

Our Farm Homes

May

'Tis May and early morning,
And the quietude unbroken
Of night is still unhush
By the mocking bird and thrush,
Whose songs, a half hour later,
Will fill the fragrant air
With blithe notes of thanksgiving,
In each sweet song of prayer.

Oh, it's just good to be living
On a morning such as this;
To feel the soft wind on your cheek
Soft as a mother's kiss.
And though your six-in-hand may be
A farmer's horse and cart,
You've this much in your favor—
You've got an early start.



Mrs. Hull's Outing

(Continued from last week)

Alas! for the vanity of human expectations. With the first streak of daylight a swarm of flies came in at the open window and buzzed in the faces of the sleepers, awaking Mr. and Mrs. Hull at once, though the children dozed unawakened.

"Hang these flies!" burst out Mr. Hull. I can't lay here and be chewed to death! I shall get up."

He rose and dressed, closed the shutters at the request of his wife, thus partially darkening the room, then went downstairs, where he found no one but the servants, who were cleaning the halls, so went out to see what he might on the streets. Mrs. Hull kept her place by the baby and fought the flies so the little one might sleep. The pain in her head had subsided, but her head felt tired and heavy from long continued overlooking and lack of sleep. After a while she rose and dressed, that she might be ready to dress the children when they awoke. But was the first to open his eyes, and just as she had him dressed, the breakfast bell rang loudly, and Mr. Hull came in.

"Breakfast's ready, Lorany," he said. "Let's you and I and Bub go down and eat while Sis and the baby are asleep."

"No," said Mrs. Hull, who had no desire to furnish diversion for the dining-room again, "you and Bub go down. When Sis is up, she and I will go while you stay with the baby."

A full hour passed before they came back. "Starve to death, Lorany!" asked Mr. Hull. "I thought to goodness I should starve before I got any breakfast." The family was finally breakfasted and now the day was before them for pleasure.

"If I only had old Dolly and the spring-board here, we could all go out riding," said Mr. Hull.

"Perhaps you could hire a team reasonable," suggested his wife, and he went out accordingly and visited several lively stables.

"It's no use, Lorany," he said, when he came back. "The cheapest thing I could get is a dollar an hour." "A dollar an hour!" gasped Mrs. Hull. "I hope you didn't hire one."

"Wal, I rather guess not! We'll go out walkin' a piece. I'll carry the baby."

It was a hot morning, dusty and sultry. Mrs. Hull had taken no parasol from home and the sun beat mercilessly into her face, which her little bonnet failed to protect in the least.

"Fity you hadn't taken your big hat along, or your slat sunbonnet," said Mr. Hull. "That bunnet don't do any good."

"I seem to see myself walking this street in my old big hat, or my slat sunbonnet!" retorted Mrs. Hull.

Mr. Hull's arms soon ached with the unaccustomed weight of the baby, and coming to a little park they all sat down in the shade to rest. The children led the baby up and down the walks for a while, till she was tired and cross.

"It's time for her nap," said Mrs. Hull. Let's go back to the hotel and I'll get her to sleep while you



The comfortable country home of the Hull family to which they were all glad to return after their city outing.

go walking with the others." The arrangement was carried into effect and Mrs. Hull, lying down by the baby, had the first restful sleep she had known since the day she began to prepare for the outing, until the others came in about noon and wakened them both. Mr. Hull was carrying his coat over his arm and the children were awestruck and cross, their faces and hands sticky and dirty to the last degree, for their father had treated them to candy.

"Alanson Hull!" ejaculated his wife, when she saw the sticky ruin wrought upon their clothes, "haven't I told you over and over again never to give the children candy when they were dressed up!"

"That was the only way I could keep 'em quiet on the street," he protested. "They were all cross as young bears." Mrs. Hull took them in hand and in due season had Bub ready to go down to dinner with his father, while she cleaned up Sis. She had learned that this was the most satisfactory way to take their messes, for as a family party they were quite too conspicuous. In fact, Mrs. Hull was learning several things; her horizon had perceptibly widened.

