



### The Asparagus.

Those who have never tried to pot asparagus have no idea of the satisfaction there is in possessing a few of these dainty plants. Many flowering plants are not especially beautiful, except during a period of bloom. The asparagus, whose glory is its foliage, is beautiful at all times. It may be placed in the same order of usefulness with palms, ferns, rubber plants, araucarias, umbrella plants, and rex begonias, but, although sometimes called "asparagus fern," it is not a fern. Neither does it resemble very closely in appearance the well-known asparagus of the vegetable garden. The color of the foliage in all the varieties is a vivid green. In the variety, "plumosus," the leaves spread out from the slender stems in delicate, lacelike fronds, whose feathery divisions are much finer than those of the most finely pinnatifid ferns. In asparagus sprengeri, the foliage is not so fine, but the branches grow very rapidly, spreading and drooping until a veritable mantle of green falls about the pot, often to a length of three or four feet; hence, the situation which pleases asparagus sprengeri best is on a bracket from which its branches may droop at their own sweet will. This variety also has the advantage of being suited with any situation, so long as the light is good. It does not object to sunshine, but will grow just as well without it in a northern window, or in an eastern one, where it can only get a glint of sunlight in the forenoon. Asparagus plumosus always does better in a northern situation. Asparagus will grow nicely from seed. Plant the seed in shallow boxes, and keep the soil moist and warm. They usually germinate in about three weeks; in less time if you have taken the precaution to soak them for three or four hours in lukewarm water. Transplant the young plants when ready to small pots, and shift from these just as soon as the roots fill the pots. Give plenty of water, put on some liquid manure once a week, and keep the foliage clean by sprinkling well every day. In the summer, the asparagus is the better for being rested for a while. Simply set it in a cool, shady place, say in June, and leave it there, giving it very little water until August, when it should be repotted, and its water rations increased. Asparagus plumosus nanus, which has deep roots, should, as it grows older, be shifted to deep pots.

FLORA FERNLEAF.

"Farmer's Advocate" office, London, Ont.

### Androcles and the Lion.

Androcles is said to have been a Roman slave, who fled from a cruel master and took refuge in a cave. While there he saw a lion approaching. He feared lest he should be slain. But as the lion came nearer, Androcles saw that the beast was limping. He seemed to be in great pain. Androcles plucked up his courage and took up the lion's paw. From it he extracted a large thorn, which had caused the flesh to fester. The lion seemed most grateful and showed its pleasure by fawning upon its benefactor. The story tells us that later, when Androcles was taken prisoner and sent to Rome to be delivered up to the wild beasts, a lion was set loose to devour him. It was the same lion that Androcles had relieved in his agony. The animal remembered with gratitude his deliverer, and instead of springing on him to devour him, he went up to him and fawned upon him. Appian declares that he witnessed with his own eyes the scene between Androcles and the lion in the Roman circus.

### Something Each Day.

Something each day—a smile,  
It is not much to give,  
And the little gifts of life  
Make sweet the days we live.  
The world has weary hearts  
That we can bless and cheer,  
And a smile for every day  
Makes sunshine all the year.

Something each day—a word,  
We cannot know its power;  
It grows in fruitfulness  
As grows the gentle flower,  
What comfort it may bring,  
Where all is dark and drear,  
For a kind word each day  
Makes pleasant all the year.

Something each day—a thought,  
Unselfish, good and true,  
That aids another's need  
While we our way pursue;  
That seeks to lighten hearts,  
That leads to pathways clear;  
For a helpful thought each day  
Makes happy all the year.

Something each day—a deed,  
Of kindness and of good,  
To link in close bonds  
All human brotherhood,  
Oh, thus the heavenly will  
We all may do while here;  
For a good deed every day  
Makes blessed all the year.

—George Cooper.

### The First Plowing.

By Charles G. D. Roberts.

Calls the crow from the pine-tree top  
When the April air is still.  
He calls to the farmer hitching his team  
In the farmyard under the hill.  
"Come up," he cries, "come out and  
come up,  
For the high field's ripe to till!  
Don't wait for word from the dandelion,  
Or leave from the daffodil."

Whistles the highhole out of the grove  
His summoning loud and clear:  
"Chilly it may be down your way,  
But the high south field has cheer,  
On the sunward side of the chestnut  
stump  
The wood-grubs wake and appear:  
Come out to your plowing—come up to  
your plowing—  
The time for plowing is here."

