

HOME CIRCLE.

SWEET HERBS.

We do not grow many of the so-called sweet herbs in this country. Sage is, perhaps, the leading plant of this group found in the Canadian farm garden. The sage plant is so named because, in olden days it was thought the leaves of this aromatic herb, when eaten, strengthened the mental faculties, and therefore made people sage.

The sage plant can be propagated early by cuttings, but many find it more convenient to grow it from seed. Sage seed is quite apt to be poor and should be tested before sowing. It is best to prepare the soil in the fall for the next spring's sowing. The seed can go into the ground so soon as it can be worked. A light exposed spot is best for growing sage, but the soil should be rich. The seed is sown in rows, wide enough apart for handy cultivation with the hoe. The crop is ready as soon as the plant is in full flower. Tie the plants in bunches and sell green; or, if the market is distant, let the sage dry and ship when convenient.

Thyme is another sweet herb similar to sage, and needs nearly the same treatment in growth. Mr. Joseph Harris writes: If preferred, the seed may be sown where the plants are intended to remain. Sow in rows twenty-one inches apart, and drill in seed as shallow as possible, dropping three or four seeds to each inch of row. It will be necessary to mix the seed with three or four times its bulk of fine, dry sand, or the drill will sow it too thick. The plants of thyme are cured the same as for sage.

Summer Savory.—The seed may be sown in a window-box, and the plants set out in early spring. The plants will usually be of good size if the seed is sown in open ground. The further culture is much the same as thyme.

Sweet Marjoram does not bear transplanting well, and it is better to sow a plenty of the seed, and thin out to six inches in the row.

Rosemary needs to be in hills, fifteen inches each way.

Coriander is easily grown and the young leaves are good for salads. A light soil is best.

Fennel is much like coriander, and, like it, easily grown.

Rue is an old-time sweet herb. The seed may be sown in rows eighteen inches apart, and the second year every alternate plant transplanted with a plenty of earth.

Anise is grown in much the same way without the thinning recommended for Rue.

Caraway is familiar as flavouring seeds mixed in the cakes, etc. The leaves are also used in soups and salads. This plant is cultivated like the coriander.

Lavender is grown for the delicate perfume it possesses, and is largely used by tobacco manufacturers. Much of that now used is imported, we are informed, and it would seem that here is a plant deserving more at the hands of the American herb-growers. The plants may be grown from seed, propagated by cuttings. Sow the seed in a window-box, and set in open ground when warm weather comes, setting the plants about twenty inches apart each way. The stems are cut from the

bushes when in flower, tied in bundles and dried. The dried flowers and leaves when placed among clothing give it a pleasing odour.

AN APRIL GIRL.

The girl that is born on an April day
Has a right to be merry, lightsome, gay;
And that is the reason I dance and play
And frisk like a mote in a sunny ray,—
Wouldn't you
Do it, too,

If you had been born on an April day?

The girl that is born on an April day
Has also a right to cry, they say;
And so I sometimes do give way
When things get crooked or all astray—
Wouldn't you
Do it, too,

If you had been born on an April day?

The girls of March love noise and fray;
And sweet as blossoms are girls in May;
But I belong to the time mid-way,—
And so I rejoice in a sunny spray
Of smiles and tears and hap-a-day,—
Wouldn't you
Do it, too,

If you had been born on an April day?

Heigho! and hurrah! for an April day,
Its cloud, its sparkle, its skip and stay!
I mean to be happy whenever I may,
And cry when I must; for that's my way.
Wouldn't you
Do it, too,

If you had been born on an April day?

—Mary Mapes Dodge; *St. Nicholas* for April.

HOW TACKS ARE MADE.

Described in a few words, the process of making tacks is as follows: The iron, as received from the rolling mills, is in sheets from three inches to twelve inches wide, and from three feet to nine feet in length, the thickness varying according to the kind of work into which it is to be made, from one-eighth to one thirty-second of an inch. These sheets are all cut into about three-foot pieces, and by immersion in acid cleaned of the hard outside flinty scale. They are then chopped into strips of a width corresponding to the length of the nail or tack required.

Supposing the tack to be cut is an eight-ounce carpet tack, the strip of iron as chopped and ready for the machine, would be about eleven-sixteenths of an inch thick, and three feet long. This piece is placed firmly in the feeding apparatus, and by this arrangement carried between the knives of the machine.

At each revolution of the balance wheel the knives cut off a small piece from the end of this plate. The piece cut off is pointed at one end, and square for forming the head at the other. It is then carried between two dies by the action of the knives and these dies coming together form the body of the tack under the head. Enough of the iron projects beyond the face of the dies to form the head, and, while held firmly by them, a lever strikes this projecting piece into a round head. This, as we have said before, is all done during one revolution of the balance wheel, and the knives, as soon as the tack drops from the machine, are ready to cut off another piece. These machines are run at the rate of about 250 revolutions per minute. The shoe-nails machines for cutting headless shoe-nail are run at about 500 revolutions per minute, and cut from three to five nails at each revolution. When we think of the number of machines being now run in the United States, viz., about 1,700, and of the quantity of tacks and nails they can produce, it is as

much a mystery where they go as it is what becomes of the pins.

The tack maker of fifty or sixty years ago worked as follows: He took a small rod of iron, and after heating it in a charcoal fire, hammered it down so as to make a point, then a small piece was cut off, placed in a vice worked by foot power, and the head formed by a few blows of the hammer.—*Scottish American Journal*.

WHY HE REFORMED.

There was a drunkard in Arkansas town who became a sober man through a kind Providence granting him what Burns longed for:

"Oh wad some power the gife gie us,
To see oursel as ithers see us!"

One day several acquaintances, on asking him to drink, were surprised to hear him say, "You must excuse me, gentlemen, for I can't drink anything." To their question, "What is the matter with you?" he said:

"I'll tell you. The other day I met a party of friends. When I left them I was about half drunk. I would not have stopped at this, but my friends had to hurry away to catch a train.

"To a man of my temperament, to be half drunk is a most miserable condition, for the desire for more is so strong that he forgets his self-respect in his efforts to get more to drink.

"Failing at the saloons, I remembered that there was a half-pint of whiskey at home, which had been purchased for medicinal purposes.

"Just before reaching the gate I heard voices in the garden, and looking over the fence I saw my little son and daughter playing. 'No, you be ma,' said the boy, 'and I'll be pa. Now you sit here an' I'll come in drunk. Wait now till I fill my bottle.'

"He took a bottle, ran away, and filled it with water. Pretty soon he returned and entering the play-house, nodded idiotically at the little girl and sat down without saying anything. Then the girl looked up from her work and said:

"James, why will you do this way?"

"Whizzer way?" he replied.

"Gettin' drunk."

"Who's drunk?"

"You are, an' you promised when the baby died that you wouldn't drink any more. The children are almost ragged, an' we haven't anything to eat hardly, but you still throw your money away. Don't you know you're breakin' my heart?"

"I hurried away. The acting was too life-like. I could think of nothing all day but those little children playing in the garden, and I vowed that I would never take another drink, and I will not, so help me God!"

LAND-BIRDS IN MID-OCEAN.

The appearance of some of the smaller varieties of migratory birds, such as sparrows, swallows, doves, etc., several hundred miles away from the nearest land is by no means an unusual occurrence on the ocean. About these little erratic visitors there are some curious and interesting facts. Their appearance is almost always one at a time, though I have known a considerable number, repre-