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EDITORIAL 386

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"At that instant, one glance at Aunt Ellen Leslie's fine face, framed in the winter firelight, which grew brighter as the checkerboard window beside her slowly darkened, would have revealed to the veriest tyro why the Doctor's patients liked best to call her 'Aunt' Ellen."



The Christmas Prodigal



Any man or woman . . . that can give any knowledge, or tel any tidings, of an old, old, very old gray-bearded gentleman, called Christmas, who was wont to be a verie familiar guest, and visite all sorts of people, both pore and rich, . . . and had ringing feasts and jollitie in all places . . . for his coming . . . whosoever can tel what is become of him, or where he may be found, let them bring him back againe!

Old English tract, 1645



BY LEONA DALRYMPLE

POLLY, the Doctor's old white mare, plodded slowly along the snowy country road by the picket fence, and turned in at the snow-capped posts. Ahead, roofed with the ragged ermine of a newly-fallen snow, the Doctor's old-fashioned house loomed gray-white through the snow-fringed branches of the trees, a quaint iron lantern, which was picturesque by day and luminous and cheerful by night, hanging within the square, white-pillared portico at the side. That the many-paned, old-fashioned window on the right framed the snow-white head of Aunt Ellen Leslie, the Doctor's wife, the old Doctor himself was comfortably aware—for his kindly eyes missed nothing.

He could have told you with a reflective stroke of his snow-white beard that the snow had stopped but an hour since, and that now through the white and heavy lacery of branches to the west glowed the flame-gold of a winter sunset, glinting ruddily over the box-bordered brick walk, the orchard and the comfortable barn which snugly housed his huddled cattle; that the grasslands to the south were thickly blanketed in white; that beyond in the evergreen forest the stately pines and cedars were marvelously draped and coiffed in snow. For the old Doctor loved these things of Nature as he loved the peace and quiet of his home.

So, as he turned in at the driveway and briskly resigned the care of Polly to old Asher, his seamed and wrinkled helper, the Doctor's eyes were roving now to a corner, snug beneath a tattered rug of snow, where by summer Aunt Ellen's petunias and phlox and larkspur grew—and now to the rose-bushes ridged in down, and at last to his favorite winter nook, a thicket of black alders freighted with a wealth of berries. How crimson they were amid the white quiet of the garden! And the brightly colored fruit of the barberry flamed forth from a snowy bush like the cheerful elf-lamps of a wood-gnome.

There was equal cheer and color in the old-fashioned sitting-room to which the Doctor presently made his way, for a wood fire roared with a winter gleam and crackle in the fireplace and Aunt Ellen Leslie rocked slowly back and forth by the window with a letter in her hand.

"Another letter!" exclaimed the Doctor, warming his hands before the blazing log. "God bless my soul, Ellen, we're becoming a nuisance to Uncle Sam!" But for all the brisk cheeriness of his voice he was furtively aware that Aunt Ellen's brown eyes were a little tearful, and presently crossing the room to her side, he gently drew the crumpled letter from her hand and read it.

"So John's not coming home for Christmas either, eh?" he said at last. "Well, now, that is too bad! Now, now, *now*, mother," as Aunt Ellen surreptitiously wiped her glasses, "we should feel

proud to have such busy children. There's Ellen and Margaret and Anne with a horde of youngsters to make a Christmas for, and John—bless your heart, Ellen, *there's* a busy man! A broker now is one of the very busiest of men! And what with John's kiddies and his beautiful society wife and that grand Christmas eve ball he mentions—why—" the Doctor cleared his throat,—"why, dear me, it's not to be wondered at, say I! And Philip and Howard—busy as—as—as architects and lawyers usually are at Christmas," he finished lamely. "As for Ralph—" the Doctor looked away—"well, Ralph hasn't spent a Christmas home since college days."

"It will be the first Christmas we ever spent without some of them home," ventured Aunt Ellen, biting her lip courageously, whereupon the old Doctor patted her shoulder gently with a cheery word of advice.

Now, there was something in the touch of the old Doctor's broad and gentle hand that always soothed, wherefore Aunt Ellen presently wiped her troublesome glasses again and bravely tried to smile, and the Doctor making a vast and altogether cheerful to-do about turning the blazing log, began a brisk description of his day. It had ended, professionally, at a lonely little house in the heart of the forest, which Jarvis Hildreth, dying but a scant year since, had bequeathed to his orphaned children, Madge and Roger.

