

that. And here it might be noted that Mr. Smith told his wife with much delight that he had taken care to be present when the garden drainage was laid down—not merely for the sake of getting any general hints as to the process, but also to insist upon it that the upper surface soil should be put back just as it was taken up, so as not to have afterwards on the surface of the garden any stones or rougher material that originally lay underneath.

And a pleasant discussion took place a few days afterwards between John Smith and his wife as to what was to be the fate of the tree about which the contractor, as we have already remarked, had not troubled himself. John thought that as it was not a fruit-tree of any sort it had better come down, knowing, of course, that not even grass would grow under its shadows and being somewhat jealous, therefore, of the space that it could not fail wholly to monopolise: he was fearful too that the ramification of the roots would very much tend to exhaust the nourishing properties of the soil and in this respect he was certainly right. But it was a grumble to which he gave vent at the trouble which the annual fall of the leaf would occasion him that lost him the day and was the saving of the tree.

"You goose, dear," said Alice, his better half, "don't you see that it is an evergreen, and evergreens are plants that do not shed *all* their leaves at any *one* time during the year." So it ended in a laugh, and at the husband himself being playfully dubbed an "evergreen;" but the good little wife had another argument in her favour—"Don't you see, dear," added she, "that the tree is almost at the end of the garden and quite close to the hedge:" this was a fact that poor John could not gainsay. "Very well then, dear, a good half of the roots will therefore run under the hedge into the dreary No-Man's-Land that lies beyond us, and, besides, we shall be grateful for its shelter, and it will save us the trouble of building a summer-house, so

that we can sometimes on hot afternoons and evenings have tea under its branches."

John Smith's parting shaft was, however, an allusion to the long shadow which its branches would unavoidably cast over the garden and the consequent detriment to the ripening of any fruit or the perfection of many flowers. Here again he was right, but the little amicable discussion between husband and wife has afforded us an opportunity of stating the arguments that are in favour of or that militate against the preservation of a large tree. Undoubtedly a fine tree is an ornament, and "a thing of beauty is a joy for ever." A tree, too, is always dear to the children of a household, though undeniably detrimental to all growth in its immediate neighbourhood.

In this instance the tree remained, but the next important operation was a deep trenching of the whole garden from end to end, when some good and rich manure was also at the same time dug in. Now the first trenching of a new garden is a very important one, as all refuse or stones and indeed everything that impedes garden growth ought to be then removed. This done, in a few days' time the "wilderness" began to wear the semblance of a garden.

And something further must be said as to the subject of trenching beyond a mere allusion to its necessity. Now it has often been objected that if the *sub-soil* of a garden is poor material, it ought not to be brought to the top. But in reply to this difficulty we must remember that every time some of the poor sub-soil is brought to the surface, the very exposure of it to the action of the atmosphere tends much to improve it. No half measures should be employed when digging and trenching; the spade should be well home, and now in the present instance when manure is supposed to be dug in, the soil will of course, at once materially improve. The garden at No. 13, an end one of irregular shape, soon also began to attract the observation of No. 12, but of this we must speak later on.

## A LOVER OF NATURE.



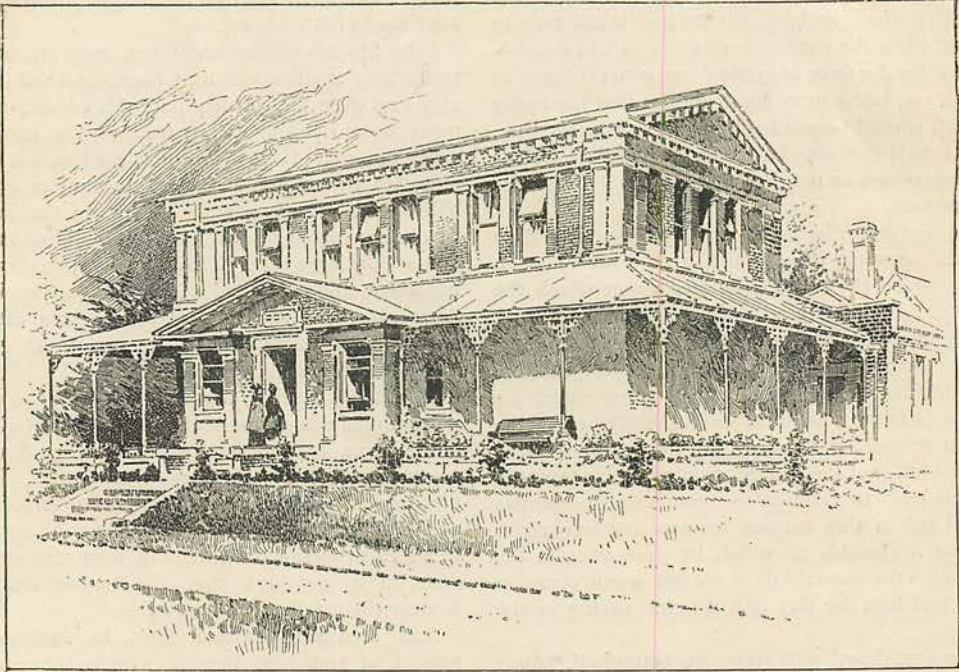
MISS MARIANNE NORTH.  
(From a photograph by Messrs.  
Elliot & Fry, Baker Street, W.)

