

## OPEN LETTERS.

in a cool greenhouse, or room, near the glass (the air of the living room of a dwelling is too hot and dry), and the foliage sprayed daily until the buds burst.

After blooming, pick off the seed-pods, and when danger of freezing is past, plunge the pot in full exposure to the sun, with coal ashes beneath to prevent the work of earth-worms. Pinch back straggling growths to keep the

head symmetrical, and spray freely every day during hot dry weather, with a decided under-cut.

The above treatment should place the plant in original export condition, and if wintered in a cool moist atmosphere, well aired, and sprayed on bright days, the results of the first season may be repeated; after which treat as before, transferring to a larger pot if needed.

H. H. GROFF.

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### Nelumbium luteum.

SIR,—In mentioning the *Nelumbium luteum* in November number, a very important habitat, viz., shores of Lake Érie, Province of Ontario, was omitted. *N. spectiosum* is naturalized in ponds in New Jersey.

J. M. D., Hamilton.

### A Glimpse of Spring.

SIR,—On the 11th day of February, I picked my first Snowdrops. What wonderful little flowers, for, about the 11th of January, the ground was bare and not a sign of growth; then came eight inches of snow, and under that mantle the little plants first made a growth of leaves about one inch in height, and then a little tender green stem starts up, carrying with it a small drooping bud, and as it forces its way through the snow the bud increases in size, till the stem is about three inches long; by that time the bud is as white as the snow, something in the shape of a small hazel nut. In a short time after they were placed in water, each flower burst open, perfect emblems of modesty and purity. Dear readers, if you have no Snowdrops in your gardens, do not let next fall go by without planting out a few dozen bulbs.

C. J. F., South London..

### The Florida Velvet Bean.

SIR,—I send you herewith sample of the new Florida product—the wonderful Velvet Bean. Up to two years ago it was grown

here in a limited way, mainly as a trellis shade; but afterwards, it being discovered that it was invaluable for all kinds of stock as a forage, and a phenomenal fertilizer for Orange and other fruit trees, and for the soil as well, it has been grown in a larger way since that.

There is nothing yet discovered that is all in all, so valuable a crop as this, for farmers to raise. It being an air plant it will do well in most any kind of soil, in any of the States, north or south, that will grow corn, and no fertilizing is necessary. The forage—the foliage and vine—coming from this bean is a marvel and a wonder.

To plant in rows four feet apart will produce a solid mass of vine and foliage to the depth of fifteen to twenty inches, covering the entire surface of the ground.

Beside the vine being a valuable fertilizer, forage, shade and mulch, you will ask, Is it also prolific in fruit? I answer, Yes, emphatically so. From the hill the vine runs out in all directions like the watermelon, ten to twenty feet. It begins to fruit at the hill like the raisin grape, thence along the entire length of the vines at intervals of ten to twenty inches, pods in clusters of from ten to twenty appear. Therefore the fruitage must be immense.

From twenty to thirty bushels of shelled beans is a modest estimate, from an acre of ground, average crop. I speak from experience, as I have just harvested nineteen acres of as fine a crop as ever grew.

Plant early in spring in rows four feet apart, or drill in furrow, and cover with plow, as you like. From three to five beans to the hill is the right amount of seed. If drill and cover with third or fourth furrow, put in sixteen quarts to the acre. Cultivate and keep clean until vine begins to fill the