The afternoon was altogether too

warm for walking and the time dragged on their hands, though they tried to keep up the fiction that they were pleasuring and sat on the upper piazza watching the passers-by in the street below.

In the evening they attended the opera, which was a total disappointment to them all. It was hard dragging the little ones back the long way to the hotel after 11 o'clock, they were so sleepy and listless. "I wish I hadn't gone," whined Sis.

"Guess you wish so more'n I do," said Mr. Hull. "Hanged if I ever got so little for the money! I'd better throw it into the fire. Why! I've even rather hear Charity sing Balerna, and you know I was never very fond of her singing."

"I'm more tired than I've been a night all summer. This baby's monstrous heavy," groaned Mr. Hull. By the time the four children were put to bed Mrs. Hull was ready to wait to herself that she was never so tired after a day's work washing. She was even too tired to pay much heed to the mosquitoes, which flocked in again, or to mind the uncomfortable heat, but the early morning flies woke her and she felt a positive elation at her first conscious thought, "We're going home to-day!" Home never seemed so dear and pleasant before.

The train left at 8, so they ate a hurried breakfast as soon as they could get it at the hands of the dilatory waiter. Mr. Hull went to the

rolled it up and put it under her head.

"How good you are, Alanson," she said, when she awoke after a half hour's restful sleep and saw him sitting patiently by her keeping off the flies. "Where are the children?"

"They're at play out here in the shade. I can see them with one eye, while I watch for the flies with the other."

"Such a delicious sleep as I've had, even on this hard bench! Well, our outing is almost over."

"Yes it is, Lorany, and I've been thinking it over and it don't pay." "That's so, Alanson, it doesn't. I was foolish to try to take it so, but I've learned something this trip."

"It's cost us something, too; twenty dollars or more, besides the wear and tear. But never mind! We'll go home now. I get rested and as-tired when it comes cooler, we'll take old Dolly and the springboard and all go out to Jonas's and have a real good time."

And Alanson Hull absolutely bent over and kissed his wife, but there was no one in sight but the ticket collector who was discreetly looking the other way.

Planting Hardy Shrubs

As a general rule, the most effective way to plant shrubbery is in masses, with not too much variety in one group. Professor Bailey says: "The shrubbery masses should be placed on the boundaries, for it is a fundamental concept of landscape gardening that the center of a place should be open. In most places the mass or border planting should be the rule, and the isolated specimens the exception; but, unfortunately, the rule is reversed." It is easy to see conspicuous evidences of the truth of these statements in almost any suburban neighborhood in examples of good and poor arrangements.

Many planters seem to think it desirable to have a well-developed plant of as many varieties as possible for accommodation on the lawn in order that they may enjoy each plant individually as it passes through its varying change of foliage, flowering, fruitage and leaflessness throughout the year. Such an arrangement may be appropriate for an arboretum or trial grounds, and there are special charms in such a collection of shrubs as each successively comes into bloom. But as the blooming period of most shrubs is only from two to four weeks, the beauty of foliage hues, both in the greenness of Summer and in Autumn colorings, are an important consideration in arrangement of shrubbery groups. The introduction of bright colored foliage, such as golden elder, variegated euonymus, variegated weigela, purple-leaved plum and barberry, etc., is occasionally done very effectively, but more frequently the result is conspicuous blarney.

The handling of bright colored shrubs always requires a high degree of artistic skill, or the result will be displeasing to the most refined tastes, affording valuable object lessons to the student and gardener, but it is not the way to produce the most effective results in lawn arrangement.

To quote again from Professor Bailey's essay on shrubbery: "Plants scattered over a lawn destroy all appearance of the most refined in the place. Every part of the place is equally affected. The area has no meaning or individuality." The plants in masses do not spoil the lawn. The place is random."

In large grounds the shrubbery border should be composed of successive masses of different species, grouped together, followed by another harmonious group of another sort, the border of the two groups intersecting with each other. Let the selection from one variety to another be gradual—not too sudden—and let the

yourself." He pulled off his coat.