The Good Old Times.

Admiring my flowers, young gents, I see,
Well, they do look pretty, it seems to me,
Though I fancy, begging your pardons,
There's some who would think the marigold,
The stock, and carnation too prim and old
For your fine, new-fangled gardens,

Seems to me, in these changeable days,
Our gardens and suchlike are going the ways
Of all that's simple and homely;
Change! are the blooms of my youthful hours
That we gave to our sweethearts for gaudier flowers,
Not half so pleasant and comely.

Do I see to the gardens myself? Not I;
My time for that, sir, is long gone by;
'Tis my grandson's hobby, you see, sir;
He takes a pride in it like, dear lad!
For he knows it pleases the old grandad,
And he's always thinking o' me, sir.

Oyes, sir, this little place is my own,
And Willie will have it when I'm gone;
And I don't get younger or stronger,
For I'm eighty five come next birthday;
So I can't expect, as a body may say,
To be spared many summers longer.

My fever and fret 'o life are gone,
And I like to sit out here 'i the sun,
While truant memory ranges
O'er my childhood's innocent days forsooth,
The passionate hopes and loves of youth,
And manhood's trials and changes.

And, the times have altered, sir. You're right.
And not for the better I fancy, quite
Though it may be a whim of mine too;
When we're hopeful and young, I suppose,
Everything looks the color of rose,
And we carry our own sunshine too.

Your railways and gas, that you boast about,
May be all very clever and fine, no doubt,
And the age be as grand as you say it is;
But I miss, somehow, the heartier ways
Of the dear old-fashion'd leisurely days,
With their homelier tastes and gaities.

—*The Belfravia Annual*

Parsley Culture.

In our cookery we often miss those little trifles which gives so much zest to European dishes. We generally have meats and pastries in abundance, and even, in many cases, a fair show of fruit and vegetables; but an infinite variety may be given to even every-day things by a judicious use of pot herbs.

Among the most useful to the ingenious cook is the Parsley, and perhaps there is no one kind of the large number used in Europe that is better known to American women. When ever the head consults with the heart of the house about the little garden affairs, and the list of seeds to be procured is under earnest discussion, she is tolerably sure to close with the injuction, "be sure and have some Parsley sown." And the Parsley is bought and sown; but how many gardeners ever have it for all the anxiety and care to get the seed? The fact is, it is almost always sown too late. It takes six weeks to germinate, and then its early stages of growth are slow, so that it comes up about the time the weather is getting warm and dry, and unless in a very favorable spot, burns out, or is in some way destroyed. This is if allowed to sprout at all; for generally the amateur gardeners, not knowing that it takes six weeks to sprout, considers the seed bad, and sows something else in the place thereof.

Parsley seed ought to be amongst the very earliest of seeds put into the ground, and it should have selected for it rather a dry spot; and yet one not much exposed to the full sun in summer. Many like to have plants in the fall to lift and put in pots or boxes to keep in the window and gather from all winter. For this purpose the plants must be kept from going to seed in the summer-time, which they are very likely to do, especially if sown early. Sometimes when planted late there is no tendency to go to seed, if it grows at all, but remains green and stocky all the summer and fall. It is not always that early sown Parsley runs to seed, but it often does. If allowed to perfect the seeds, the plants either die or become much weakened.

When lifted in the fall for winter-use, many put the roots rather thick in square boxes—any sort of box which comes to hand; but many give ornament to utility by having tasteful boxes made; and some even put the roots in shells or hanging-baskets. We have seen holes bored in small kegs, and after filling the keg with earth the roots are inserted through the holes, and when neatly done the effect is very good. Of course, in such cases, a hole must be bored in the bottom of the keg also, in order to allow the surplus water to escape.

There are several varieties of Parsley, but the double curled is the best for general purposes. It makes a pretty ornament for table dishes even when not wanted for actual use; and when the roots are taken up for winter preservation as described, the pretty figured leaves of the curled variety is as beautiful to look upon as many of the rare plants grown expressly for ornamental purposes.—*Germantown Telegraph.*

The Champion Grape.

In our issue of Aug. 30th, we spoke of this grape, saying that we saw it on the 26th well colored, and ripe enough to sell, but not in its best condition since then we have eaten it in various stages of ripeness and over-ripeness. It is a large, compact, shouldered bunch, grapes round, blush-black, nearly as large as the Concord, with a rather thicker skin, adhering well to the stem. In quality we think it a little inferior to Concord or Hartford Prolific, but in beauty excelling the latter and nearly equalling the former. In period of ripening we should say that it is eight or ten days earlier than Hartford. Mr. James Stone, of Greece, to whom we are indebted for the opportunity of making the acquaintance of the grape, shipped most of those grown in his neighborhood to Canada, realizing from twenty cents down to twelve cents per pound, while the Hartford opened at six and eight cents only. From this we see that they are attractive enough to sell at better prices than later varieties will bring. The chief value of the grape seems to be its earliness, added to its vigor and hardiness. These three qualities commend it to high latitudes.

Its Origin.

In 1869 a Mr. Spalding, of Greece, saw in a fruit-store in Syracuse some early grapes. He learned that they were brought in by an old man living about four miles out. He visited him, and ascertained that he had but one vine, which he found growing in the garden when he came in possession of the place, but that he was then growing some cuttings. Mr. Spalding claims to have bought his plants and sold them to his Grecian neighbors.

Is the Champion a Synonym?

