

### THE CARDINAL FLOWER.

Clare, Anabel, and little Hugh,  
Brush from the grass the inoning dew,  
In quest of flowers. With laughter sweet,  
They press with eager, tireless feet,  
Down lanes ablaze with Golden Rod,  
Where white and crimson Thistles nod,  
Where purple Asters, leaning, look  
At purple Asters in the brook.

They gather wreaths of Clematis,  
And blithely, deeming naught amiss,  
Where pale pink Roses lately grew,  
Pluck shining spheres of scarlet hue,  
And berries like red ivory gleam  
From stems of glossy Wintergreen.  
And now their bright, enraptured eyes  
Are fastened on a rarer prize ;  
Upon a steep bank, just beyond  
The confines of a marshy pond,  
In lonely grandeur brave and tall,  
There flames a scarlet Cardinal.

They pick their way among the rocks,  
Their pains the radiant vision mocks.  
All reaching is in vain, and they,  
With backward glances, turn away,  
Till, flushed and weary with their toils,  
And laden with the brilliant spoils,  
That, wilting now within their arms,  
Are losing fast their early charms,  
They rest beside the roadside brook,  
With half a disappointed look.

Ah, Clare and Anabel and Hugh,  
Not if you search the meadows through,  
And gather more than you can hold  
Of autumn's purple, red, and gold,  
Will you find aught so fair to each,  
As that one flower you could not reach !

*Congregationalist.*

### COVERING STRAWBERRY BEDS.

The *Germantown Telegraph* says :

"Often there is much said, and especially at this season of the year, about covering strawberries ; and many persons are induced by what they read to act so as to heartily regret it when the spring comes round. We have known people to act on this suggestion, and cover their strawberry beds with manure, and find the whole completely rotten in the spring. And yet a little covering with the right kind of material is not a bad thing. If the plants are left entirely unprotected the leaves are browned and often destroyed ; while it must have been noted by every observant gardener that the best fruit comes from plants that have managed to keep their leaves bright and green till their spring

flowers appear. And this is why a covering of snow the whole winter is so good for the strawberry crop. As we have remarked, when the leaves are browned the crop is small ; but when the snow covers the plants all the winter long, they come out in the spring in the best possible condition.

"But we cannot always depend on the snow. It does not always come, or continue in the regular way. So if some light material can be put over the plants, that will not smother and rot them, and yet will be just enough to make a shade from the winter sun and a screen from frosty winds, it will be doing a good turn to the strawberry plant. Manure is bad. There is salt in it, especially when fresh, which is destructive to foliage ; but clean straw, or swamp or marsh hay that is free from weeds, answers the purpose very well. But it must not be put on very thick. The idea is, just enough to make a thin screen, and yet not enough to hold the moisture long. Shade without damp is the idea. Such light protection is good for the strawberry plants."

THE CARDINAL FLOWER.—There is no difficulty in cultivating the Cardinal Flower (*Lobelia Cardinalis*). It prefers damp, rich soil, but with a little care it can be grown almost anywhere. The best way is to get a good load of swamp dirt, which is mainly leaf mould, and make a bed in a shady or half-shady position. Of course the plants will do better if they can be removed from their native place with care, retaining a good quantity of soil with the roots, and be speedily replanted ; but we have taken them up with but little soil, kept them several days, carried them a hundred miles, and planted them in conditions not particularly favorable with very good results. Among the many too much neglected native wild flowers there are none whose form and color better challenge our admiration ; and when we know with what ease they are started, and that, being perennial, they continue from year to year to repay the attention once bestowed, we wonder they are not more frequently seen in our gardens.