard pear-tree, or one grown against a wall, when the wounds you have made with your saw should be afterwards covered with a little grafting-clay. In the orchard itself, take out all thin and spindly wood, and, in the case of a decidedly old tree, it might be cut in more closely and robbed of much of its top. The next operation is on the ground. Taking up the turf from some four feet round the base of the tree, we then dig a small trench all round, and fill in with rich manure from the cow-house or elsewhere, putting some of our soil on afterwards and replacing our turf. We omitted, however, to say that in many cases a judicious root-pruning is also an advantage: this is certainly advisable with wall fruit-trees.

Something, however, must be said as to our flowers this month. Our beds, now cleared of their bedding-out stock, will leave us with many large gaps, even those of us who do not depend outside for flowers wholly and solely on bedding-out plants. Here, then, our beds being first of all turned and prepared, we put in now, though not during a frost, our bulbs for early spring show, hyacinths, tulips, and crocuses, taking care that the more delicate and somewhat later tulips are placed in the warmer and more sheltered situations. And then, in anticipation of some of the autumn gales, go over the standard roses; rub off finally all growth from the stocks; see that those budded in July or in August last are well secured, and as to the old stagers, you will probably notice that the heads have made large growth, and that many shoots have become extravagantly long: where too many have grown, they should be thinned out, in which case cut away the weaker branches altogether, while probably the majority of those you allow to remain will bear shortening. Then secure all well and strongly to the stakes, and they will be in readiness to stand the first of the gales.

Our greenhouse is by this time beginning to be gay with chrysanthemums: plunge any of these, however, that you wish to take their chance in the open air, as by this means you will save the roots. And of these outside ones, cut down at once any that have declined flowering, and remove the blooms of any that may show damage by early frost. Those that are in pots in your greenhouse will need now a regular watering, the flower-heads, as they swell, very much drawing upon the moisture; absence of water, therefore, just now would very much check and stint your blooms. This month, again, is a good one for parting perennials: perhaps they have grown too large, or you have a little space elsewhere in which you would be glad to see some; simply then, with your spade, cut off from the side on which it can best be spared a portion of your plant, and plant the piece out where you most need it.

And, lastly, our kitchen-garden gives us in October plenty of heavy work, for first there will be the digging and dry housing of the main crop of our potatoes: a very important operation, and one that should be done before any frost is about; our savoys, too, most useful as winter greens, should be planted early in this month, and by Christmas-time we shall find them of great service for table.

Nor must we omit to remind our readers that this is the first month for heavy garden changes. Alterations of our shrubbery, or of the shape or extent of our lawn and flower-beds, may all be now made, as we can certainly better afford the time for work of this kind now, when the dormant season is commencing, than when, the sap being up, we run the risk of killing our trees and shrubs by removing them.

A CHAPTER ON CURRY.

BY A. G. PAYNE, M.A., AUTHOR OF "COMMON-SENSE COOKERY," "CHOICE DISHES AT SMALL COST," "THE HOUSEKEEPER'S GUIDE," ETC.

HOW very seldom is it that we meet with really good curry, and yet perhaps few dishes are more popular. Many years back, housekeepers laboured under the impression that curry was a dish off which people could make their dinner, but the dish, as usually served, had no resemblance to a dish of curry properly so called. In fact the old-fashioned method of making curry was simply this. The cook opened a bottle of curry powder, and then proceeded to make some hashed mutton from the remains of, say a cold leg of mutton; having boiled some rice—usually into a clammy and sticky mass—she placed a border of it round a large dish, and then moistened about a table-spoonful of curry powder in a little water and mixed it with the thin gravy of the hash; the whole of the hashed mutton, with the now yellow

CONFIDENCES.

ALTHOUGH one wears a bunch of keys,
And stands in posture deferential,
Their conference, one clearly sees,
Is confidential.

My lady's fond of lolling thus;
Here, safe from man's unmeaning chatter,
She loves serenely to discuss
Affairs of matter.

No flippant politics impede
Grave talk of lace to fringe a bed-dress—
Though one may praise a bow,* indeed,
Or scout a head-dress.

But now in softer tones they speak—
The two fair heads are bent together;
And, surely, o'er my lady's cheek—
But, then, the weather!