"And, Ellen," finished the Doctor, soberly, "there he sits by the window, day by day, poor lame little lad!—staring away so wistfully at the forest, and Madge, bless her brave young heart!—she bastes and stitches and sews away, all the while weaving him wonderful yarns about the pines and cedars to amuse him—all out of her pretty head, mind you! A lame brother and a passion for books—" said the Doctor shaking his head, "a poor inheritance for the lass. They worry me a lot, Ellen, for Madge looks thin and tired, and to-day—" the Doctor cleared his throat, "I think she had been crying."

"Crying!" exclaimed Aunt Ellen, her kindly brown eyes warm with sympathy. "Dear, dear!—And Christmas only three days off! Why, John, dear, we must have them over here for Christmas. To be sure! And we'll have a tree for little Roger and a Christmas masquerade and such a wonderful Christmas altogether as he's never known before!" And Aunt Ellen, with the all-embracing motherhood of her gentle heart aroused, fell to planning a Christmas for Madge and Roger Hildreth that would have gladdened the heart of the Christmas saint himself.

Face aglow, the old Doctor bent and patted his wife's wrinkled hand.



"Why, Ellen," he confessed, warmly, "it's the thing I most desired! Dear me, it's a very strange thing indeed, my dear, how often we seem to agree. I'll hitch old Billy to the sleigh and go straight after them now while Annie's getting supper!" And at that instant one glance at Aunt Ellen Leslie's fine old face, framed in the winter firelight which grew brighter as the checkerboard window beside her slowly purpled, would have revealed to the veriest tyro why the Doctor's patients liked best to call her "Aunt" Ellen.

So, with a violent jingle of sleigh-bells, the Doctor presently shot forth again into the white and quiet world, and as he went, gliding swiftly past the ghostly spruces by the roadside, oddly enough, despite his cheerful justification to Aunt Ellen, he was fiercely rebelling at the defection of his children. John and his lovely wife might well have foregone their fashionable ball. And Howard and Philip—their holiday-keeping Metropolitan clubs were shallow artificialities surely compared with a home-keeping reunion about the Yule log. As for the children of Anne and Ellen and Margaret—well, the Doctor could just tell those daughters of his that their precious youngsters liked a country Christmas best—he *knew* they did! It was not the complex, steam-heated hot-houses off-shoot of that rugged flower of simpler times when homes were further apart that they would prefer, but

a country Christmas of keen, crisp cold and merry sleigh-bells, of rosy cheeks and snow-balls, of skating on the Deacon's pond and a jubilant hour after around the blazing wood-fire: a Christmas, in short, such as the old Doctor himself knew and loved, of simplicity and sympathy and home heartiness!

And then—there was Ralph—but here the Doctor's face grew very stern. Wild tales came to him at times of this youngest and most gifted of his children—tales of intemperate living interlarded with occasional tales of brilliant surgical achievement on the staff of St. Michael's. For the old Doctor had guided the steps of his youngest son to the paths of medicine with a great hope, long abandoned.

Ah—well! The Doctor sighed, abruptly turning his thoughts to Madge and Roger. They at least should know the heart-glow of a real Christmas! A masquerade party of his neighbors Christmas eve perhaps such as Aunt Ellen had suggested, and a Yule-log—but now it was, in the midst of his Christmas plans, that a daring notion flashed temptingly through the Doctor's head, was banished with a shrug and flashed again, whereupon with his splendid capacity for prompt decision the Doctor suddenly wheeled old Billy about and went sleighing in considerable excitement into the village whence a host of night-telegrams went singing over the busy wires to startle eventually a slumbering

conscience or so. And presently when the doctor drew up with a flourish before the lonely little house among the forest pines, his earlier depression had vanished.

So with a prodigious stamping of snow from his feet and a cheerful wave of his mittened hand to the boy by the window, the doctor bustled cheerily indoors and with kindly eyes averted from the single tell-tale sauce-pan upon the fire, over which Madge Hildreth had bent with sudden color, fell to bustling about with a queer lump in his throat and talking ambiguously of Aunt Ellen's Christmas orders, painfully conscious that the girl's dark face had grown pitifully white and tense and that Roger's wan little face was glowing. And when the fire was damped by the doctor himself, and his Christmas guests hustled into dazed, protesting readiness, the doctor deftly muffled the thin little fellow in blankets and gently carried him out to the waiting sleigh with arms that were splendid and sturdy and wonderfully reassuring.

