

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

GARDENING.—*What book can I get that deals with vegetable-growing? I have only a small garden and wish to grow common vegetables chiefly.*—OXIDE OF CALCIUM.

Flowers and Vegetables all the Year Round, published by Messrs. Sutton of Reading, is a book which you would find exceedingly useful. As the name betokens, it does not deal only with vegetables; but this fact would probably be no disadvantage, as you would doubtless like to have some flowers in your garden as well as vegetables. From your question, it is not plain whether you wish to grow vegetables for profit, or only for home consumption. If the former, "common" vegetables would be unremunerative, as prices are very low for all ordinary vegetables which can be grown with little skill or expense. Prime, spherical tomatoes, seakale, and early asparagus are the things that pay; but even these, of course, must be grown in large quantities and be furnished to some market where prices are good. If, however, you are growing for home consumption, it would be best to aim at variety. It would be worth while for you to turn your attention especially to saladings, such as endive, cos lettuce, radishes, mustard and cress, and to herbs such as sweet marjoram, thyme, tarragon, savory, chervil, and shallots.

INQUISITIVE writes—"Will you kindly reply in your Answers to Correspondents whether you can give information as to the origin of the expression 'Jessamy Bride'?"

The "Jessamy Bride" was Mary Horneck, one of the delightful family whose other members were styled "Captain" and "Little Comedy," and in which Oliver Goldsmith was a familiar guest. After his death the young lady received a lock of his hair, and it is supposed that he was in love with her. We cannot give the exact reason for the name bestowed upon Mary Horneck. Possibly some of our readers can make a suggestion. There is a story on this episode entitled "The Jessamy Bride," by Frankfort Moore, which might help **INQUISITIVE**.

IRIS says: "I have often read in books of the 'Gordian Knot'; may I ask you to explain what it is?"

The legend runs that the people of Phrygia were informed by an oracle that a waggon should bring them a king who would put an end to many internal disturbances in the country. While they were consulting on these points in the popular assembly, a poor peasant, Gordius, suddenly appeared, riding in his waggon, and was accordingly hailed as king by

his fellow-countrymen. Out of gratitude, Gordius dedicated his waggon to Zeus, and had it placed in the Acropolis. The pole was attached to the yoke by a knot of bark, so ingeniously tied that no one could unfasten it. The oracle declared that "Whoever undid the knot should reign over the whole East." Alexander, on arriving at Gordium, heard this saying. "Well then," said he, "it is thus I perform the task," and cut the knot asunder with his sword. To cut the Gordian knot is, therefore, to get out of a difficulty in a clever or summary manner. Shakespeare says, in *Henry V.*, of the king—

"Turn him to any cause of policy,
The Gordian knot of it he will unloose
Familiar as his garter."

OUR OPEN LETTER BOX.

Will any of our readers help **AN INQUIRER** to find a humorous piece for recitation entitled "Choosing Christmas Cards," also an American sketch which describes the telling to an inquisitive child the story of George Washington and his little hatchet? We heard the latter piece ourselves a day or two ago, but the reciter could only inform us that it was anonymous and in an American collection.

HASEL B—wishes to know the author of a poem entitled "Lady Maud's Oath."

CLARICE asks—"By whom and where is to be found the following quotation: 'The veil which hides the future is woven by the hand of Mercy.'"

LUCIE inquires the authorship and title of the poem in which occur the lines:

"Heaven is not gained at a single bound;
We build the ladder by which we
climb,"

and wishes for the tract or sermon by Canon Wilberforce on the text "The twelfth an amethyst." The subject was temperance.

VEE asks us to find her a serio-comic parody on "Old Mother Hubbard," which she thinks she has "read in some magazine."

Can anyone direct "A New Reader" to the humorous recitation, "How Bill Adams Won the Battle of Waterloo"?

STUDY AND STUDIO.

INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE.

THERE seems a little vagueness in the minds of our correspondents as to the method of procedure. We do not undertake to write, nor to send addresses, privately. We simply offer to publish requests for international

correspondence in this column. If A.B., for instance, being French, wishes to exchange letters with an English girl, she can do one of two things—either send us her request with name and address for insertion here, or write direct to some English girl, C.D., whose address appears under this heading. The only drawback to the latter plan is, that C.D. may already have found a correspondent, but we rely on the courtesy of our subscribers to, in such a case, write and explain. Matters will soon arrange themselves.

