

CREEPING PLANTS OF CEYLON.

At Topari the creeping plants are as beautiful as they are various. They cover the stems of the loftiest trees, shoot across the top branches, extending from branch to branch and from tree tree, over a continuous extent of wood; bordering the forest paths, roofing with verdure and bloom the entire thicket, completely shutting out the intense light and heat of the blazing sun—producing a profuse, varied and rich mass of the most luxurious green tints, the intense light shining through the transparent leaves; while their graceful tendrils hang in wreaths, festooning nature's loveliest arbors—drooping across in garlands of gorgeous blossom, red, yellow, purple, blue and white; some of them small and tiny, others as large as a peony rose, enclosing you within a thin partition of quivering leaves, through which the parrot and the humming bird are constantly fluttering, also the graceful ribbon bird, which is white, with a white tuft on the head, and two long feathers growing out of the tail, closely resembling the bird of paradise.—Some of those creeping plants are of large dimensions, and are called jungle-rope, being as thick, and as closely twisted as a cable, which it closely resembles.

LOVERS OF CANDIES BEWARE!

In an article in the "Household Words," we find the following statement:—"British confectionary contains plaster of Paris, chalk, starch, sulphate of barytes, bronze, copper leaf, leaf tin, arsenite of copper, carbonate of copper, verdigris, chromate of lead, orpiment, oxy-chloride of lead, read lead and vermilion. The minerals here named are all poisonous. Our bright yellow comfits contain a dangerous and insidious poison—chromate of lead, which is used also largely for giving the slight yellow tint to ginger lozenges. Let the British consumer who has often, during the winter season, a ginger lozenge in her mouth not be surprised at a slight failure in her health. The emerald green sugar plums and ornaments in sugar have been colored with a still more dangerous poison, arsenite of copper. Dr. Lethby states that to his knowledge, there has been several cases of fatal poisoning during three years, traced to the use of confectionary made and coloured in this country."

THE USES OF SLATE.

A few years ago, people who knew nothing of slate but as a material to roof houses with and do sums upon, were charmed to find it could be made to serve for so large a thing as a billiard table. For billiard tables there is nothing like slate, so perfectly level and smooth as it is. Then fishmongers found there was nothing like slate for their slabs (till they are rich enough to buy marble); and farmers' wives discovered the same thing in regard to their dairies. Plumbers then began to declare that there was nothing like slate for cisterns and sinks; and builders, noticing this tried slate for the pavement of washhouses, pantries, and kitchens, and for cottage floors; and they have long declared that there is nothing like it; it is so clean, and dries so quickly. If so,

thought the ornamental gardener, it must be the very thing for garden chairs, summer houses, sundials, and tables in arbours; and it is the very thing. The stonemason was equally pleased with it for gravestones. "Then," said the builder again, when perplexed with complaints of a damp wall in an exposed situation, "why should not a wall be slated as well as a roof, if it wants it as much?" So he tried; and in mountain districts, where one end of the house is exposed to beating rains, we see that end as sealy as a fish—slated like its own roof. Thus it is with small houses erected for the business at the quarry in Valencia; the steps leading up to them are of slate; and the path before the door are paved with slate. We look in upon the steam engine, and we observe that the fittings of the engine house are all of slate, so that no dust can lodge and no damp can enter.—*Dickens's Household Words.*

EXPANDING THE CHEST.

Those in easy circumstances, or those who pursue sedentary employment within doors, use their lungs but little, breathe but little air in the chest and thus, independently of positions, contract a wretchedly small chest and lay the foundation for the loss of health and beauty. All this can be perfectly obviated by a little attention to the matter of breathing. Recollect the lungs are like a bladder in their construction, and can stretch open to double their size with perfect safety, giving a noble chest and perfect immunity from consumption. The agent, and only agent required, is the common air we breathe; supposing, however, that no obstacle exists, external to the chest, such as twinning it around with stays, or having the shoulders lie upon it. On rising from your bed in the morning, place yourself in an erect posture, with your shoulders entirely off from the chest, then inhale all the air you can, so as to fill your chest to the very bottom, so that no more air can be got in; then hold your breath, and throw your arms off behind—hold your breath as long as possible. Repeat these long breaths as many times as you please. Done in a cold room is much better, because the air is much denser, and will act much more powerfully in expanding the chest. Exercising the chest in this manner it will become flexible and expandible, and will enlarge the capacity and size of the lungs.—*Scientific American.*

COUCH OR TWITCH GRASS.

There are three or four conditions in which it does not seem to thrive. It appears, nevertheless, to possess strong assimilative powers; for on soils too poor for wheat or oats it will be the most luxuriant; and when both co-exist in a soil decidedly unequal to the production of both, the couch will eat out the corn. These powers seem to come into operation soon after harvest in a still more vigorous degree; for it seeds at harvest, and, unlike the wheat plant, continues to live under ground, spreading ten thousand filaments in every direction. Now though it prefers a porous soil, still it must have root hold, and if disturbed in autumn immediately after harvest, it never