CREEPERS

AND

CLIMBING PLANTS

By GORDON STABLES, M.D., R.N.

"I sat me down upon a bank
With ivy canopied, and interwove
With flattering honeysuckle."

"Rеспледент! rose! to thee we'll sing,
While we invoke the weldath spring."

This is a paper on creepers and climbing plants; but as next month, with the Editor's kind permission, I shall have something to tell you about window gardening, both outside and in, I wish to remind every girl who is fond of flowers—and most are—that it is now time to get the window-boxes ready and the mould put in. I dare say, then, I shall not be far out of order if I now give a few preliminary hints about these. They will fit in well with the subject in hand.

Girls who live in the country hardly miss the flowers; but what dweller in the smoky town whose eye has not many times and oft rested fondly and lingeringly on the sight of a beautiful garden in spring or in summer? Now, I do not care where a girl dwells, whether the window of her room is large and ample, and overlooks some lovely park or splendid terrace, or whether it be small, that of a mere attic in fact, amidst the gloom and smoke of a large city, I tell her that she may get a trilling cost beauty that window, so that it may be gay and lovely all the year round. I hear going to say, so that it shall look more like the entrance to some fairy's bower than that of a humble human being; but that would have been putting too poetic a touch to it.

Well, then, to be practical, the extent of some people's taste in window-gardening is that of sticking a few flower-pots outside the sash, offending the eyes of people with taste, and endangering the heads of passengers whenever the wind blows. It is so much easier and better to have a box with mould in it, and if you mean, then, by-and-by to cultivate window-gardening, you must get this box ready at once. Perhaps you can find one about somewhere that is exactly the length or nearly so of the window ledge, and probably only wants a little cutting down to make it just the thing. For, mind, it does not matter so much as to the width; indeed, I myself very much prefer a good wide box, only, of course, it must be most securely fastened. If not so, it might come down in a gale of wind, and thus, if from a top window, the consequences might be lamentable.

Suppose your window sill is about five inches wide; well, your box could be ten inches, or nine at least, and really in a box like that there is no end to the pretty things one can grow. Decide ten by two, and you get the depth of your box—five inches. If you have not happily a box that will fit the window, a shilling will get you a new one of ample size for ordinary use.

The outside of the box will have to be ornamented in some way; if I were writing for boys I should say this is best done by covering it entirely over with small pieces of peeled and split branches, and afterwards varnishing; but I shudder to think of any of my girl readers cutting their shapely fingers, so I say paint the box, but beware of gaudy colours; or the box may be covered with encaustic tiles, though these are more expensive. What is the price? did you ask. Well, if you put me in a corner in that fashion, I can tell you that, too: they are about fifteenpence per tile of five inches square. If the colours are well chosen, they look very rich and ornamental.

On the other hand, Virginia cork may be used, and very pretty this looks, with tendrils of the canary creeper, or the rich blossom of trailing tropaeolum falling over it. Virginia cork has this advantage: it is easily worked; all you want is a strong sharp knife to shape the piece, and a few French nails to tack it on with. It looks nice on either upstairs or downstairs windows, and it may be
coloured here and there with patches of white, green, and red tinge to represent lichens or moss; but this is a matter I prefer to leave to your own judgment and taste.

Now you have got your box ready and fitted, and I trust you will take good care it is well supported. There is something else to be done, for I am far too jealous of the interests of the readers of The Girl's Own Paper to permit them to be content with a mere show of flowers in a box on the window-sill. No, we must look up as well as look down. Well, listen. At any Ironmonger's shop, either in country or town, you will find narrow strips of galvanised iron net-work, and they can be cut to any length, while the price is a mere trifle. I want you to measure your window all round, and cover it from both ends of your box all the way up the sides against the brick work and over the top. The top may be in the form of an arch, if you like it better. This is for the convenience of charming creepers.

Lastly, buy one of those galvanised hanging flower-pot frames, to depend from the middle of the arch, unless indeed the window is very small.

So now we have all we are likely to want this month. I may mention the soil, however, for it is best you should have the box quite prepared. This, then, you really ought to get from a gardener; but you may take it from the garden, only it must be rich, and mixed if possible with turf and leaf manure; and while it is firm enough to pack well it ought not to be clayey. Remember there is a great deal in the kind and condition of the soil you procure.