"There, there, little man!" he said cheerfully, "we've not hurt the poor lame leg once, I reckon. And now we'll just help Sister Madge blow out the lamp and lock the door and be off to Aunt Ellen!"

But, strangely enough, the doctor halted abruptly in the doorway and turned his kindly eyes away to the shadowy pines. And Sister Madge, on her knees by Roger's bed, sobbing and praying in an agony of relief, presently blew out the lamp herself and wiped her eyes. For nights among the whispering pines are sleepless and long when work is scarce and Christmas hovers with cold, forbidding eyes over the restless couch of a dear and crippled brother.

II.

Round the doctor's house frolicked the brisk, cold wind of a Christmas eve, boister-



Under the roof, heavy with the ragged ermine of the newly fallen snow, the Doctor's old house looked gray through the snow-fringed branches of the trees



The Christmas House & Garden



ously rattling the luminous checkerboard windows and the Christmas wreaths, tormenting the cheerful flame in the old iron lantern and whisking away the snow from the shivering elms, whistling eerily down the doctor's chimney to startle a strange little cripple by the doctor's fire, who, queerly enough, would not be startled.

For to Roger there had never been a wind so Christmasy, or a fire so bright and warm, and his solemn black eyes glowed! Never a wealth of holly and barberry and alder-berries so crimson as that which rimmed the snug old house in Christmas flame! Never such evergreen wreaths, for, tucked up here in this very chair by Aunt Ellen, he had made them all himself of boughs from the evergreen forest! And never surely such enticing odors as had floated out for the last two days from old Annie's pots and pans as she baked and roasted and boiled and stewed in endless preparation for Christmas day and the Christmas eve party, scolding away betimes in indignant whispers at Old Asher, who, by reason of a chuckling air of mystery, was in perpetual disgrace.

Wonderful days indeed for Roger, with Sister Madge's smooth, pale cheeks catching the flaring scarlet of the holly, and Sister Madge's slim and willing fingers so busy hanging boughs that she had forgotten to sigh; with motherly Aunt Ellen so warmly intent upon Roger's comfort and plans for the masquerade that many a mysterious and significant occurrence slipped safely by her kindly eyes; and with the excited doctor's busy sleigh jingling so hysterically about on secret errands and his kindly face so full of boyish mystery that Roger, with the key to all this Christmas intrigue locked safely in his heart, had whispered a shy little warning in the culprit's attentive ear.

And presently—Roger caught his breath and furtively eyed the grandfather's clock, ticking boastfully through a welter of holly—presently it would be time for the doctor's masquerade, and later, when the clock struck twelve and the guests unmasked, that great surprise which the doctor had planned so carefully by telegram!

But now from the kitchen came the sound of the doctor singing;

"Come bring with a noise,
My merry, merry boys,
The Christmas log to the firing!"

Roger clapped his thin little hands with a cry of delight, for old Asher and the doctor were bringing in the Yule-log to light it presently with the charred remains of the Christmas log of a year ago. To-morrow another Yule-log would crackle and blaze and shower on the hearth, for the old doctor moulded a custom to suit his fancy. And here was Annie splendidly aproned in white, following them in, and Aunt Ellen in a wonderful old brown-gold brocade disinterred for the doctor's party from a lavender-sweet cedar chest in the garret. And Sister Madge!—Roger stared—radiant in old-fashioned crimson satin and holly, colorful foils indeed for her night-black hair and eyes! As for the doctor himself, Roger now began to realize that with his powdered wig, his satin breeches and gaily-flowered waistcoat—to say nothing of silken hose and silver buckles—he was by far the most gorgeous figure of them all!

"I," said the doctor presently, striking the burning Yule-log until the golden sparks flew out, "I charge thee, log, to burn out old wrongs

and heart-burnings!" and then, in accordance with a cherished custom of his father's he followed the words with a wish for the good of his household.

