

## CLIMBING PLANTS.

"As graceful as a vine," is a very common expression. Every one thinks the phrase quite poetical, and that is the end of it. *Grace* and *Beauty* are well enough to talk about, and serve as excuses for writing fine sentences, say our utilitarians; but were you to advocate that these are "qualities as positive as electro-magnetism," you would at once be set down as a hopeless sentimentalist.

Still, we are about to propose something which has no other recommendation than simplicity, beauty, and grace. It costs nothing, and will afford no pecuniary income; but it looks pretty. We wish to talk about the propriety of planting climbing plants to shade the windows, to relieve the monotonous colour of the exterior of the house, to cover up everything ugly, and to heighten the charm of everything pretty and picturesque. No matter how rude and unarchitectural may be your dwelling, vines will give it a new character, and make it look home-like and cheerful. There never was a grand old mansion or princely palace, that would not look grander and more kingly for a vine to twine about its great pillars, whose green leaves and bright flowers would relieve its stern and imposing appearance.

A decoration of this kind, you have not to wait years to have completed; nor to consult with architects, or spend much time yourself to secure it. A wish will almost bring it. We quote Mr. Downing's remarks as to the vines most suitable for cultivation:—

"Our two favourite vines, then, for the adornment of cottages, in the Northern States, are the double *Prairie Rose*, and the *Chinese Wistaria*. Why we like these best is, because they have the greatest number of good qualities to recommend them. In the first place, they are hardy, thriving in all soils and exposures; in the second place, they are luxuriant in their growth, and produce an effect in a very short time—after which they may be kept to the limits of a single pillar on the piazza, or trained over the whole side of a cottage; in the last place, they are rich in the foliage, and beautiful in the blossom.

"Now, there are many vines more beautiful than these in some respects, but not for this purpose, and taken altogether. For cottage drapery, a popular vine must be one that will grow anywhere, with little care, and must need no shelter, and the least possible attention, beyond seeing that it has something to run on, and a looking over, pruning, and tying up once a year—say in early spring. This is precisely the character of these two vines; and hence we think they deserve to be planted from one end of the Union to the other. They will give the greatest amount of beauty, with the least care, and in the greatest number of places."

The *Prairie Rose* is of uncommonly rapid growth—shoots of twenty feet in a single year, being a not uncommon sight. The *Chinese Wistaria* is of a more compact growth, and its blossoms hang in large bunches, from eight inches to a foot long.

A climbing vine in the garden, in the "front door yard," and in pleasure-grounds, is particularly desirable. One great difficulty in the way of planting vines, is a want of some support. On

the one hand, a lattice house or arbor is too expensive for persons of moderate means, and perhaps less taste, while on the other, ladders and stakes are forever rotting and breaking down just when they should not.

"It is simply procuring the trunk of a cedar tree from 10 to 15 feet high, shortening in the side branches to within two feet of the trunk, and still shorter near the top, and then setting it again, as you would a post, two or three feet deep in the ground.

"Cedar is the best, partly because it will last forever, and partly because the regular disposition of its branches forms naturally a fine trellis for the shoots to fasten upon.

"Plant your favourite climber, whether rose, wistaria, or honeysuckle, at the foot of this tree. It will soon cover it, from top to bottom, with the finest pyramid of verdure. The young shoots will ramble out on its side branches, and when in full bloom will hang most gracefully or picturesquely from the ends.

"The advantage of this mode is that, once obtained, your support lasts for fifty years; it is so firm that winds do not blow it down; it presents every side to the kindly influences of sun and air, and permits every blossom that opens, to be seen by the admiring spectator."

THE MAJOR.—And what has been the result of your monthly labours, Mrs. Grundy?

MRS. GRUNDY.—Not much, but still enough to enable our fair Canadian readers to render still more attractive their already pretty faces and fine figures. (*Mrs. Grundy reads*):

## DESCRIPTION OF PLATE.

CARRIAGE COSTUME.—Albanian dress of grey silk. The skirt ornamented with rows of flowers woven in the silk. A small pelisse mantle of black satin, trimmed with Canada sable. Bonnet of bright grosseille-colored velvet, trimmed with velvet flowers of the same color. Under-trimming, white flowers and blonde. Strings of broad white gros-de-naples ribbon.

## PARISIAN FASHIONS FOR JANUARY, 1853.

Dresses for morning and general wear will have the bodies more or less open in front, come quite to the waist; these styles have small square *barquines*; fringe is the most favorite trimming for this style: the plain high body closing to the throat has the waist round, with *ceinture* of broad ribbon, the ends floating.

In cloaks, *Talmia's* are still in great favor; the *Balmoral* is the most novel of the season; it is exceedingly graceful and becoming to the figure.

Bonnets are still worn open, the corners nearly meeting under the chin.

## GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON LONDON FASHION AND DRESS.

THE season has called forth a vast variety of elegant novelties in ball dresses, &c. For young ladies, jupes of tulle, white or colored, are ornamented with braid or embroidery, and worn over slips of silk or satin of the same color as the tulle. The dresses of black tulle, worked in flowers of natural colors, which have so long maintained their hold on fashionable favor, are this season more splendid than ever; and those worked with yellow silk have perfectly the effect of gold embroidery.