



Farmers' Gardens.

Who should have a good garden if not the farmer? He has plenty of land to devote to it; there is no extra expense for the team-work required about it; the manure-heap is close by to enrich it: the road to both barn and fields lies close by it, so that its condition and wants are seen twice or thrice every day; there are, therefore, all desirable facilities for having a good garden in connection with every farm. Moreover, tilling the soil is the farmer's business, at which he ought to be an adept. The skill in husbandry for which there is so much scope in a garden, is just what the farmer of all men should pride himself in possessing, and giving proof of to all comers. Nor is there any class of people to whose families a garden is a greater convenience, or more pressing necessity, than the farming class. Removed far from that access to a daily market which makes up for the want of a garden to town and city residents, the farmer's household must do without fresh vegetables and fruits unless they are home-produced. Without a garden, the winter diet will be mainly bread, meat, and potatoes. When spring comes, and the system craves juicy, cooling vegetables, rather than stimulating food, they are not to be had, and the old round of salt pork and potatoes must be pursued. Lettuce, radishes, green peas, early beans, and potatoes would be most welcome variations of the culinary monotony, but they are non est. So on through the summer-time. The want of a garden is a constant source of privation, and there are all the inconveniences of living in the country, without the advantages of such a life.

This is no fancy sketch. Very few farmers have gardens. Probably it is not going too far to say that fully one-half of our farmers have not even an apology for a garden. And in the case of the other half, what a wretched apology the garden so-called is, for the institution that ought to go by that name. The only surrounding of the farm-house in multitudes of cases is the "door-yard" as it is termed; which consists of a wood-pile with a considerable area of chip scatterings, and a general litter of sundry household utensils, wash-tubs, pails, kettles, and farm implements. Others have a small plot of land "laid out" for a garden; that is to say it is intended sometime or other to make a garden on that particular spot, but the convenient season has not arrived for carrying out the good intention, and so it lies waste. Here and there you may see a garden half over-run with weeds in the corner of a grain-field, or surrounded by a tumble down fence, through which the fowls, calves, and even larger animals pass and repass at pleasure. In a few pleasing instances—alas that they are so few—you will find attached to the farmhouse, and lending an indescribable charm to it, a well-kept garden, the trees, shrubs, flowers and vegetables forming a beautiful natural picture, and presenting a tempting array of objects "pleasant to the sight and good for food."

A nice flower garden is the cheapest and most attractive ornament any dwelling, whether in town or country, can possibly have. As a gratification and educator of taste there is nothing to compare with it. Although many affect to despise flowers and to care nothing for "looks," it would be difficult to find a person so stolid and boorish as not to be more or less affected by their gentle influence. They speak with a silent eloquence that moves the heart.

"Their voiceless lips are living preachers,
Each cup a pulpit, and each leaf a book."

The natural desire and love for flowers are displayed in children. How eager they are the first fine days of spring to go to the woods and see if there are any wild flowers. How delighted they return each with a bunch of gathered beauties. And all through the genial summer-time a ramble in search of flowers counts among their greatest pleasures. Why should not these natural instincts be gratified, and home rendered attractive by the cultivation of a flower-garden? On the Sabbath how pleasant a sight is the garden, and how elevating and instructive it is to "consider the lilies," to remember the Author and Creator of all forms of loveliness, and to think how he hath "made everything beautiful in its time." In sickness there is a world of refreshment and solace for an invalid in the sight of a flower-garden beneath the chamber window.

"Very pretty no doubt!" some one replies, "but it don't pay to raise flowers." We reply it does pay, and there is no rod of ground on a farm that yields so much clear profit as the rod on which roses, violets, and lilies bloom. After the bare necessities of one's being are supplied, there is nothing more to gain but satisfaction. Most people fancy they find this in turning things into money, but there are cravings of human nature that are not satisfied by looking at the face of a dollar-bill, or at the image and superscription of a gold or silver coin. Some of these cravings find satisfaction in the spectacle of beauty, and there is quite as much pleasure to be derived from the sight of a beautiful flower-bed, the seeds for which cost a few cents, as there is to be had in gazing at a beautiful carriage or a nice piece of furniture which has just come home. After the necessities of life, we repeat, come its satisfactions, and the flower-garden yields these more or less to all minds, and most of all to the mind that is reflective and cultivated, as all minds ought to be.