Your box has holes for drainage at the bottom, but if you put the soil right on top of this you would quite fill up the holes; there would be no drainage, and therefore your flowers would rot and die. Cover the bottom, then, with a layer of broken flower pots, or sherds of crockery and stones, and afterwards put in your loan or mould and pack it firmly down.

A lady writer would have told you all this much better doubtless than a plain sailor like myself. I have contented myself with throwing out the crude suggestions, knowing well that your own taste will enable you to improve on them.

We, I have to confess that I have cut rather deeply into the space allowed me for my creepers in thus describing the preparation of the window for flowers; but I do not regret it, and will defer my description of some important trailing plants whose cultivation does not necessitate operations in early spring, for another month.

I suppose the first creeper that would occur to any English mind, as worthy of all attention, would be the rose. Although the latter end of the year is the proper time to plant roses, still I have found them exceedingly tenacious of life, and very willing to please—in fact, the
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Rose will grow almost anywhere; but, nevertheless, it will repay all care and attention. "Roses from May till November" is a line I remember reading on a window. I feared that they would have been substituted for November it would be equally near the mark.

The rose has been called the Queen of flowers, and Southey thought so too. We used to cover an old sea-boot with daisies and dandelions, and now I am sure you would find, for the following entry in my note-book: "Of all the weeds that ever invaded a garden, the wild convolvulus is undoubtedly the worst, and I will not be responsible for any, and its powers of propagation are on a par with its positive impudence. Other weeds are, as a rule, content to grow where they are and to spread with them. The wild convolvulus knows a plan worth ten of that. It sends its shoots beneath the earth in all directions, makes a sort of underground railway of itself, and pops through the ground with the first warm rain in fifty places all at once, which is confusing. Nor is it particular what it catches, and can even loves a currant-branch and delights in raspberry cane. But nothing was ever made that it would not get to the top of. To see it squirm up a telegraph-pole, would make even a navy midshipman stare, and I do believe that if one were to plant a wild convolvulus at this side of the Atlantic it would one day reach the other—indeed.

Well, this was only my nonsense, but one day—this is figurative—while walking down the garden I came upon a group making the best the sweeping-up of one of my favourite pinch-bushes.

"Hallo!" I said, "you seem to be enjoying yourselves, and I really can't help admiring your magic, and I see how you did it. Now, if you did it, you and I, and all the people of the world. He is a favourite mine is this same glorious John rose, so tall, so handsome, so hardy. And his home yellow tinted buds, how lovely they look in May and June. In one tree last summer I called over three hundred buds. Glorious John is a bit shy; he will creep over a fence, or even up a tree, with the greatest pleasure in the world, and will form bookshelves round the parlour window. So contented and happy a fellow is John, that if you but help him up a little and cut right over the roof and cut round the chimney of his own accord, and even attempt to peep downward and see what is cooking and maybe a donkey, for all this John lies well treated, but he does not in the least object to another kind of rose growing at his nest, and will even lend it a hand in quite another direction. It is not exactly a creeper, but it grows well when thus spread out.

I have fallen in love with two common hedgegrew creepers, and taken them for garden pets; and I now have the greatest pleasure in the world in introducing them to the "salty" you might term it, because when the proprietor is inside or outside, with book or paper, he is not supposed to be at home. It is a cottage, but it consists of a cabin, or rather boudoir, because, although originally intended for the former, finer fingers than mine have set to work and made it quite the latter, and it is as quiet.

There are inside my books of reference, my favourite poets, a guitar, and a violon, so that I have always music when wanted. It is a little bower, and I am nestled in the shape of the wild birds and the flowers, to say nothing of the wild convolvulus, and a weasel, who has made its home underneath the

What more could any author desire? I should think. But touching the convolvulus. Last spring I had its way inside, at the two corners of the gables of the wigwam, and I rather encouraged it than otherwise, by placing strings handy for it to hold on by. Well, it got up all over the roof, and sent down tendrils. I cut those tendrils off that were not desirable, and trained the others in tears over the canopies and in the front windows. So I grew, threw out branches fourteen feet in length and ten in number, and were the wonder of all beholders. Meanwhile, the convolvulus became quite a subject of unique picture for a picture that hung above a small book-case. This is a framed photograph of two famous Newfoundlands, now dead and gone.

