

affection, of well-regulated obedience, and of mutual co-operation which constitute the bonds of society, are learned by the infant in the domestic circle, and can be learned no where else; and if we can leave it in the care of an intelligent mother, and in the society of its brothers and sisters, we should not send it to an infant school, where it is governed by and associated with strangers, with none of whom it is likely to have natural sympathies. What the child may be expected to gain specifically in these schools, beyond mere protection, can only be regularity of habits—which is certainly of great importance, but not so great as to countervail the advantage of a well regulated domestic circle. For the reasons we have advanced, we conceive that infant schools, though most serviceable in large cities for the poor, are totally unfitted for children of more opulent parents. With the latter, the system might be characterised, as Dr. Chalmers has done another artificial system, as “a taking to pieces of the actual framework of society, and re-constructing it in a new way or on new principles—which is altogether fruitless of good, and often fruitful of the sorest evil, both to the happiness and virtue of the commonwealth.”—*Drs. Evanson and Maunsell on the Management and Diseases of Children.*

A CHAPTER ON FLOWERS.

“Flowers!” says Mr. Bowring, “what a hundred associations the word brings to my mind! Of what countless songs, sweet and sacred, delicate and divine, are they the subject! A flower in England, [and we will add America,] is something to the botanist,—but only if it be rare; to the florist,—but only if it be beautiful: even the poet and the moralizer seldom bend down to its eloquent silence. The peasant never utters to it an ejaculation—the ploughman (all but one) carelessly tears it up with his share—no maiden thinks of wreathing it—no youth aspires to wear it: but in Spain ten to one but it becomes a minister of love, that it hears the voice of poetry, that it crowns the brow of beauty. Thus how sweetly an anonymous cancionero sings:

“Put on your brightest richest dress,
Wear all your gems, blest vale of ours!
My fair one comes in her loveliness,
She comes to gather flowers.

“Garland my wreaths, thou fertile vale;
Woods of green your coronets bring;
Pinks of red, and lilies pale,
Come with your fragrant offering.
Mingle your charms of hue and smell,
Which Flora wakes in her spring-tide hours!
My fair one comes across the dell,
She comes to gather flowers.

“Twilight of morn! from thy misty tower
Scatter the trembling pearls around,
Hang up thy gems on fruit and flower,
Bespangle the dewy ground!
Phœbus, rest on thy ruby wheels—
Look, and envy this world of ours;
For my fair one now descends the hills,
She comes to gather flowers.

“List for the breeze on wings serene
Through the light foliage sails;
Hidden amidst the forest green
Warble the nightingales!
Hailing the glorious birth of day
With music's best divinest powers,
Hither my fair one bends her way,
She comes to gather flowers.”

LONDON MAGAZINE, *Spanish Romances*, No. 3.

It was, perhaps, the general power of sympathy upon the subject of plants, which caused them to be connected with some of the earliest events that history records. The mythologies of all nations are full of them; and in all times they have been associated with the soldiery, the government, and the arts. Thus the patriot was crowded with oak; the hero and the poet with bay; and beauty with the myrtle. Peace had her olive; Bacchus his ivy; and whole groves of oak-trees were thought to send our oracular voices in the winds. One of the most pleasing parts of state-splendor has been associated with flowers, as Shakespeare seems to have had in his mind when he wrote that beautiful line respecting the accomplished prince, Hamlet:

“The expectancy and rose of the fair state.”

It was this that brought the gentle family of roses into such unnatural broils in the civil wars: and still the united countries of Great Britain have each a floral emblem: Scotland has its thistle, Ireland its shamrock, and England the rose. France, under the Bourbons, had the golden lily.

The different festivals in England, have each their own peculiar plant or plants, to be used in their celebration; at Easter the willow as a substitute for the palm; at Christmas, the holly and the mistletoe; on May-day every flower in bloom, but particularly the hawthorn or May-bush. In Persia they have a festival called the Feast of Roses, which lasts the whole time they are in bloom. Formerly, it was the custom, and still is in some parts of the country, to scatter flowers on the celebration of a wedding, a christening, or even of a funeral.

It was formerly the custom also, to carry garlands before the bier of a maiden, and to hang them, and scatter flowers over her grave:

The Queen scattering flowers:

“Sweets to the sweet. Farewell!
I hoped thy bride-bed to have decked, sweet maid,
And not have strewed thy grave.”