I thought a name was murmured low—
But that, perhaps, was inferential;
Besides, the conference, we know,
Is confidential.

FREDERICK LANGBRIDGE, M.A.

* A salutation, not a ribbon.

THE GARDEN IN THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER.

SUMMER has passed away, and once again we find ourselves on the outskirts of the dreary and uncertain winter season. There is, however, nothing at all to be despondent about. Everything is as it should be. The great majority of our flowers, trees, and shrubs, with a good many vegetables, have merely gone to bed, and one of the duties imposed upon us just now is to "tuck them up." If we refuse to do so, they may catch cold, and the result in many cases may be very serious indeed. But the great head-gardener, Nature, who in all the ages past has never yet found time to go to bed, comes to our assistance, and just when the frost is keenest, and we are in anxiety perhaps about the whole of our out-of-doors family, we awake in the morning to find everything silently covered up with the eider-down protection of a foot of snow. If we presume to interfere with the work of our head-gardener, and think proper to remove the snow from our crops in the kitchen garden, we shall probably kill them. Not, however, to carry our analogy too far, in the event of a very heavy fall of snow in the early winter, perhaps before all foliage has been entirely removed, we might gently shake a part of the snow from some of our young trees, shrubs, or standard roses; though even here again the head-gardener comes to our assistance with a gentle wind, and not infrequently does in a minute in *every* garden what would occupy us a whole day in *one*. If we will only look into it, we shall find the *necessity* of a First Cause; nor is it difficult to see that that First Cause *must* be omnipotent.

Preparations for the winter, then, are what we are busy about in the garden just now, and much of our work is heavy. Nor can it be, with any degree of prudence, shirked. We want to expose as much of our surface soil as possible—especially in the kitchen garden—to the action of the frost. This will kill all the grubs and vermin that prey upon our crops; so, accordingly, in dry weather or in the beginning of frost, we wheel our manure on to the land which we intend to trench, and then scatter it about on the surface. Or, again, some of our land may be sufficiently rich, so we at once deeply trench it, and take care to expose the soil in large lumps and clods to the action of the frost; and then, when the thaw afterwards sets in, it will easily break up, and the whole surface soil become friable and capable of more readily and quickly nourishing and germinating the seed which we afterwards sow in it. On the other hand, if we neglect this trenching, and leave our soil too often to take its chance, the land will grow as hard and unyielding as our gravel walk, our labour in the spring will be very great, our harvest in the summer very small, and our proprietorship that of "barren earth" instead of "mother earth." We must work, then, assiduously under the unseen head-gardener. Or, to take another phase of our early winter month, sometimes we have a mild and damp season, with no frost about at all, and we take this opportunity of making any heavy changes in our garden, such as re-laying or re-arranging our lawn and flower-beds, moving our shrubs, or transplanting and introducing any new young trees, whether shrubs or fruit-trees. All this should be done now, to do which during extreme frost or heat would peril the very life of the things in our removing. Coming more closely to our flower-beds, we should at once put in, during a genial and non-frosty season, all our spring bulbs, if they were not placed in our beds

in October, which is the more general month for this operation—one, however, which ought no longer to be postponed. Then, again, we should utilise our fallen and falling leaves: it is mere wantonness to make a bonfire of them—not to mention the damage to the interior, and to the tempers of the inmates of our house, occasioned by the blinding smoke. These leaves will gradually decompose if we mix them with some of our stable manure: we shall by this means largely add to our manure-heap, which we can never afford to get low, for an unnourished soil is an unproductive one. The collection of manure, then, as well also as the collection of composts for re-potting in our greenhouse, is another winter operation.

And the mention of the greenhouse reminds us that we may be forced to work underneath the glass a good deal from this time. Avoid as far as possible here, then, giving unnecessary artificial heat. For the most part, the main object of a greenhouse is the preservation of our stock of flowers by the mere exclusion of frost. We are not here speaking of our forcing-house or orchid-house, where a high temperature is necessary. All through the winter, then, take care to give plenty of air in mild and open weather, and in the best of the day, even during a frosty season, or your whole stock will soon become weak and sickly.