NO visitor to Kew Gardens should need to be told who, or what, Miss Marianne North was. Hers was the gift, not only of the remarkable collection of drawings of foreign plants and flowers, but of the building in Kew Gardens in which they are housed. We have before us the two volumes in which, under the title of "Recollections of a Happy Life," Messrs. Macmillan have just pub-

lished Miss North's autobiography; which was edited, after its author's death in 1890, by her sister, Mrs. John Addington Symonds. It is one of the pleasantest and most interesting books of travel we have opened for many days.

From her earliest days Miss North was passionately fond of painting flowers and plants. "She painted," says her sister, "as a clever child would, everything she thought beautiful in nature, and had scarcely ever any artistic teaching." And in search of subjects she travelled in every part of the globe. In North and South America, in the West Indies, in South Africa, India, Ceylon, Borneo, Japan and Australasia, she sought and found plants, rare and beautiful; and painted them amid their natural





MISS NORTH'S PICTURE GALLERY AT KEW.  
(From a photograph by Mr. H. N. King, Avenue Road, W.)

surroundings. And then, with noble generosity, she gave to the nation the result of her many years' toil. There was obvious exaggeration in what a distinguished Chilian said of her, that she "went about into sunny countries, painting blue sky and light, and brought it home to the poor people of London, *who never saw it, and did not know what it was like!*" Much as our climate is reviled, we are not quite so hardly used as that!

A little boy in Australia asked Miss North, of whose exploits he had been told, "What will they do with you when you return to England; will the Queen knight you?" Reward of that nature was impossible; but the Queen herself wrote to the lady and acknowledged her gift to the nation. Miss North had a happy knack of making friends wherever she went, and she tells some amusing stories in her book of unexpected help from strange quarters. On one expedition in California she had missed the only passenger train and was sent on to her destination on the engine of a wood train. "We stopped very often," she says, "and it was late before I got back to Mrs. R—'s. When I tried to slip a couple of dollars into the engineer's hand, he coolly opened my bag and put them inside. 'Just you keep them things till you want 'em, and shake hands again to show you don't mind my saying so,' he said. 'The talk he had had with me had done him real good, and he didn't want pay.'"

Miss North had letters of introduction and friends awaiting her wherever she went; but when she could so easily *make* friends, it is no wonder her life was a "happy" one. She was fond of the humorous side of

things, and often told a story against herself. Of animals she was almost as keen an observer as of plants, and writing of the Zoo at Melbourne, she says: "I heard a good story of a cockatoo in those gardens, which lived near the porter's lodge; hearing him say constantly, 'Walk in, ladies and gentlemen. Don't come all at once; one at a time.' The bird escaped from its cage, and was discovered with a troop of wild cockatoos attacking it, lying on its back, defending itself with its feet and beak, and crying, 'Come on, ladies and gentlemen, come on; not all at once—one at a time, one at a time.'"

Our readers must turn to the book for themselves to see the difficulties which Miss North had to surmount in the accomplishment of her self-appointed task. One difficulty, happily rare, she met in Borneo during a visit to Rajah Brooke. We give Miss North's account of it. "I came on a lovely spray of a white orchid and picked it grudgingly to paint, then suddenly found that every tree was loaded with the same, and the boathouse roof looked as if there had been a sudden snowstorm. The air was scented with it, so I got more; and when I reached the house found the drawing-room full of it. They called it the Turong Bird, and said it came out spontaneously into bloom three times in the year and *only lasted a day*; and that I must be quick and draw it, for I should find none the next day. It was true: the next day the lovely flowers were hanging like rags." We have not space for more extracts from this delightful work, which we have found among the brightest and most readable records of unconventional travel that we have ever handled.