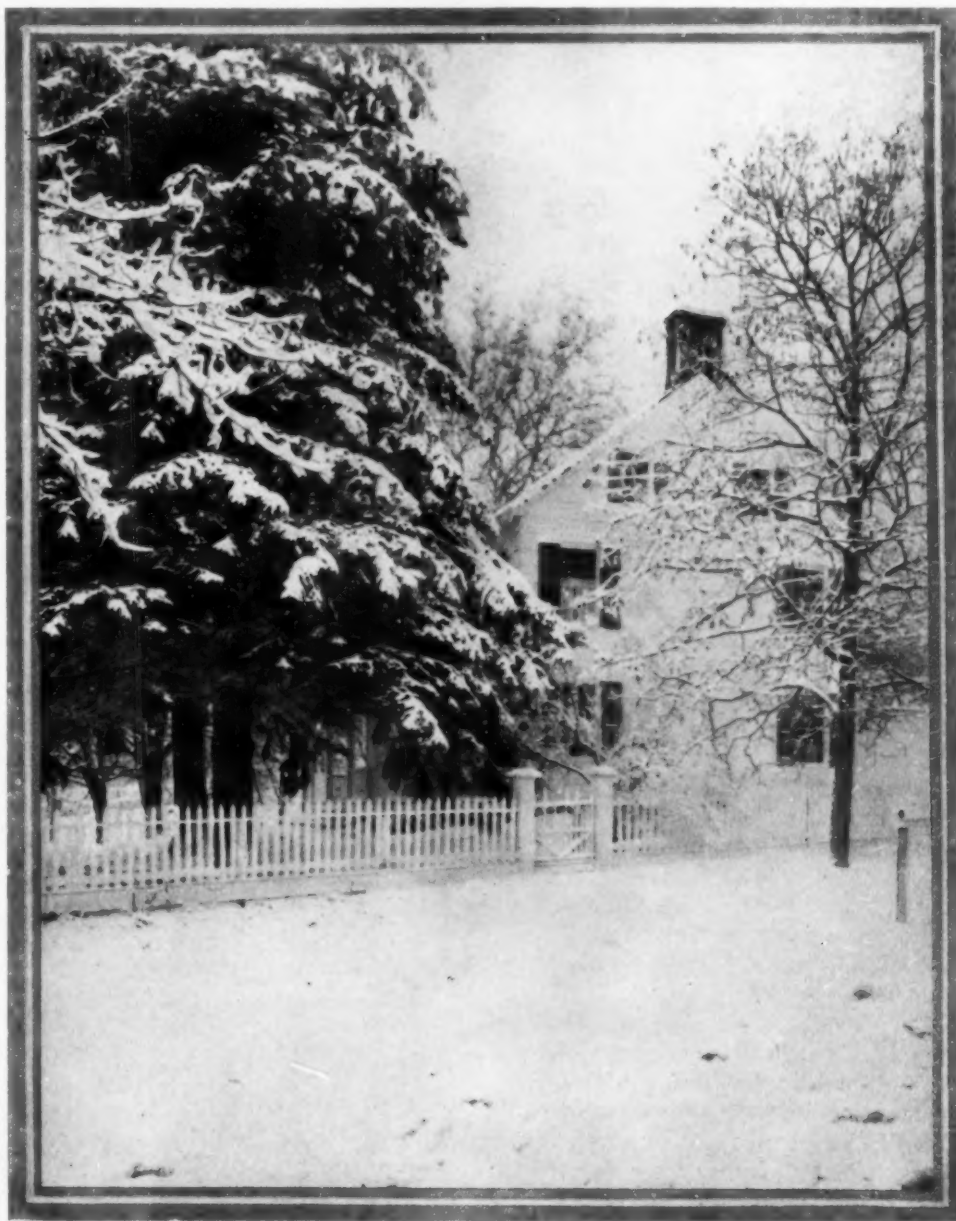
"And Ah," said old Asher, as he struck the log, "Ah wish foh de good ub de horses and cows and all d' udder live tings, an'," with a terrific shuckle of mystery, "Ah wish foh tings aplenty dis night!"

"And I," said old Annie, with a terrible look at her imprudent spouse as she took the poker, "I wish for the harvest—and wit for them that lack it!"

But Roger had the poker now, his black eyes starry.

"I—I wish for more kind hearts like Aunt Ellen's and the doctor's," he burst forth with a strangled sob as the sparks showered gold, "for more—more sisters like Sister Madge—" his voice quivered and broke—"and for—for all boys who cannot walk and run—" but Sister Madge's arm was already around his shoulders and the old doctor was patting his arm—wherefore he smiled bravely up at them through glistening tears.

"Now, now, now, little lad!" reminded the doctor, "it's Christmas eve!" Whereupon he drew a chair to the fire and began a wonderful Christmas tale about St. Boniface and Thunder Oak and the first Christmas tree. A wonderful old doctor this—reflected Roger wonderingly. He knew so many different things



The grass lands to the south were thickly blanketed in white and the stately pines and cedars were marvelously draped and coiffed in snow



—how to scare away tears and all about mistletoe and Druids, and still another story about a fir tree which Roger opined respectfully was nothing like so good as Sister Madge's story of the Cedar King who stood outside his window.

