

With the Flowers

The Geranium.

With foliage at all times attractive, and flowers infinite in variety of color and marking, possessing at the same time the advantage of being especially easy of culture, and exceptionally free from insect pests or fungous diseases, little wonder is it that the geranium should, more than any other plant, recommend itself to the amateur floriculturist. However, as everyone knows, there are geraniums and geraniums. Here one sees tall, straggling plants, blessed with but few blossoms; there compact, bushy ones, laden with clusters of scarlet, or white or pink, an ornament to any table, a brightener to any room; all of which goes to show that, although the geranium will live under any treatment, it will smile only under the best.

Some people make the mistake of expecting the geranium to bloom all the year round, and so meet with disappointment. The best plan is to have two sets, one for summer and the other for winter blooming. For the summer set cuttings may be rooted early in spring—March is not too early—and for the winter set any time from June till August. The cuttings are very easily managed. The stubby side branches make the best ones, and may be started simply in the pot beside the parent plant, or in shallow boxes of sand, which, for geraniums, must not be kept too moist. When rooted, move the slips to small pots, and continue to shift from pot to pot, according as the roots reach the outside, until, at the last moving, the plants occupy pots six inches in diameter. Larger ones should never be used for geraniums, as too much root room will cause the plants to run to foliage and give but little bloom.

If you have old plants set out in the garden this summer, and wish to have them bloom again in the garden next year, simply take them up in the fall, cut them back sharply, and stow them away in the cellar for the winter, giving them very little water, so that they may obtain a complete rest. Or, if you choose, you may take the plants out of the pots and hang them up somewhere until spring. . . . If, on the contrary, you wish to have your old plants bloom during the winter, do not let any flowers come on them during the summer. Pinch off every bud resolutely, according as it appears; then, early in the fall, take the plants up and re-pot, so as to have them growing well in the house before the fires are started; otherwise the leaves will be likely to drop off. Let them flower all they will during the winter, and when spring comes cut them back, set them out in the garden as before, and repeat the process.

Sandy soil which is not too rich is best for geraniums, as overrich soil has a tendency to produce foliage rather than flowers. Watering should be done only when the soil appears quite dry, and, after the buds form, weak liquid manure may be given once a week. Frequent spraying to keep the leaves free from dust will be found very beneficial.

Don't despise the geranium as a "common" plant. If you have only been used to a few old-fashioned varieties, get a few of the newer kinds: Madame Bruant, for example, with its white, carmine-striped petals; the blotched Renome Lyonnaise; the scarlet-and-white Jean Sicily, or any of the other "choice" kinds kept by all florists. Give them plenty of fresh air and sunshine, and a little especial care, and then, and not until then, say whether you do or do not consider that the geranium is well worthy of being given a place in every home and prized all the home because of those qualities which have made it indeed the "Flower for the Million."



Grandma's House.

Strap up the trunks, the satchels lock;
The train goes north at seven o'clock,
And then we're off—a jolly flock—
For grandma's house in the country.

There's milk to skim and cream to churn,
There's hay to cut and rake and turn,
And brown our hands and faces burn
At grandma's house in the country.

There's water bubbling clear and cool,
And speckled trout in the shady pool,
And not one thought of books or school,
At grandma's house in the country.

And when it rains and skies are gray,
There's a big old attic made for play;
There are cookies, crisp with caraway,
At grandma's house in the country.

Each day is just brimful of joys;
When grandpa says, "Tut, tut, less
noise!"
Why, grandma smiles, "Boys will be
boys,"
At grandma's house in the country.

If you will go just once with me,
I'm sure you'll every one agree
'Tis the only place in the world to be—
At grandma's house in the country.

—Alice Allen.

A Lost Scolding.

One morning Benjy happened to reach the schoolhouse very early. The place was as still as a meeting house in the middle of the week. Benjy was not afraid exactly, but he felt rather lonesome and timid; for the little white schoolhouse was hidden from the village by a grove. To keep up his spirits, Benjy began

bounded back. This was much livelier, and he had entirely forgotten to feel lonesome, when the ball suddenly disappeared. There was a soft little thud inside the schoolroom, then a crash that in the quiet place sounded to Benjy as loud as a peel of thunder. One of the windows was down from the top and the little red ball had found its way through the narrow opening.

Benjy's first fear was that he had lost his ball, and then that some damage had been done in the schoolroom. He stood on tiptoe, and peeped through the window. On the teacher's desk was a vase lying on its side. The flowers that had been in it were scattered about, and the water was trickling in among the neatly-piled books. Benjy was really frightened now. He tried the door, but it was fastened; and he was too small a boy to climb through a window. He thought of running home to get out of sight of the mischief he had done; for how could he face the scolding that would come? But no one had seen the ball thrown. Perhaps Miss Berry would never find out who it was. Then the boy shut his hands together into two tight little fists, and ran down the road toward the village as fast as his feet could carry him. He met two or three boys going to school, but he did not stop when they shouted.