Mr. Lay, of Greece, an experienced fruit-grower, brought us some grapes from his garden, on the 9th inst., which he claimed to be identical with the Champion, and which he procured from Syracuse, under the name of *Talman's Seedling*. On his way he stopped at Mr. Filer's and got a few bunches of his Champion. He was unable to decide which of the bunches came from his place, and which from Mr. Filer's. Some of the bunches were hardly ripe, while others were over-ripe, and of course there was a decided difference in their flavor, but perhaps no greater than we perceived in different specimens of Champion, in different stages of maturity. Upon the whole, we could not decide whether they were two grapes, or were synonyms.—*American Rural Home.*

Preserving Celery.

Celery, from being one of the rarest of vegetables, seen only on a few tables, has become a necessity to all who delight in good living. There are many ways of preserving this eseulent, so that it may be accessible for use at any time, some of them involving more trouble and expense than families are willing to undergo. We have found the following a simple and reliable way. Select a dry, elevated spot, where water never stands, and dig a narrow trench—say six or seven inches wide—deep enough to receive the entire plant. Nail two boards together so as to form a roof over the celery, reaching about three inches on either side of the trench.

Take up the celery, roots and all, whether blanched or not, and stow it compactly in the trench, covering with the boards. As the cold increases, strew straw, or any litter, over the roof, and it will preserve the celery in good condition through the winter, easily accessible at any time when wanted for the table.—*American Rural Home.*

Proper Time to Manure Trees.

People often argue whether it is best to manure trees in the fall or in the spring, but we think that any one who tries it will find that the summer is as good a time as any.

It is only a few years ago that it has been discovered that plants are like animals in this—that they, while appearing to be expending their daily nourishment on continuous growth, are really at the same time laying-up food for to-morrow. Those who have examined vegetable cellular structure with a microscope tell us that the formation is exactly like that of a honey comb, the cells lying together of a hexagonal shape, as if made by bees. But it proves that this structure is more like the illustration than those who used it suspected, in this—that as in the honey comb, honey is stored up for use at a further time, so matter is stored up in these little plant cells for the future use of the plant. There are in almost all plants two growths during the season. The first growth is formed almost wholly from the matter stored up in the cells of the previous year. After midsummer, especially in the apple tree, the whole of the force derived from the past year is expended, and it stores up a little for a new growth, which is soon after made. As the season progresses, the latter or secondary growth also in turn lays up some matter in its cells, for the next season, as the past season has done.

Trees always like fresh food as well as animals; and thus it is with this explanation that one can readily understand how it is that a top-dressing of good manure put under the trees soon after midsummer, when the second growth is about to take place, produces the marked good results we have before recorded.—*Thomas Meehan, in Weekly Press.*

CLEARING MOSS FROM FRUIT TREES.—The *American Agriculturist* says nothing is better than carbolic soap, and lye. Make common lye of wood ashes, not strong, and add half a pound of carbolic soap to a three gallon pail of boiling lye. Apply hot, with a swab, to old trees. It has been used with entire success on apple, pear, peach, and cherry trees, destroying every particle of moss it touches.

LARGE APPLES IN ENGLAND.—*The Garden* gives the following dimensions of some superb specimens grown on dwarf trees: White Calville, weighing 1 lb 4 oz, and 15½ inches in circumference; Canada Reinette, 12½ inches in circumference; Belle de Bois, 1 lb. 7 oz., and 15 inches in circumference. The trees were trained in cordons, and, of course, every advantage of thinning given the fruit. The largest apple which we have seen in this country, was a Fall Pippin, grown in Cayuga Co., N.Y., and weighing 23 ounces—of course on a standard.

FUNKIA SUBCORDATA.—This plant, known also under the names of F. grandiflora and F. alba, is one of the most beautiful, and at the same time, neglected, hardy flowers we possess. The leaves are of a light yellowish green, and the flowers held well above the foliage on foot-stalks 12 to 16 inches long. They are of the purest white, nearly 4 inches long, opening wide at the mouth, but with the tube long and slender. They are produced in succession spring from the axil of a little stem-leaf, and are as sweet as orange blossoms. The plant likes light and warm soil, and sunny positions, and should be in every collection of hardy flowers.

THE WEEPING BEECH.—This is a tree of great beauty. Our specimen, 40 feet high, covers an area of 2,000 square feet. Unlike many weeping trees, it grows upward, and then throws its branches down in all sorts of fantastic shapes. Looking upon it from the outside, it seems like a cathedral built by one of the old masters of architecture. Enter through its branches, which sweep the ground, you find yourself in a natural arbor. Look up, and you see a sturdy trunk with a bark like a rhinoceros' hide, and supporting limbs twisted and gnarled as if nature were trying to show how picturesque and beautiful so crooked a thing could be. No tree in our grounds elicits so many expressions of wonder and admiration. —*Garden.*

A NEW HEDGE PLANT.—The *Gardener's Monthly* for December, figures and describes a new hedge plant, the *Eleagnus parvifolius*, a native of the Himalaya Mountains. It belongs to the Oleaster family, in which are the wild olive of the Levant and the Buffalo berry (*Shepherdia argentea*) of the northwest. It will probably prove quite hardy and of easy culture. It is described as looking very harmless the first year from seed, having then no spines, but large numbers of short branches, from a fourth of an inch to two inches in length, which become sharp spines the second year. The spines increase in size and numbers as the shrub grows older. The second and third years, branches two to five feet long are produced, so that the plant soon becomes high enough for a good hedge. But its greatest value consists in its rarely showing any disposition to grow over six or eight feet in height. After reaching this height, the shrubs grow by sending out strong shoots from the stems near the ground; becoming self-thickening. It makes a first-class hedge if pruned, or if left to itself it is still a good fence. At three or four years the plant bears seed, so that it can be cheaply propagated, Gray says the *Elœagnaceæ* are mostly dioecious, but this species is an exception.