Then dips the colter and drives the share,  
And the furrows faintly steam.  
The crow drifts furtively down from the  
pine  
To follow the clanking team.  
The flycatcher tumbles; the highhole  
darts  
In the young noon's yellow gleam.  
And wholesome sweet the smell of the  
soil  
Upturned from its winter's dream.

### Humorous.

"I'm free to admit," remarked Farmer Cornstossel, "that I won't never git through demandin' more prosperity."  
"But you are in comfortable circumstances. What do you mean by prosperity?"  
"There's jes' the difficulty. It means somethin' different fur everybody. Ef you've got a mortgage, 'prosperity's' gettin' it paid off. Ef ye've got it paid, 'prosperity's' ownin' a cabinet organ. Ef ye've got a cabinet organ, 'prosperity's' havin' enough to be able to trade it in fur a grand pie-anno—an' so on, without no limit whatsoever."

It was at an open-air meeting in a village near Exeter that a well-known speaker was holding forth.  
"Men!" he shouted, "what we want and what we are going to get is free land. We want the land for the people, Free land, men, we want, and we are going to have free land."  
Just then a large piece of earth landed on the speaker's eye, and while he was removing the clod a voice yelled out:  
"There's a bit of Devonshire to begin with!"

### For Tender Feet.

Old shoes are not all they are cracked up to be. When the soles are worn down, paper thin, there is no more prolific source of callous places under the ball of the foot. Cobblestones, hot concrete, inequalities in the pavement—every trifling circumstance that, were the feet well shod, would be passed unnoticed, bruise and irritate the feet through the thin soles.

Cheap shoes are quite as bad. A cheap sole soon gets full of humps and hollows, or it warps, or sometimes cracks into a deep ridge across, producing immense discomfort to the foot inside. Sometimes a good, perfectly new shoe will produce a welt across the foot above the toes. It may be a wrinkle in the lining, or in the shoe itself, but the result is pretty much the same in either case. If the shoe store or cobbler cannot remedy the trouble, try taking a small piece of soft white felt, pare down the edges as thin as possible, and place it inside the stockings over the welt.

If a foot is aching or smarting badly after one has walked or stood a lot, relief may be obtained by plunging it for a few minutes in hot water in which a handful of salt has been dissolved. Then cool the water off gradually till it is quite cold. Moderately warm water to which a little ammonia has been added is also immensely restful to tired, hot feet.

The nails of the toes stand in just as much need of careful, systematic cutting as do the finger nails. Some people, you know, let them go till they wear holes through their stockings, and then they complain about the miserable, flimsy way they make stockings these days. Cut the nails twice a week regularly, and cut them straight across, not rounding. To allow a nail to grow long is to tempt Providence, for it runs the risk of being pressed into the skin, and it may take you weeks to overcome the pain and trouble caused by that trifling neglect.

### Advice.

Do not "kick" about the weather!  
It won't change conditions whether  
You are satisfied or not.  
If each day you find it raining,  
Don't waste any time complaining,  
Just be glad it isn't hot.

If it's hot, try not to mind it,  
Just be cheerful. You will find it  
To be far the safer rule.  
Fussing will not make it better.  
Everybody hates a fretter.  
Kicking never makes you cool.

Take what comes, and just enjoy it:  
Don't let discontent alloy it:  
It's the wisest thing to do.  
Try this plan I've given thought to,  
If it helps you, as it ought to,  
Maybe I will try it, too.

—Somerville Journal.

### Humorous.

More men than horses have been spoiled by having too many ancestors.

Applicant—"Oid'd like a job wid ye, sorr." Foreman—"Well, I don't know. There isn't much doing just at present. I don't think I could keep you busy." Applicant (reassuringly)—"Indade, sorr, it 'ull take very little to kape me busy."

Teacher—"Have animals a capacity for affection?"

Class—"Yes, nearly all."

Teacher—"Now, what animal possesses the greatest attachment for man?"

Little Girl—"Woman!"



### TRADE TOPIC.

"Economies in Dairy Farming" is the title of a seventy-page volume, by Ernest Mathews, the English dairy authority, who has tested and closely studied over 1,500 cows. The work includes an exhaustive discussion on the characteristics of dairy cattle, with very many excellent illustrations of different types of cows, peculiarities of the udder, etc. Country Life are the publishers, and the illustrations and typography are characteristic of the excellent work of this splendid magazine. The selling price of this volume is \$2, through this office.

### A Woman's Sympathy.

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