HAMLET, Act V. Scene 1.

In Tripoli, on the celebration of a wedding, the baskets of sweetmeats, etc. sent as wedding presents, are covered with flowers; and although it is well known that they frequently communicate the plague, the inhabitants will even prefer running the risk, when that dreadful disease is abroad, rather than lose the enjoyment they have in their love of flowers. When a woman in Tripoli dies, a large bouquet of fresh flowers, if they can be procured, if not, of artificial, is fastened at the head of her coffin. Upon the death of a Moorish lady of quality, every place is filled with fresh flowers and burning perfumes: at the head of the body is placed a large bouquet, of part artificial, and part natural, and richly ornamented with silver: and additions are continually made to it. The author who describes these customs also mentions a lady of high rank, who regularly attended the tomb of her daughter, who had been three years dead; she always kept it in repair, and, with the exception of the great mosque, it was one of the grandest in Tripoli. From the time of the young lady's death, the tomb had always been supplied with the most expensive flowers, placed in beautiful vases; and, in addition to these, a great quantity of fresh Arabian Jessamines, threaded on thin slips of the palm-leaf, were hung in festoons and tassels about this revered sepulchre. The mausoleum of the royal family, which is called the *Turbar*, is of the purest white marble, and is filled with an immense quantity of fresh flowers; most of the tombs being dressed with festoons of Arabian Jessamine and large bunches of variegated flowers, consisting of Orange, Myrtle, Red and White Roses, etc. They afford a perfume which those who are not habituated to such choice flowers can scarcely conceive. The tombs are mostly of white, a few inlaid with coloured marble. A manuscript Bible, which was presented by a Jew to the Synagogue, was adorned with flowers; and silver vases filled with flowers were placed upon the ark which contained the sacred MS.*

The ancients used wreaths of flowers in their entertainments, not only for pleasure, but also from a notion that their odour prevented the wine from intoxicating them; they used other perfumes on the same account. Beds of flowers are not merely fictitious. The Highlanders of Scotland commonly sleep on heath, which is said to make a delicious bed; and beds are, in Italy, often filled with the leaves of trees, instead of down or feathers. It is an old joke against the effeminate Sybarites, that one of them complaining he had not slept all night, and being asked the reason why, said that a rose-leaf had got folded under him.

In Naples and in the vale of Cashemero (I have been told also that it sometimes occurs in Chester,) gardens are formed on the roofs of houses: “On a standing roof of wood is laid a covering of fine earth, which shelters the building from the great quantity of snow that falls in the winter season. This fence communicates an equal warmth in winter, as a refreshing coolness in summer, when the tops of the houses, which are planted with a variety of flowers, exhibit at a distance the spacious view of a beautiful chequered parterre.” The famous hanging gardens of Babylon were on the enormous walls of that city.

A garden usually makes a part of every Paradise, even of Mahomet's, from which women are excluded,—women, whom gallantry has so associated with flowers, that we are told, in the Malay language, one word serves for both.† In Milton's Paradise, the occupation of Adam and Eve was to tend the flowers, to prune the luxuriant branches, and support the roses, heavy with beauty. Poets have taken pleasure in painting gardens in all the brilliancy of imagination. See the garden of Alcinoüs in Homer's *Odyssey*; those of Morgann, Alcina, and Armida, in the Italian poets: the gardens fair

“Of Hesperus and his daughters three,
Who sing about the golden tree;”

and Proserpina's garden, and the Bower of Bliss in Spenser's *Fairie Queene*. The very mention of their name seems to embower one in leaves and blossoms.

It is a matter of some taste to arrange a bouquet of flowers judiciously; even in language, we have a finer idea of colours, when such are placed together as look well together in substance. Do we read of white, purple, red, and yellow flowers, they do not present to us so exquisite a picture, as if we read of yellow and purple, white and red. Their arrangement has been happily touched upon by some of our poets:

“Th' Azores send
Their jessamine; her jessamine, remote
Caffraia: foreigners from many lands,
They form one social shade, as if convened
By magic summons of th' Orphean lyre.

* See Tully's Narrative of a Residence in Tripoli.
† See *Lalla Rookh*, page 303. Sixth edition.

