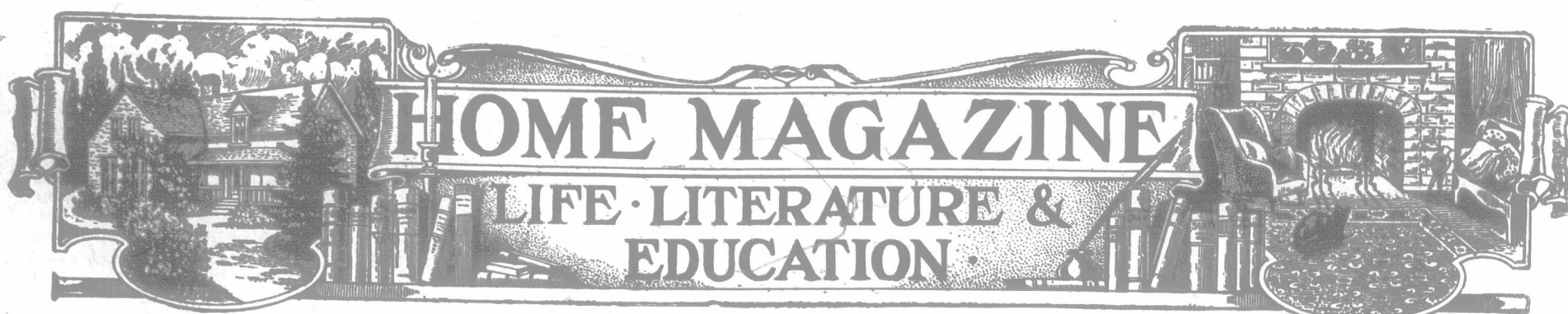




Mr. James Pearson.

The Toronto lawyer who instituted the Peel County Flower-garden Competition.

Friends in Gray.

By Edith M. Thomas.

Till morning fair
Came forth with pilgrim steps in amice
gray.

—Paradise Regained.

Lo! I have grown so gray with time,
I make me friends with all things gray!
With silvery mists that rise and climb
Upon the footfalls of the day;

With musing summer skies o'ercast,
When not a wind may list to blow—
But cloudland, leaning vague and vast,
Throws argent lights on streams below!

I melt, I merge, in autumn meads,
Where gossamer cloth-of-dreams is spread,
With shimmering drift of feathery seeds
The unregarded wild hath shed;

With glistening rain, with sprinkled rime,
With sea-foam dry, or wind-blown spray—
I am become so gray with time,
I find my friends in all things gray!

Methinks, that oft they say to me,
"We, too, are dim and silvery-sad;
Our grayer garments brushing thee,
Thou mayest forget how thou art clad!"

And I, discerning them as well—
A pilgrim bound the selfsame way,
Their veiled passion strive to tell—
We are the Soul of All Things Gray!

A Trip Through Peel County.

[Judging the flower gardens in the Pearson competition.]

Those of you who read that delightful book, "The Garden of a Commuter's Wife," which has now become, like "Elizabeth and Her German Garden," a classic among those who love gardens and the outdoors, will remember that the Commuter's Wife says this: "As gardening is the most exacting as well as the most exciting of outdoor sports ('sports'—mark you!—Ed.) one cannot begin too early in the season, and it is really better to begin the season before. Neither a garden nor a gardener can be made in one year, nor in one generation even. It takes a fine sort of heredity of air and soil and environment for

either; also gardening is the most cheerful and satisfactory pursuit for women who love outdoors. Field and forest often hold one at bay. We may admire, worship, love, but neither advise nor argue with them, nor add one cubit to their stature. In a garden one's personality can come forth, and stick a finger into Nature's pie, and lend a hand in the making of it, besides furnishing many of the ingredients."

It was, perhaps, with nebulous thoughts such as these that we—Mrs. Dawson, of Parkhill, and myself—took the train from London with the flower-garden judging trip through Peel County as our objective point. Yes, the Commuter's Wife was right,—a garden cannot be made in one year,—hence, on this judging competition, we must not expect too much. Yet, on the other hand, hope was high. A garden "takes a fine sort of heredity of air and soil and environment,"—and where indeed could one hope to find such heredity more strongly inherent than out among the farmers' wives and daughters, children, presumably, to the third or fourth generation, of the men who have turned this fair land of ours from forest to farm land, and orchard and garden?

Again, "In a garden one's personality can come forth."—True, again, Commuter's Wife, and in this very fact was not much of the interest of our trip to center?—So many women, so many gardens, and each garden reflecting inevitably the personality behind its creation—the "human" touch here, you see, that must ever mean so much more than mere flowers, however beautiful they may be.