Miss Berry was shutting the gate behind her when a breathless little boy almost tumbled against her, crying: "Oh teacher! I spilled water all over your desk. Please hurry, and perhaps the books won't be spoiled."

When she learned what had happened she hurried on to rescue the books, leaving Benjy to follow more slowly. She had not scolded. "But she will when she has seen the books and has time to tend to me," he thought, ruefully.

As he entered the schoolroom there was a group about the desk, watching Miss Berry wiping off her books and putting them on a window-sill to dry in the sunshine.

"I know who did it," a little girl called out, suddenly, diving into a corner where she had caught sight of the bright ball. "This is Benjy Adams' ball, and he threw it in the window and tipped the vase over!"

She was triumphant over her discovery; but Miss Berry smiled at Benjy over the heads of her other scholars and said: "Yes, I know who did it—it was an honorable and truthful little boy who came straight to me with the story of his accident. There has been

no harm done, Benjy. Most of the water dripped to the floor, and the few books that are wet will dry and be as good as ever."

And that was all the scolding Benjy received.—[M. B. Beck, in Presbyterian Banner.

"Willie," said his mother, "I wish you would run across the street and see how old Mrs. Brown is this morning." A few minutes later Willie returned and reported: "Mrs. Brown says it's none of your business how old she is."

The Best Way.

"Cos I's a tell-tale I must stay
In this old corner till I say
I'm sorry that I touched the jam,
I just won't say it, but I am!
Now, if I'm sorry, don't you s'pose
The little birdie surely knows?
Why can't it tell a thing like that,
And do some good, the little tat?"

"See how my blouse is stained! Oh, dear,
I wish I could go 'way from here!
There's no use wriggling—mamma's word
Is always law. I wish that bird
Would come along; I can't stand this.
'I sorry, mamma!' Well that kiss
Was worth it. Now if birdie had
Told that time would I feel as glad?"
—Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

"Our Lady of the Snows."

By Rudyard Kipling.

A nation spoke to a nation,
A Queen sent word to a Throne,
"Daughter am I in my mother's house,
But mistress in my own.
The gates are mine to open,
As the gates are mine to close,
And I set my house in order,"
Said our Lady of the Snows.

"Neither with laughter or weeping,
Fear or the child's amaze,
Soberly under the White Man's law,
My white men go their ways.
Not for the Gentiles' clamor,
Insult or threat or blows—
Bow we the knee to Baal,"
Said our Lady of the Snows.

"My speech is clean and single,
I talk of common things—
Words of the wharf and the market-
place
And the ware the merchant brings.
Favor to those I favor,
But a stumbling-block to my foes,
Many 'there be that hate us,"
Said our Lady of the Snows.

"I called my chiefs to council
In the din of a troubled year:
For the sake of a sign ye would not see
And a word ye would not hear.
This is our message and answer,
This is the path we chose;
For we be also a people,"
Said our Lady of the Snows.

"Carry the word to my sisters,
To the Queens of the East and the
South.

I have proven faith in the heritage
By more than the word of mouth.
They that are wise may follow
Ere the world's war-trumpet blows,
But I—I am first in the battle,"
Said our Lady of the Snows.

"A nation spoke to a nation
A Queen sent word to a Throne,
Daughter am I in my mother's house,
But mistress in my own.
The gates are mine to open
As the gates are mine to close,
And I abide by my mother's house,"
Said our Lady of the Snows.

Humorous.

A LESSON IN PUNCTUATION.

A high-school girl said to her father the other night:
"Daddy, I've got a sentence here I'd like you to punctuate. You know something about punctuation, don't you?"
"A little," said her cautious parent, as he took the slip of paper she handed him.
This is what he read:
"A five-dollar bill flew around the corner."
He studied it carefully.
"Well," he finally said, "I'd simply put a period after it, like this."
"I wouldn't," said the high-school girl; "I'd make a dash after it."

Huntswill: "It seems that in all railroad accidents the first and last cars are always the ones that are injured." O'Rourke: "Shure, an' I wonder why they don't leave thim two cars off the thrain entotirely."

"There isn't very much to eat," said the Eskimo hostess, as she handed a candle to each guest, "just light refreshments."



The "Flower for the Million"

so play ball by himself. The ball he pulled from his pocket was a great wonder to all the school-children. It was of rubber, almost as light as a soap-bubble, and was a beautiful bright red in color. Such a ball had never been seen among the Sharon boys until this one came to Benjy from a cousin in the city.

He began by tossing and catching it, then he made it bound on the hard, smooth ground; but it was rather stupid to be playing alone. Then he tried to make the schoolhouse help him in his fun; and he threw the ball against the wall and up on the roof, catching it as it