But whatever may be thought about the flower-garden, there can be no question that a good vegetable-garden is both convenient and profitable. In actual money value, half an acre or less devoted to garden culture, will yield annually more profit than four or five times as much land occupied by ordinary farm crops. The pecuniary view, which is the only one some people seem capable of looking at, is decisive in favour of a vegetable-garden, and along with this, there are the arguments based on the comfort and health that will accrue to a family from this source. Nobody can say of a vegetable-garden, "it don't pay," even in the lowest sense in which that phrase can be used. Why then is it that so few farmers have gardens? The reason usually assigned is, want of time to attend to their culture. A little thought on the subject will however suffice to show that this reason is a fallacious one. Of course a garden cannot be kept without some expenditure of time upon it. But the amount required is not much at once. Supposing the garden arranged, as every farmer's garden ought to be, so that it can be ploughed, the preparation of the land is but a short job. When once the ground is ploughed and harrowed, the seeds can be put in little by little. A few minutes now and then, while waiting for a meal, or giving the team time to feed and rest, will do wonders toward cultivating a garden. There are broken half days, and fragments of time often occurring which may thus be turned to excellent account. Many a farmer could till a garden well by simply giving to it the time he spends in smoking a useless pipe, or the wasted hours of loafing in the village store or tavern. With a little forethought, system, daily care, patience and perseverance, every farm might easily have its garden. What a smiling land of beauty, and what a rich land of plenty ours will be when this is realized. It is one of the "betterments" for which it is our mission to labour, and if a single reader of this article shall be stirred up to the resolve that he will have a good garden this year, we shall not have put pen to paper in vain.

Grapes in City Yards

UNDER this head Dr. Chas. W. Ridgely, writes to the *Horticulturist* to say that he has twenty-five specimens of the most approved varieties of hardy grape vines growing in his door-yard, which consists of only thirty feet by twenty of clear space. He says that in this small patch of ground, after making due concessions to domestic claims, he laid out a grape border forty-five feet by three feet wide, and another twelve by five. He took up the stiff soil to a depth of two feet, and mixed it with a liberal proportion of old field-sods, street-scrapings, plaster, coal-ashes, sand, &c. He then procured the choicest vines and planted them about two and a half feet apart, training them in four courses on the trellis, one above another, setting up stout posts to support the four horizontal bars; the first placed one foot from the ground, and the others above it at intervals of two feet.

Each vine has a space on the trellis nearly ten feet long and two feet in height. By careful pruning and pinching, a vine can easily be confined to this space. Should a long-jointed Isabella or Herbemont aspire to reach its neighbour on the next higher course, it may be passed behind the bar occupied by the other and suffered to spread itself a little. The arms may be lengthened by two or three buds each season, but this must be done cautiously lest the older spurs should suffer.

Dr. Ridgely says that the Iona is the prince of hardy grapes, besides its excellent flavour, it is early, prolific and beautiful. The Delaware comes next; were it of equal size and not so wonderfully sweet, it would rival the Iona. The saccharine element is in such excess, that it seems almost to have candied, and the grape tastes like sugar. The Isabella is large, early, and sweet, with a thick skin. The Diana is rich, vinous and sweet, with an agreeable peculiarity of flavour. Rebecca is excellent, ripening thoroughly. Allen's Hybrid is sweet and pure, but deficient in flavour. The Elsinburgh is the smallest of grapes, but it is rich and sweet, and worthy a place in every choicest collection. Dr. R. says that his Catawbas ripened as well as usual this season, but retained the tough, acid centre, and the Isabellas, as insipid as ever, make him marvel at the avidity with which he used to devour them.

NUTRIMENT IN WATER.—In the new number of the *Journal of the Royal Horticultural Society* we have the conclusion of Professor Schuitzenstein's paper on the constituents of water, in which he asserts positively that pure pump, spring, or river water contains an inexhaustible supply of nutriment; that is the real staple food for plants; and that the knowledge of this is calculated to throw light on many puzzling phenomena in vegetable physiology and culture. The art of making water nutritious should be the true aim of horticulture and agriculture. The Rev. W. Kingsley gives an illustrated note describing his method of border-heating. By placing pipes for the circulation of hot water among drain-tiles under the earth, near the roots of trees, he maintained a temperature equal to that of a very gentle hotbed, during the winter months. He thus (at South Kiltvinton) obtained fruit of excellent flavour, which otherwise could not have been ripened. He considers his system as yet as merely an experiment. This number of the *Journal* also contains several papers of a purely horticultural nature, as well as extracts from the "Proceedings."

SAVE THE SOAP SUDS.—"I say now that are is a wicked waste—d'ye know it, neighbor Flandry?" "What, uncle Enoch? Dunno as I quite understand ye." "Why, throwin' out and wastin' that way all them soap suds the way your gals there is doin'." "What is soap suds worth, uncle Enoch?" "Bout a hundred dollars, I guess, what your folks'll make 'tween now and spring. 'Ourn was worth more'n that, last winter, and I guess our folks don't wash more dishes and clothes'n yours." "Why, what in natur do you do with soap suds to make 'em worth that, uncle Enoch?" "Didn't I tell ye? Wal, raly now, I meant to done it, and I will now. We save every mite of our suds and dish water for the garden and truck patch, splashin' it over the ground 'bout once a week all winter. It's good for gooseberries and currants, and kills a powerful lot of bugs and beetles and pesky worms, and fattens the ground moro'n a hundred dollars' worth besides. That's what soap suds is good for."—Cosmo in *Sat. Even. Post*.