The frame is black and gold. I trained my wild convolvulus to grow all round it and up each string. For about a month they were all bright green leaves; then, to my joy, out came the flowers, pink, and by-and-by the glorious flowers of snowy white. You do not now know, reader, how much I loved one of those dogs. He had saved my life, and not mine only, but one dear to me; and for ten years, by sea and land, he had been my constant companion. So that my grief when he died, this time three years ago, may be imagined, and now to see his picture wreathed, as if by nature, in living green and white, raised feelings in my heart that I care not to express—perhaps could not if I tried.

If the reader will, pet convolvulus? Once more I recommend them to you. Get the roots and plant them in large pots. Be good to them in the matter of water, and they will grow up all around your room, and form garlands about every picture in it, to your own intense delight, and the marvel of everyone who visits you. They will come out of doors. They will cover parapets, old walls, whether wood or brick; and there is this to be said about them, which I cannot say for any other creeper: they come up in April and last till November.

Another wild friend of mine is, as I said, the white bryony. It will only suit for an out-of-doors creeper, because the root is as big as an old-fashioned eight-day clock. The first one my mother and I dug up was from the roof of a hedge. We began to cut this last summer.

"It is one o'clock, sir," said my man, apparently about five minutes afterwards.

"James," said I, sitting at my desk waiting for dinner I don't mind lunccheon, but if this fellow is as long as the flag pole, he must come out.

So we went to work for another hour, and finally lifted it whole. If we had not been most careful we would have cut the roots. When laid on the garden path the root looked like a small creek.

I have these beautiful creepers now in plenty. The leaf is vine-like, the flower a
tiny, yellowish-green one; all the summer they cover arches and walls with a splendid show of light, feathery green foliage. They run up a long before other creepers, I save the wild convolvulus, has a notion it is spring, their tendrils spread over a whole tree and quite encroocy a hedge-top. I have measured some of them a mile long, and found them yards long. The leaves fade about the end of August, then they are covered with a mass of small bunches of berries, green and crimson, which lasts all winter.

One other creeper might be reclaimed from the wild; I mean the belladonna. By the time this reaches your eyes it will be time to sow seeds of the charming, fairy-like canary creeper. Sow them in flower-pots in rich soil in the house, or under glass. It makes one of the prettiest of window-garden creepers I know, it will quite cover the iron net-work around your window, and trail along the hedge, or over the handle of a flower-basket, or, indeed, anywhere you wish it. So pray do not neglect it, if you want a show.

Sow now tropaeolum. This is the name usually given by gardeners to the trailing nasturtium, though the flowers, so well in pots, in basket-work, in vases, but especially in flower-boxes. The soil they are planted in must not be too rich or they will not be compact. They are all colourful, and it is better to get them unmixt. There are many varieties of species, but in fact the whole genus is charming and most showy for trellis-work of any kind.

Plants of clematis if put in now will grow rapidly. They are exceedingly beautiful. Yew, I ought to tell you, grows well indoors. Geraniums and pelargoniums, and put them in pots on brackets in the corners of rooms, you may then train them up around the picture-frames, and you will find the effect to be very charming.

The blue and the white periwinkle require a word on paucity. I like the flower, it is very pretty, with its broad, dark-green, shining leaves. It is one of the oldest spring bloomers we have, and it is not difficult to cultivate; indeed, if once placed in a good situation in a garden it makes its own living in some of our most difficult places.

I shall give a few more hints about my in my next, also about several other favourite creepers, such as the Passion flower, jasmine, honeysuckle, Virginia creeper, and Wistaria.

Miss C. S. Kenny, 28; Miss Ruth Bates, 32; Miss Annie Norman, 21; Miss Florence Newbold, 105; Miss E. Granger, 28; Miss Lizzie Smith, 55; Miss Mary Innes Greig, 22; M. T., 35; M.; The Miseries Ford, 55; Miss Agnes A. Grey, 18; Miss Emily G. Williams, 28; S.; Oswestry, 28; Miss Spittle, 18; Miss Schottlander, 25; A. M., 17; A. A., 17; A Farmer's Lassie, 23; Miss by Two Magpies, O O., 67; Mrs. S. Bakery Heward, 18; F. and A., 28; A., 35; Miss by the late Mary E. Craig, 24; 148; 66; Miss by E. Poets, 18; F. and A., 28; Miss by Magpies, 66; Miss HARRIET SIBLEY, 18; Jennie, 28; Miss Britndley (Collect by), 8; M. T., 28; M. T., 28; Miss Gillibert, 58; Subscriber to the G. O. P., 14; 78; Collected by Miss AM. H. Hutchins, 14; T. 158; Collected by Miss Jane Hawker, 106; Miss Tuhloch, 106; Miss Guir, 58; A. Widow's Mite, 68; Miss E. Mabel Henley, 28; Miss Isabel E. Pearson, 18; Miss W. E. Ward, 28; M. A. and M., 18; One of the Girls, 18; J. B., 7; J. O., 28; Miss Rhoda White, 108; Reading, 7; Miss E. G., 58; The Brooklet, 88; Cardif, 18; Sigeence to Pay for Cash Enclosed in Unregistered Letter which cost Eightpence, 68; A. O., 18; E. H., 28; 158; Miss E. H. Hutchins, 68.