Yet just arrangement, rarely brought to pass
But by a master's hand, disposing well
The gay diversities of leaf and flower,
Must lend its aid to illustrate all their charms,
And dress the regular, yet various scene.
Plant behind plant aspiring, in the van
The dwarfish; in the rear retired, but still
Sublime above the rest, the statelier stand.”

COWPER.

What is here said on the subject of arrangement is of course addressed to those who are unacquainted with botany; those who study that delightful science will, most probably, prefer a botanical arrangement, observing however to place the smaller plants of each division next the spectator, and thus proceeding gradually to the tallest and most distant; so that the several divisions will form strips irregular in their width.

A friend has obliged me, says a celebrated writer, with the following lines, paraphrased from the Greek of Meleager. “This delicious little Greek poem,” says he, “is one of those which I always seem to scent the very odor of, as if I held a bunch of flowers to my face.”

“A flowery crown will I compose—
I'll weave the crocus, weave the rose;
I'll weave narcissus, newly wet,
The hyacinth, and violet;
And myrtle shall supply me green,
And lilies laugh in light between:
That the rich tendrils of my beauty's hair
May burst into their crowning flowers, and light the painted air.”

DIFFICULTIES OF AN EDITOR.—An editor cannot step without treading on somebody's toes. If he expresses his opinion fearlessly and frankly, he is arrogant and presumptuous. If he states facts without comment he dares not avow his sentiments. If he conscientiously refuses to advocate the claims of an individual to office, he is accused of personal hostility. A jackanapes who measures off words into verse as a clerk does tape, by the yard, hands him a parcel of stuff that jingles like a handful of rusty nails and a gimlet; and if the editor be not fool enough to print the nonsense—“Stop my paper; I won't patronize a man that's no better judge of poetry.” One murmurs because his paper is too literary, another because it is not literary enough. One grumbles because the advertisements engross too much room, another complains that the paper is too large, he can't find time to read it all. One wants the types so small, that a microscope would be indispensable in every family, another threatens to discontinue the paper unless the letters are half an inch long. One old lady actually offered to give an additional price for a paper that should be printed with such types as are used for handbills. In fact, every subscriber has a plan of his own for conducting a journal, and the labour of Sisyphus was recreation when compared with that of an editor who undertakes to please all.

EXCESSIVE GRIEF.—By the influence of excessive grief the health is decidedly endangered. It is difficult to define the nature of the connexion which subsists between the mind and the body; our knowledge respecting it is almost entirely limited to an acquaintance with the effect produced by the reciprocal action. Although the existence of this sympathy may be denied by those who plead for the unrestrained indulgence of their sorrow, yet nothing can be more certain. We see every day the one suffering with the other—the manifestations of mind enfeebled by disease, and the animal economy materially disturbed by disorders of the mind. It is well known how instantaneously joy or grief will pall the appetite; that it is impossible to cure many derangements of the animal system while any cause of mental irritation exists; and that many maladies are immediately produced by the influence of depressing passions. The indulgence of excessive grief, then, is by no means innocent; since, although its immediate effects may be escaped, it may still lay the foundation of insidious disease, which though long protracted may in the end terminate fatally.—*Newnham's Tribute of Sympathy.*

DEISM AND CHRISTIANITY.—There is nothing in Deism, but what is in Christianity; but there is much in Christianity, which is not in Deism. The Christian has no doubt concerning a future state; every deist, from Plato to Thomas Paine, is on this subject overwhelmed with doubts insuperable by human reason. The Christian has no misgivings as to the pardon of penitent sinners, through the intercession of a mediator; the deist is harassed with apprehensions lest the moral justice of God should demand, with inexorable rigour, punishment for transgression. The Christian has no doubt concerning the lawfulness and the efficacy of prayer; the deist is disturbed on this point by abstract considerations concerning the goodness of God, which wants not to be entreated; concerning his foresight, which has no need of our information; concerning his immutability, which cannot be changed through our supplication. The Christian admits the providence of God, and the liberty of human actions; the deist is involved in great difficulties, when he undertakes the proof of either. The Christian has assurance that the Spirit of God will help his infirmities; the deist does not deny the possibility that God may have access to the human mind; but he has no ground to believe the fact, of his either enlightening the understanding, influencing the will, or purifying the heart.—*Bishop Watson.*