

HOME ADORNMENT

A love for trees and plants and flowers is natural to every refined and well developed mind. This principle may often be dwarfed or well nigh extinguished by the greed of gain, the eager haste to be rich, which characterizes us as a nation.

I shall, in this essay, particularly urge upon the farmers the importance of improving and adorning their homes, and attempt to show the peculiar facilities they possess for accomplishing the work, as well as the influence it may be expected to exert on themselves and their families. There seems to be a prevalent belief that tasteful buildings and attractive surroundings do not belong to the lot of the humble tiller of the soil. That his calling is strictly utilitarian, and that he has not the taste to appreciate, or the capacity to enjoy Pomond's choicest treasures, or Flora's brightest gifts. Shall we accept the position thus popularly assigned us? Shall we always plod and drudge? Shall we close our eyes to the beautiful creations that surround us? Shall we stop our ears to the music of nature? Or when the fragrance of the blooming orchards as it floats on the morning breeze, rivaling the delicious fragrance of the gardens of the Orient, is wafted to us, shall we refuse to enjoy it? Rather let us drink at these pure fountains of pleasure, and find here the relaxation we need from the stern and uncongenial duties of life.

The farmer needs relaxation, without he becomes prematurely old, and where shall he find it better than in his orchard and garden, among his trees and flowers, watching their ever changing forms and and increasing loveliness. The care and culture of them elevates and refines his mind, and surrounds his home with associates of beauty. It transforms a bleak and uninviting aspect to a garden of Eden. It should be the aim of every man to have a happy, pleasant home. And every one that owns an acre of land, however humble his circumstances, has certain means and materials at his disposal, which if properly used, will give a cheerful, homelike aspect to his dwelling. We have seen a honeysuckle or climbing rose give to a rude, unpainted house, an air of cheerfulness and rural beauty that is quite wanting in many of the pretentious houses our wealthy farmers build.

The adornment of their homes contributes in no small degree, to the improvement of a people by the moral influence of exercise upon them. Whatever makes a home pleasant and attractive, lessens the temptation to stray into paths of evil. Tippling houses, gambling dens and dens of darkened deeds, do not draw their victims from congenial, happy homes. It is not here that wayward boys and girls are trained. But the children of unhappy homes fall easy victims to the tempter and are often led astray by evil associates.

It has often been remarked by travel-

lers, that they could distinguish families of intelligence and refinement by the appearance of the house and grounds. The house, perhaps an humble cottage, is painted a soft and quiet shade; in the back-ground scene, are those appendages to every well-regulated farm, the orchard and vegetable garden. While the fruit garden, well stocked with the choicest peaches, pears, cherries, grapes and the various small fruits, occupies a prominent position, belts and groves of trees are planted about the buildings in such a way as to shield them from the scorching summer's heat and the cutting winter's storm. Shrubs and flowers adorn the farmers' house, and you will find pictures upon the wall, books and papers upon the table, and all the evidences of a refined and cultivated family.

Another presents a different spectacle, it stands upon the open, bleak space, and to save land, is built near the road. To use an expression of Downing, there it stands, white, glaring and ghostly as a pyramid of bones in the desert. Not a tree or shrub to cast a grateful shade, or relieve the monotony of the dreary landscape. It is enclosed with a miserable apology for a fence, and the gates are in the last stages of delapidation. The yard contains a numerous collection of old wagons, sleds, plows, reapers and hay-racks, old barrels, empty boxes, broken rails and piles of brush, while the family wood-pile occupies the roadside immediately in front of the house.

Enter into conversation with the proprietor, and you will find that he does not believe in book-farming, that he never reads the agricultural papers, considers science as applied to agriculture as a humbug, and agricultural and horticultural societies a wicked waste of time and money. He sees no use in beauty, no good in trees and flowers, and though he may have a comfortable investment and bank account, yet he enjoys no recreation, indulges in no luxuries, and has no love for anything but the almighty dollar.

But, says one, I have not the necessary means or taste to carry out any ideas of improvement. This is all wrong, and if farmers will only think of it they will find they possess greater facilities for beautifying their homes than any other class. Go to work in the leisure days of early spring and repair the fence and gates, fix up your house, gather up the rubbish, go to the woods and carefully dig some maples, walnuts and elms, and plant them by the roadside and about your house. Then order from a reliable nurseryman, some of the most desirable evergreens, among which are the Norway Spruce, Scotch Pine and Balsam Fir. But if you want a greater variety, add Arbor Vitæ, White and Austrian Pine, Irish Juniper and Hemlock. You will also want a few of the hardy shrubs, among which, might be named, the Lilac, Syringa, Weigeia, Snow-ball, Spivera and Fringe Tree.

The man that has established an orchard and garden, and surrounded his home with trees, has done much towards making it attractive, but still he feels a want, he plants flowers around his dwelling and the picture is complete. The Quakers have a saying; that beauty is temptation, but there was peculiar force in the reply of the young Quakeress when reproached for loving so ardently the bright and beautiful things of earth. "God made the flowers and the rainbow, surely he would not have painted them such brilliant tints or created so much material beauty if he had not intended that we should enjoy it." May we not, therefore, assume that beauty is purity, and that the man who enjoys the gorgeous colors of the rainbow, the soft and pleasing tints of the vernal flowers, and the gay plumage of birds, stands higher in the scale of being than the man who looks upon these beautiful illustrations in the book of nature with no emotions of pleasure.

We are informed by history, that every civilized nation has loved and cultivated flowers. There are numerous allusions to them in the Bible; the rose of Sharon and the Lily of the Valley are spoken of as the perpetuation of beauty. The ancients crowned their gods and decked their festive boards with flowers. With them the Cupid of the ancient Hindoo, tipped his arrows. And they have ever constituted the mystic language of eastern poetry. And in the present age we use them to express the deepest emotions of our nature. We present them to those we love. They adorn the brow of the fair young bride. We place them upon the coffins and plant them upon the graves of the departed loved ones. But above all, we plant them in rich profusion around our homes, to gladden our daily lives. And who that has dwelt among them has not felt their celestial influence and been led to look up with gratitude and love to that great Being who has lavished so many blessings upon us.—*Agricultural Review.*

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

W. F., Meaford—The Weevil is a species of worm, and the Midge is a fly. We have not time to devote an editorial on the subject spoken of. Communications giving information are what are wanted. A lot of questions only hinder business, unless to the point of business.

STEADINESS OF PURPOSE.—In whatever you engage, pursue it with a steadiness of purpose, as though you were determined to succeed. A wavering mind never accomplished anything worth naming. There is nothing like a fixed, steady aim. It dignifies your nature and insures you success.

For a remarkable strawberry, see advertisement in another column.