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The blackcaps pipe among the reeds; And there'll be rain to follow; There is a murmur as of wind In every coign and hollow; The wrens do chatter of their fears While swinging on the barley-ears.

Come, hurry, while there yet is time, Pull up thy scarlet bonnet. Now, sweetheart, as my love is thine,
There is a drop upon it.
So trip it ere the storm-hag weird
Doth pluck the barley by the beard!

Lo! not a whit too soon we're housed;
The storm-witch yells above us;
The branches rapping on the panes
Seem not in truth to love us.
And look where through the clover bush
The nimble-footed rain doth rush.

-By Amelie Troubetzkoy.

What Flowers Meant to the Dames of Yesteryear.

Ideas in gardening change with the fashions and the times, as do other

fashions and the times, as do other human interests and pleasures. The woman who tenderly tended her posy garden in the latter years of the Eighteenth Century would be amazed at the selections and groupings of the twentieth century.

To-day the flower-grower is influenced as often by utilitarian motives as by good taste when she plants. An artistic grouping of growing plants, which will conceal while it adorns, appeals to her more than the beauty of an individual flower. The greatest return of blossoms for the effort expended in gardening usually controls the choice of flowers for the modern home flower garden.

in gardening usually controls the choice of flowers for the modern home flower garden.

The dames of yesteryear planted with far different ends in view. To them flowers meant something more than possibilities for home adornment. Every seed was potential with some particular sentiment which strengthened and developed while they gave loving care to their flowers. "Posies," those prim gentlewomen called them, and they lavished thought and care upon their growing pets, not for the fragrance and beauty of color of the blossoms alone, but because their flower gardens were intended to be living pages of poetic sentiment, easily read by all versed in the language of flowers.

Indeed, according to the romances of those days, a courtship could not have prospered unless a flower garden vas conveniently at hand for lovers' strolls at twilight. It was quite in keeping with such associations that the flower beds were emblematic in shape and contents. Heart-shaped beds were much in vogue, and especially a favored way for planting the first flowers of spring. Who could have resisted planting a bulb bed in this form when one knew that the crocus was the herald of joy, the snow-drop meant hope, the lily-of-the-valley pleaded for the return of love, and the jonquil pled ed love's vows? The violet gave assurance of first love, and the jonquil pled ed love's vows? The violet gave assurance of first love, and the jonquil pled ed love's vows? The violet gave assurance of first love, and the jonquil pled ed love's vows? The violet gave assurance of first love, and the jonquil pled ed love's vows? The violet gave assurance of first love, and the jonquil pled ed love's vows? The violet gave assurance of first love, and the jonquil pled ed love's vows? The violet gave assurance of first love, and the jonguil pled ed love's vows? The violet gave assurance of first love, and the jonguil pled ed love's vows? The violet gave assurance of first love, and the jonguil pled ed love's vows? The violet gave assurance of first love, and bluebell we

prophesies of domestic love.

In those days the giving and accepting of a simple nosegay was fraught with meaning. Even the setting of leaves for the flowers conveyed a compliment or message. A pansy and an druggists.

ivy leaf spoke the cordial sentiment, "You occupy my thoughts with friendship," while a gift of a moss rose with a fern leaf was a "confession of love in all sincerity." A spray of mignonette complimented a woman's loveliness, the cowslip indicated her winsomeness, the verbena typified her tact, the jessamine was likened to her amiability, the heliotrope testified to her faithfulness, the lily was emblematic of her purity, a sprig of mint gave token of her virtue, the dahlia became a stately reminder of her dignity.

Coquetry in those days claimed flowers as her adroltest hand-maidens. What more delicate way to make a shy confession or to gently rebuke could any maiden find than to make the right posy her interpreter? Her love could be told by giving a pink, her refusal by a chrysanthemum, her indifference with a sprig of candytuft, her consolation with a poppy, her esteem with a spray of salvia, her encouragement with a plume of goldenrod.

We smile at all this to-day as sentimental nonsense. Yet, while we have thrown off the glamour of romance so completely, have we not lost a subtle sweetness of thought-life since we have come to regard flowers from their scientific and decorative uses? The language of flowers, so carefully conned and interpreted as one of the social graces, was far less harmless and very possibly more fruitful of actual grace of heart than the vapid small talk and the too often venomous bandage of the beaux and maidens of this later day.

The language of flowers in those days held sentiment even for those of mellower years, and thus the floral dial became the popular ambition among amateur florists, which Mrs. Hemans commends in the lines:

"Twas a lovely thought to mark the hours,"

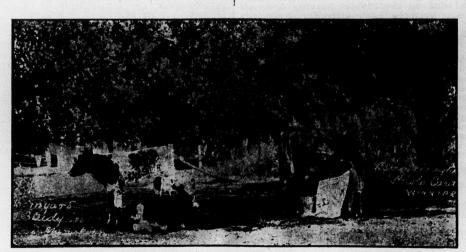
"Twas a lovely thought to mark the hours,
As they neated in light away,
By the opening and the folding flowers

As they floated in light away, By the opening and the folding flowers

That laugh to the summer's day."

These floral dials were laid off in the shape of a huge sun-dial, and every effort was made to mark each hour by the blossoming and or closing of a particular group of flowers. A good dame of Quebec describes the grouping she made in her sun-dial, which enlisted the interest and courtly comment of her good neighbor, the Duke of Kent. For four in the morning the late dandelion and wild succory; for five o'clock, the yellow day lily and smooth-stalked poppy; for six o'clock the bindweed and nipplewort; for seven o'clock the African marigold and common pimpernel; for eight o'clock the hawkweed and the pink; for nine o'clock purple sandwort and purslane; for ten o'clock creeping mallow and chickweed. The pink closed at one o'clock, marking the afternoon hour; the hawkweed and pimpernel went to sleep at two o'clock; the sandwort and marigold at three o'clock, the bindweed and achyeophorus at four o'clock; the white water lily at five o'clock; the white water lily at five o'clock; the poppy at six o'clock; the succory, dandelion and chickweed at nine o'clock, an't the purslane and sow thistle at ten o'clock, leaving the moonflower the timekeeper for the night." That the flowers obediently closed their eyes at the appointed hour, and wakened to the minute, the good dame does not affirm, but from her discreet silence on this point we conjecture that, like model babies, they were supposed to be of clocklike regularity, which duly explains the long-remembered compliment of the first almanac-maker. first almanac-maker.

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