"Very likely not!" admitted the doctor gravely. "I've nothing like the respect for Mr. Hans Andersen myself that I have for Sister Madge."

"I thought," ventured Roger shyly, slipping his hand suddenly into the doctor's, "that doctors only knew how to cure folks!"

"Bless your heart, laddie," exclaimed the doctor, considerably staggered, "they know too little of that, I fear. My conscience!" as the grandfather's clock came into the conversation with a throaty boom, "it's half-past seven!" and from then on Roger noticed the doctor was uneasy, presently opining, with a prodigious "Hum!" that Aunt Ellen looked mighty pale and tired and that he for one calculated a little sleigh ride would brace her up for the party. This Aunt Ellen immediately flouted and the doctor was eventually forced to pathetic and frequent reference to his own great need of air and companionship.

"Very well, my dear," said Aunt Ellen mildly, striving politely to conceal her opinion of his mental health, "I'll go, since you feel so strongly about it, but a sleigh ride in such a wind and such clothes when one is expecting party guests—" but the relieved doctor was already bundling the brown-gold brocade into a fur-lined coat and furtively winking at Roger! Thus it was that even as the Doctor's sleigh flew merrily by the Deacon's pond, far across the snowy fields to the north gleamed the lights of the 7.52 rushing noisily into the village.

III

How it was that the old Doctor somehow lost his way on roads he had traveled since boyhood was a matter of exceeding mystery and annoyance to Aunt Ellen, but lose it he did. By the time he found it and jogged frantically back home, the old house was already aswarm with masked, mysterious guests and old Asher with a lantern was peering excitedly up the road. Holly-trimmed sleighs full of merry neighbors in disguise were dashing gaily up—and in the midst of all the excitement the Doctor miraculously discovered his own mask and Aunt Ellen's in the pocket of his great-coat. So hospitable Aunt Ellen, considerably perturbed that so many of her guests had arrived in her absence—an absence carefully planned by the Doctor—betook herself to the masquerade, and the Christmas party began with bandits and minstrels and jesters and all sorts of queer folk flitting gaily

about the house. They paid gallant court to Roger in his great chair by the fire and presently began to present for his approval an impromptu Mummer's play.

And now the lights were all out and a masked and courtly old gentleman in satin breeches was standing in the bright firelight pouring brandy into a giant bowl of raisins; and now he was gallantly bowing to Roger himself who was plainly expected to assist with a lighted match. He did this with trembling fingers and eyes so big and black and eloquent that the Doctor cleared his throat, and as the leaping flames from the snapdragon bowl

flashed weirdly over the bizarre company in the shadows, Roger, eagerly watching them snatch the raisins from the fire, fell to trembling in an ecstasy of delight. Presently a slender arm in a crimson sleeve, whose wearer was never very far from Roger's chair, slipped quietly about his shoulders and held him very tight. So, an endless round of merry Christmas games until, deep and mellow came at last the majestic boom of the grandfather's clock striking twelve and with it a hearty babel of Christmas greetings as the Doctor, smiling significantly down into Roger's excited eyes, gave the signal to unmask.

By the fire a mysterious little knot of guests had been silently gathering, and now as Aunt Ellen Leslie removed her mask, hand and mask halted in mid-air as if fixed by the stare of Medusa, and the face above the brown-gold brocade flamed crimson. For here in Puritan garb was John Leslie, Jr., and his radiant wife—and Philip and Howard, smiling Quakers, and Anne and Margaret and Ellen with a trio of husbands, and beyond a laughing jester in cap and bells, whose dark, handsome face was a little too reckless and tired about the eyes, Roger thought, for a really happy Christmas guest—*young Doctor Ralph.*

As Aunt Ellen's startled eyes swept slowly from the smiling faces of her children to the proud and chuckling Doctor who had spent Heaven knows how many dollars in telegraphed commands—she laughed a little and cried a little and then mingled the two so queerly that she needs must wipe her eyes and catch at Roger's chair for support, whereupon a kindly little hand slipped suddenly into hers and Roger looked up and smiled serenely.

"Don't cry, Aunt Ellen!" he begged shyly. "I knew all about it too and the Doctor—he did it all!"

"And merry fits he gave us all by telegram, too, mother!" exclaimed Philip with a grin.