We were to meet Mr. Pearson, who had kindly consented to be the third judge in the competition which he had so successfully launched, at Toronto. In the meantime there was ample opportunity to become acquainted, for Mrs. Dawson and I had met but the day before, and so satisfactory was the rapidity with which we got on common ground, that by the time our train moved slowly into the Union Station we were quite prepared for the three pleasant days that were to follow.

may say this, that on our tour of the county we encountered very few horses that gave us more than a passing glance and a shuffling sideways, presumably to show their contempt of us. Only once did we come upon a really terrified one, and that time the consideration of Mr. Pearson and his chauffeur no doubt left the poor animal feeling that a new species of friend had come above the horizon of his world with the chug-chug of that mysteriously awful thing traveling the roads, with no visible sign of its means of locomotion. With Mr. Pearson patting his neck, and the car creeping by, the danger passed, and the nervous beast came trotting behind as though nothing had happened. . . . Just here—it may not, perhaps, be as widely known as it should be in districts where automobiles are not common, that simply holding up one's hand should be sufficient to stop any car; or, at least, to make it go slowly. This is all that is necessary, if a horse becomes restive. To scream and shout is the worst and most useless thing that can be done in such case. In this connection may I tell you about a dry remark of a witty farmer in the locality in which this paper is being written? When driving a mettley horse one day not long ago, he met an automobile. "Shall I lead your horse past?" asked the driver? "No, the horse is all right," replied the farmer, "but I wish you would lead my wife past." No doubt this farmer was but having a bit of fun at the expense of his better half, but the irresponsible actions of many women in such a case might often lend some point to the remark. There is no excuse whatever for reckless automobile driving, but on the other hand, travellers in buggies will do well to keep their wits about them, and not fall into a paroxysm of fear at the mere suspicion of a motor car.

Our first visit was almost to the extreme south of the county, to the garden of Miss Mona Kay, near Erindale. In this garden perennials were chiefly in evidence, with abundance of vines along the walls of the house. An especially

Caledon Mountain, and were not surprised to find that much of the land had been settled by men and women from Scotland. Surely here, if anywhere in Ontario, the children of that "land of brown heath and shaggy wood, land of the mountain and the flood," might feel at home. Possibly the work on such land is harder than that on the level, but it is to an environment such as this that the heart can cling. Money, perhaps, may be more easily made in a country of uniform flatness, but the appreciative dweller among the hills reaps more, much more than mere dollars and cents. He cannot explain, perhaps, the emotions which the fine view from the hill-top brings to him, but he understands why it is that the inhabitants of the rocky countries have always been patriots, who poets in all ages have oft-times fled to the mountains, and why the sweet singer of Israel should have sung "Unto the hills around do I lift up my longing eyes."

Just as night fell we plunged into the valleys sweeping to the eastward of Caledon Mountain, and on the way down caught our first good view of the mountain itself, upon which Mr. Pearson owns six hundred acres of land and scenery, which he loves as only a lover of the beautiful can love. At its highest point the mountain is 1,500 feet above sea level. It is, for the most part, thickly wooded, with outcroppings of rock, and the bold bluff in which the peak ends, looks down upon the most picturesque spot in Southern Ontario, the deep and rugged valley running off into two gorges at that fine meeting of the waters known as "The Forks of the Credit."

The Caledon Club-house at which, by the kindness of Mr. Pearson, we were to find our headquarters while in the vicinity, lies somewhat to the eastward of this valley, but in a spot scarcely less picturesque, surrounded by hills, and by the trout ponds which, although artificial, possess all the guise of Nature. The house itself is architecturally pleasing enough,—somewhat in the "half-timbered" style, with spacious verandahs, but the coloring inside has assuredly been done under the direction of an artist, so soft and restful is it. Especially did we want to carry away with us one of the big cobblestone fire-places, put together with greenish mortar, and so eminently suitable to the architecture of a stony country. Why, we queried, do not farmers more usually make use of this cobblestone effect when building their houses, and so have them an outgrowth of their environment rather than a thing extraneous to it? Nothing looks better for tall chimneys exposed from the ground up than cobblestone; nothing is more suitable for verandah bases; occasionally, if the architecture is carefully considered, an entire house of such stone is desirable. Then for the fire-place, why ever discard this really artistic idea for the ready-made "grate," with tiled front and veneered woodwork, so often an abomination both in coloring and design?

We fell asleep that night to the sound of a little waterfall trickling down between the trout ponds, and awoke in good time ready for another day of gardens. After a call at the old log cabin, which Mr. and Mrs. Pearson have transformed into a summer cottage, our way led directly through the gorge at the Forks, then across the railway which creeps along half way up the mountain face, and finally out again across the hilltops to the garden of Miss Cassie MacDonald, Rockside, West Caledon. Here we found a profusion of flowers all interspersed, as may be seen, with thousands of white petunias, which took well in the little snapshot secured from the gate. "We love flowers," said the lady of the house, and, indeed, there was



A Bit of Mrs. Potter's Garden.

Showing the rustic arbor which she built.

Scarcely had we stepped from the coach than we were accosted by the genial barrister himself, who, with his daughter, had come through the gate to meet us. A whirl through the city in his motor car to the National Club for luncheon, then off, out into the open country, in a whisp'ring "it's—that same motor car!" Now I know well that most of you say "things" "not loud but deep" at the thought of an automobile, but please don't abuse your Dame Durdun (who assuredly belongs to you, because she thoroughly enjoyed this little outing. I plead entirely guilty, but I

pleasing feature was a border of hollyhocks about the well platform. . . . After that to the northward, through Streetsville, and straight toward the higher country, visiting on the way the gardens of Miss E. Dolson, Mrs. H. Caslor and Mrs. A. McLean, all of Chinguacousy Township. In each of these a very good beginning had been made with annuals, but the exceeding dryness of the summer was complained of as having interfered materially with gardening plans.

As evening drew on we entered the picturesquely hilly country approaching the