We hesitate to publish addresses when a pseudonym is given, but it would expedite affairs always to send name and address for insertion here.

MISS C. A. LAMPITT, 32, Tooting Bee Road, Upper Tooting, London, S.W., wishes for a French girl correspondent.

"**SPERO**" (Ireland) would like to correspond with a French or German girl, or both.

A. M. would be happy to exchange letters with a French lady.

MISS FLORENCE E. SMITH, Winfrith, The Crescent, Bedford, thinks "it would be delightful to have letters from, and write to, a French girl."

MISS JANE M. M. CUNNINGHAM, aged eighteen, exceedingly fond of music, French, literature, etc., would be very glad if Mademoiselle Jeanne Bossy of Avallon par Anvers would open a correspondence with her. Her address is, 6, Fettes Row, Edinburgh, Scotland.

MADMOISELLE PAULA DAHLHOFF, Engelstrasse 22, Münster, Westphalia, having seen our answer to **PHENIX** OF DEAD MOUNTAIN (November), would like to correspond with her. Miss Dahlhoff is a merchant's daughter, fifteen years old, still at school, acquainted with German, English, French, and Italian, and much interested in the study of literature and music. She writes an excellent letter, and, if **PHENIX** would like a girl correspondent, they might suit one another.

MISS G. E. BATCHELOR, The Rectory, Letcomb Bassett, Wantage, Berks., would like to correspond with a French girl.

LAURETTE H. (France) would be very glad to write to an English girl, and thinks that each correspondent should correct the other's mistakes. We commend to her notice one of the addresses given above.

MADMOISELLE YVONNE BRUNET, 22, Rue Joyeuse, Bourges, Cher, France, has long wished for an English correspondent, and impatiently awaits one.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MEDICAL.

IRISH MOLLY.—The medical part of your question resolves itself into—"Ought I to marry under the following conditions? I am twenty-two years old. Four years ago I had tubercular disease of the hip, but I am better now. My father died fourteen years ago. I have three brothers and sisters alive. My mother is still with us." If your hip is no longer diseased, and if you do not suffer from tuberculosis elsewhere, and if your father did not have tubercular disease, and your brothers and sisters are healthy, there is no reason why you should not marry. But if your family history points to tubercular tendency, or your hip is still affected, or you are ill in other ways, it is better for you to remain single, but this is a point which requires further investigation. The other part of your question depends entirely upon yourself. We cannot advise you whether to marry or not. You and your relatives must decide that.

"INSOMNIA."—Of all the symptoms that a medical man is called upon to relieve, none is more distressing, more complex in its causation, more difficult to treat or more likely to lead to serious results than sleeplessness. This condition may ruin the health, prostrate the energy, or even destroy the life of the most robust individual. You ask us for a remedy for this symptom. Read the above, and see what a task you have set us! In your case insomnia is probably due to taking a heavy supper before going to bed. Discontinue your supper and take a glass of hot milk instead, and see how you get on. Under no circumstances should you take any drugs to make you sleep; if you do, you will repent when it is too late.

M. E. H.—It is absolutely impossible for us to give you any advice on your most distressing complaint without a most complete personal inquiry into your symptoms and a thorough examination of nearly every organ in your body. Therefore consult your own medical man.

ANGELA.—Did it never strike you that "a swollen-up feeling in your throat, stuffiness in the nose and loss of taste" might be due to a local cause, and not to "something or other" in the blood? We feel certain that your nose is the organ at fault. You do not breathe through your nose, but through your mouth; therefore your mouth gets dry. The loss of taste and swollen feeling in your throat are secondary to some nasal condition, but it is difficult to say what that condition is without further details. Make a powder consisting of one tablespoonful each of borax, bicarbonate of soda, and chlorate of potash, and two teaspoonfuls of finely-powdered white sugar. Dissolve a teaspoonful of this powder in a tumblerful of tepid water, and use it as a wash for your nose and as a gargle for your throat. Do the best in your power to breathe through your nose and not through your mouth. "Does the taste ever go from any other cause excepting cold?" Most decidedly it does. Any disease of the nose may produce loss of taste.