Total, 594 os. 11d.

The Editor wishes to remark that, up to the present, only a few girls have applied for collecting cards, hence the small sum here returned. Pay, therefore, forward with your energies to aid the homeless girls of mighty and wicked London. Write to the Countess of Jersey, Hadley House, Aberdeen; or to John Chapman, Esq., Hon. Sec., "Homes for Working Girls," 38, Lincolns Inn Fields, London, for collecting cards, and they will be sent to you in your name and our signature.

VARIETIES.

NOTES ON THE SCRIPTURES.

The following analysis of the Scriptures is by an anonymous, originally published under the heading of "The Old and New Testaments Dissected." It contains an enumeration of all the books, chapters, verses, words, and letters which occur in the English Bible and Apocrypha. For its accuracy, however, no one will venture to vouch, unless she has followed the steps of the "painfully laborious" author of it, who is said to have spent three years of his life in the calculations necessary for it.


Books

Chapters

Verses

Words

Letters

In the Apocrypha there are chapters, 183 verses, 6,081; words, 122,185.
The middle chapter and last in the whole Bible is Esther, 2,000,000, 000.
The middle verse is Psalm cxviii, 5th verse.

The word Jehovah occurs 6,853 times.
The word and was 35,543 times.
The 19th chapter of the 2nd Book of Kings and the 37th chapter of Isaiah are alike.


The middle book in the New Testament is the 2nd of Thessalonians.

The shortest verse is John, 11th chapter, 35th verse.

The word and occurs 10,684 times.

A CODE OF MORALS.

The following list of moral virtues was drawn up by Dr. Franklin for the regulation of his life:

Temperance. Eat not to fullness; drink not to elevation.

Silence. Speak not but what may benefit others or yourself; avoid trifling conversation.

Order. Let all your things have their place; let each part of your business have its time.

Resolution. Resolve to perform what you ought; perform without fail what you resolve.

Frugality. Live your own business; excuse no expense but to do good to others or yourself; that is, waste nothing.

Industry. Lose no time; be always employed in something useful; avoid all unnecessary action.

Sincerity. Use no hurtful deceit; think innocently and justly; and if you speak, speak accurately.

Justice. Wrong none by doing injuries or omitting benefits that are your duty.

Moderation. Avoid extremes; forbear reposing your hopes on uncertain opinions.

Cleanliness. Suffer no uncleanliness in body, clothes, or habituation.

Transparency. Be not disturbed about trifles, or at accidents common or unavoidable.

Humility. Imitate Jesus Christ.

DOUBT ACRISTIC.

Two rival cities in the days of yore;
To find their names, consult your classic lore.

1. The Ifly palace; its Chaldal name

That of the town and province then became;
And here the girl, by charm of form and face

Embrath'd the king and saved her fate.

2. A city on a village may depend

For what that village to the town can send;
Essential aid may from that hamlet come.
Say, what was Oisia to Imperial Rome?

3. An emperor said'd his fellow-men,

And marcl'd victoriously home again;
Admiring subjects built this, as his need,
Engraving on it each triumphant deed.

4. A range of hills 'mid Thracian vallies rise;
The ancients thought their summits reach'd the skies.

5. A Spaniard, whose good sword carv'd out the way

To fame and fortune, in the olden day;
As corn for 'sand'd, as ruber, even more;
To the noble and friendly with the poor;
Travlers may see the column that records
His valiant deeds without the aid of words.

6. A man, who took in deeds and was no slave:

He lov'd his gardens, all his thoughts were there.
Their beauty was renown'd, and they became
The glory whence the monarch draws his fame.

XIMENA.