

FLOWERS.—The interest which flowers have excited in the breast of man, from the earliest ages to the present day, has never been confined to any particular class of society or quarter of the globe. Nature seems to have distributed them over the whole world, to serve as a medicine to the mind, to give cheerfulness to the earth, and to furnish agreeable sensations to its inhabitants. The savage of the forest, in the joy of his heart, binds his brow with the native flowers of the woods, whilst a taste for their cultivation increases in every country in proportion as the blessings of civilization extend. From the humblest cottage enclosure to the most extensive park and grounds, nothing more conspicuously bespeaks the good taste of the possessor, than a well cultivated flower garden; and it may very generally be remarked, that whenever we behold a very humble tenement surrounded with ornamental plants, the possessor is a man of correct habits and possesses domestic comforts; whilst, on the contrary, a neglected, weed-grown garden, or its total absence, marks the indolence and unhappy state of those who have been thus neglectful of Flora's favors.

Of all luxurious indulgencies, that of flowers is the most innocent. It is productive not only of rational gratification, but of many advantages of a permanent character. Love for a garden has a powerful influence in attracting men to their homes; and on this account every encouragement given to increase a taste for ornamental gardening is an additional security for domestic comfort and happiness. It is likewise a recreation which conduces materially to health, promotes civilization, and softens the manners and tempers of men. It creates a love for the study of nature, which leads to a contemplation of the mysterious wonders that are displayed to the vegetable world around us, and which cannot be investigated without inclining the mind towards a just estimate of religion, and a knowledge of the narrow limits of our intelligence, when compared with the incomprehensible power of the Creator.

Flowers are, of all embellish-

ments, the most beautiful; and, of all created beings, man alone seems capable of deriving enjoyment from them. The love for them commences with infancy, remains the delight of youth, increases with our years, and becomes the quiet amusement of our declining days. The infant can no sooner walk than its first employment is to plant a flower in the earth, removing it ten times in an hour to wherever the sun seems to shine most favorably. The school boy, in the care of his little plot of ground, is relieved of his studies, and loses the anxious thoughts of the home he has left. In manhood our attention is generally demanded by more active duties, or by more imperious and perhaps less innocent occupations; but as age obliges us to retire from public life, the love of flowers and the delights of a garden return to sooth the latter period of our life.

To most persons, gardening affords delight as an easy and agreeable occupation; and the flowers they so fondly rear, are cherished from the gratification they afford to the organs of sight and of smell; but to the close observer of nature and the botanist, beauties are unfolded and wonders displayed, that cannot be detected by the careless attention bestowed upon them by the multitude.

In their growth, from the first tender shoots which arise from the earth, through all the changes which they undergo to the period of their utmost perfection he beholds the wonderful works of creative power; he views the bud as it swells, and looks into the expanded blossom, delights in its rich tints and fragrant smell, but above all he feels a charm in contemplating movements and regulations before which all the combined ingenuity of man dwindles into nothingness.—*Journal of Health.*

John Bogner, Bishop of Geneva, was a swineherd in his youth. Being one day at Geneva, he went to the Tarconnerie to purchase a pair of shoes, but found upon examining his scrip, that he had not sufficient money. The Shoemaker observing his confusion, took compassion upon his poverty: "Go, friend," said he,

"you shall pay me when you become a Cardinal." Not long after, a Cardinal taking a liking to Bogner, carried him to Avignon, and made him a learned man. He came at last to be in reality a Cardinal, when he made the kind-hearted shoemaker his house-steward.—*Olio.*

The largest flower, and the largest bird.

In 1818, Dr. Arnold discovered in the island of Sumatra, a flower which he named the *Raffisia Arnoldi*, and which an author has called with much justice, 'the magnificent Titan of the vegetable kingdom.' The human mind indeed had never conceived such a flower; its circumference when expanded is nine feet; its nectarium calculated to hold nine pints—the pistils are as large as cow's horns, and the entire weight of the blossom computed to be fifteen pounds. Temple, in his recent travels in Peru, states that he shot a condor, and from notes taken on the spot, gives us the following dimensions of its size:—When the wings are spread, they measure forty feet in extent, from point to point, the feathers are twenty feet in length, and the quill part 8 inches in circumference. This almost realizes the fabled roc of Sinbad in the Arabian Nights, but its dimensions, as here given, rests on good and very recent authority.—*Penny Mag.*

Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, in the *Altrive Tales*, makes the following observation about the Author of Waverly:—

"There is not above five people in the world, who, I think, know Sir Walter better, or understand his character better than I do; and if I outlive him, which is likely, as I am five months and ten days younger, I shall draw a mental portrait of him; the likeness of which to the original shall not be disputed. In the mean time, this is only a reminiscence, in my own line, of an illustrious friend among the mountains."

Among the fashions prevailing just now at Paris is that of wearing *ten breadths* in the skirt of the dress. In one of Jonny's papers, in "L'Hermitte de la Chaussee d'Antin," he makes the old lady declare that the brocade of her wedding suit was afterwards made into covers for a sofa and a dozen arm chairs, and it seems likely that so curious an epoch of fashion will be renewed.

NATURAL HISTORY.

From Doct. Richardson's Zoology of the northern part of British America.

THE RED-BREADED THRUSH.

None of the feathered tribe are better known in America than this, which, from its red breast and familiar habits, has obtained the name of the 'Robin.' It winters, in immense numbers, in the Atlantic States, from New Hampshire to the Gulf of Mexico, deserting at that season, the tracts to the westward of the Alleghany