"Moreover," broke in John, patting his mother's shoulder,
(Continued on page 401)



All about them lay a glittering, moonlit country of peaceful, snowy hills and long, quiet roads with shadowy trees

Some New House Plant Suggestions

NOVEL USES FOR GARDEN PLANTS IN THE HOUSE—SPECIAL SITUATIONS AND THE PLANTS THAT FIT THEM—GROWING VINES INDOORS—CULTURAL DIRECTIONS

BY D. R. EDSON

ONE of the most common causes of failure with house plants is the selection of sorts unsuited to the environment that is to be given them. Not only are conditions in the house generally very different from those which a plant may have been getting outside or in the care of the florists, but discretion is not exercised to select plants adapted to the peculiar conditions of temperature, full or partial sunlight, or none at all, the degree of moisture in the air, or the amount of attention likely to be given, which in any particular case will maintain. And so the rash housekeeper takes a delicate fern from the moist, warm atmosphere of the florist's and places it where the temperature may go down to forty-five degrees of a cold night, and twenty-four hours out of every day the moisture is being burned out of the air by the steam radiator. For a few days all seems to go well, then it is reluctantly admitted that it does not seem to be looking "bright and perky"—there must be too little water, so its semi-dormant roots are over-saturated daily for a week. This treatment does not seem to help it; so the trouble must be that it is not getting enough sunlight, and over it goes, after the necessary shifting of furniture, into the south window—which, after a sad and more or less lingering illness, finishes it!

But there are special situations where plants will thrive. Take, for instance, that sunny south window; there are plenty of plants that will do well in winter in the full sun, and stand a moderately cold temperature at night. Why not devote it wholly to them? Get John to put a substantial shelf just below it, and another across a third of the way up—just a couple of pieces of good, smooth pine board, supported by iron brackets. A narrow little strip nailed along the edges will be convenient in keeping pots, saucers or any stray litter from falling off.

As there are special places, so are there plants suitable for house culture. The good old geranium is one of the very best house plants there is. Don't be deterred from giving it a place by the fact that it is common. To those who grow plants for their intrinsic beauty and not because they may or may not be in vogue, the geranium, with its healthy vitality, its attractive foliage and its simply marvelous range of color and delicate shadings will always be a favorite. I even venture to predict more: to prophesy that it is going to be used, as one seldom sees it now, as a cut flower for decorative purposes. I have grown some of the newer varieties with stems from twelve to eighteen inches long, supporting enormous trusses of dull red or the most delicate pink

and keeping fresh in vases for days at a time. I find that very few people, even old flower lovers, have any conception of the improvement and variety which the last few years have brought, especially in the wonderful new creations coming from the hands of the French hybridizers. The latest news is that a German plant-breeder has produced the first of a new race of pelargoniums (Pansy or Lady Washington geraniums) that continues to bloom as long as any of our ordinary bedding sorts. It has now been offered in this country under the name "Easter Greeting," and it will be an acquisition indeed.

The culture of the geranium is simple. For its use as a house plant there are just two things to keep in mind: first give it a soil that is a little on the heavy side; that is, use three parts of good heavy loam, one of manure and one of sand; secondly, do not over-water. Keep it on the "dry side."

To have the geraniums blooming in the house all winter, prepare plants in two ways, as follows: First in May or June pot up a number of old plants. Cut back quite severely, leaving a skeleton work of old wood, well branched, from which the new flowering wood will grow. Keep plunged and turned during the summer, and take off every bud until three or four weeks before you are ready to take the plants inside. Secondly, in March or April, start some new plants from cuttings and grow these with frequent shifts, until they fill six or seven-inch pots, but keep them pinched back to induce a branching growth, and disbudded until about the end of December. These will come into bloom after the old plants.

S. A. Nutt leads all the double varieties. It is the richest, darkest crimson—usually ordered as the "darkest red." It is a great bloomer, but one word of caution where you grow your own plants. You must keep it cut back and make it branch, grow up tall and spindling. E. H. Trego is the most brilliant of the reds that I have grown. Marquis de Castellane is the richest of the reds—a dull, even, glowing color with what artists term "warmth" and "depth." The trusses are immense and the stems long, stiff and erect. It is the best geranium for massing in bouquets that I know.

Beaute Potevine is the richest, most glorious of the salmon pinks—perhaps the most popular of all the geraniums as a pot plant for the house. It is a sturdy grower and a wonderful bloomer. Dorothy Perkins is a strong growing pink, with an almost white center—very attractive. Roseleur is one of the most



There is nothing difficult in the arrangement of such a window for house plants and the situation is ideal for special kinds. The French doors are useful in regulating the temperature

lovely delicate pinks. Mme. Recamier, perhaps the best of the double whites, makes a very compact, sturdy plant. Silver-leaved Nutt, very recently introduced, is, I believe, destined to be one of the most popular of all geraniums. It has the rich flowers of S. A. Nutt and leaves of a beautiful dull, light green, bordered with silver white. I am chary of novelties, but was not disappointed when I got my first plants of this variety.

The sweet scented geraniums are valuable for their delicious fragrance and also the beauty and long keeping quality of the leaves when used for table decoration with other flowers. Rose and Lemon (or skeleton) are the two old favorites of this type. The Mint geranium with a broad large leaf of a beautiful soft green, and thick, velvety texture, should be better known. All three must be kept well cut back, as they like to grow long and scraggly.

The "ivy-leaved" geraniums have not yet come into their own. They are my favorite of all the geraniums. The leaves are like ivy leaves, only thicker and more glossy. The flowers, which are freely borne, contain some of the most beautiful and delicate shades and markings of any flowers, and the vines are exceedingly graceful in habit when given a place where they can spread out or hang down.

Another plant for a sunny window that for sheer abundance of bloom, perpetual color and cheer, is the humble petunia. And it will thrive with the slightest of care. It is, however, a little coarse, and some people object to its heavy odor. The flowers are both single and double, each having its advocates. Both have been vastly improved within the last few years. Certain it is that some of the new giant ruffled singles are remarkably beautiful, even as individual flowers; and the new fringed doubles, which come in agreeable shades of pink, variegated to pure white (instead of that harsh magenta which characterized the older style), produce solid masses of bloom, even where only one or two plants are grown, so that it is not necessary to mass them for good effect.

Another good "sunny plant" is the "flowering maple" (Abutilon). It is an old favorite among house plants, but not seen now as generally as it deserves to be. It is practically ever-blooming, which at once marks it as highly desirable. The pendulous flowers are very pretty, coming in shades of pink, white, yellow, and dark red. The foliage is also beautiful, especially that of the variegated varieties, than which very few plants are more worthy of a place in the window gardener's collection. New plants, which will grow and bloom very rapidly, are propagated by cut-

tings rooted in the fall or spring. Give the plants, when indoors, plenty of light.

The varieties are numerous. Some of the best are Santana, deep red; Boule de Neige, pure white; Gold Bell, yellow; Darwini tessellatum; Souvenir de Bonn and Savitzii (variegated).

Other well-known plants doing well in the sunny window are callas, alyssum mesembryanthemum, English daisies, some of the Begonias (those used in the summer for bedding), impatiens, and such foliage plants as vincas, dracenas, tradescantia.

Most of the flowering bulbs will also do well in full sunlight, and this class of plants is one of the most attractive of all for the window garden.

The winter garden is not complete without a vine or two to add that charm which vines alone can give to the general effect. Nothing else can make the other plants look so naturally in place, nor form such an attractive frame for the outlook from the room (or the inlook from the outside, for that matter), as a vine trained up and about the window.

And, furthermore, no other plants can make such a display for the amount of pot room required.

The thunbergia, sometimes called the "butterfly plant," is the best all-round flowering plant for the house. The flowers are freely produced, average an inch to an inch and a half across, and cover a wide range of colors, including white, blue, purple, yellow and shades and combinations of these. Its requirements are not special and the vines grow rapidly when allowed to run in the house. It can be grown from seed, but cuttings make the best plants.

Thunbergia laurifolia has flowers of white and blue; *T. fragrans*, pure white; and *T. Mysorensis*, purple and yellow.

The swainsonia, although really a shrub, may be trained up in vinelike form, and bears beautiful clusters of sweet-pea like flowers, white or light pink. The foliage, also, is remarkably pretty, and as the flowers are borne freely for a long time, and will soon begin again if the plant is cut back quite severely at the close of the flowering period, it makes a very unusual and desirable plant for house culture.

Next to the heliotrope, and as old a favorite, is that marvelous scented shrub, the lemon verbena. It is very hardy, but will, like the heliotrope, drop its leaves under adverse conditions. A single leaf will scent up half the room. Another flower especially desirable for fragrance is the heliotrope, an old and universal favorite. A plant well cared for will last for years, but one's stock may be readily in-

(Continued on page 399)



One cause of trouble is dust on the leaves. Wipe them with a moist cloth



The sweet-scented geranium is an old favorite well worth growing indoors. Do not let it grow scraggly



Another view of the plant shown at the left after it has been pruned to produce healthy growth

Christmas Gifts that Furnish the Home

ARTICLES THE STORES CONTAIN THAT WILL BE APPRECIATED TO COMPLETE A DECORATIVE SCHEME—WORTH WHILE SUGGESTIONS FOR YOUR CHRISTMAS SHOPPING LIST

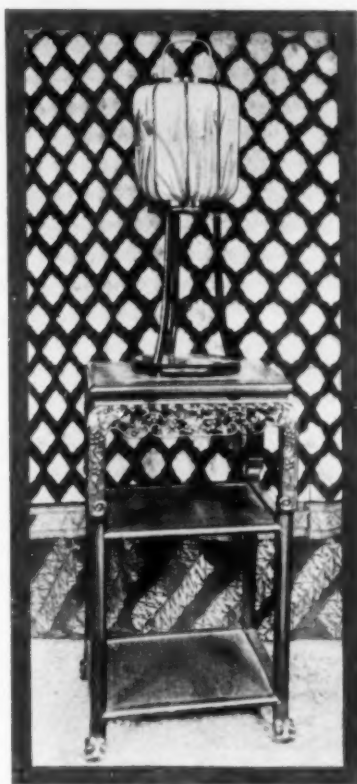
BY S. C. WAVERLEY



HERE is a well known fairy tale by one Hans Christian Andersen called "Everything in Its Right Place." The story itself has nothing to do with the case in hand, but the idea conveyed by the subject is one to be recommended for the consideration of every prospective donor of the

Christmas gift that has a part in household furnishing. In this period of striving for simplicity in home making there either is a place for such a present or there isn't, and the step between an acceptable gift and a white elephant is short and easily taken.

To avoid the white elephant successfully one should either be quite sure that the gift is absolutely suitable, or else it should be made with the privilege of exchange if desired. Individual tastes are so widely different that unless a place fairly yawns for a specific thing or a householder is heard to express a desire for it, it is much safer not to take chances. The real value of a gift lies in the thought put into its selection to make it fit a want. There are few householders who are without desires of some sort for their establishments,



Three articles of oriental manufacture that make pleasing gifts. The fabric behind the taboret is used for curtains

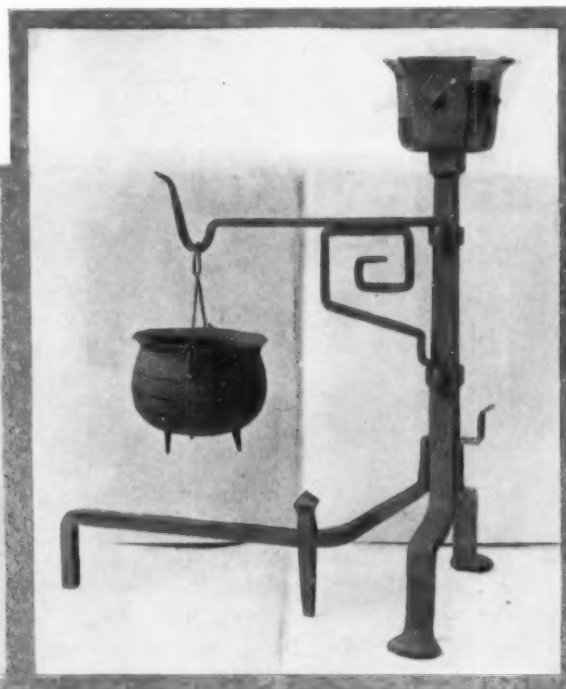
and it should be easy enough to ascertain them. Small excuse can be left therefore for the unhappy recipient of the Christmas gift to have to face the alternative of living with a positive eyesore or lacerating the feelings of the donor by removing the eyesore from the scene of its usefulness.

Taking for granted that the average house has at least a few pieces of mahogany and an oriental rug or two, it is safe to say that there is nothing more thoroughly acceptable than a gift that means an addition to one of these collections. The smaller mahogany pieces are not prohibitive in price when one considers their lasting qualities, nor for that matter are the rugs. The little Shirvan prayer mats that are so useful for filling in odd places can be had in various colorings to correspond with other rugs, and are only five to ten dollars each, while much larger Beluchistan rugs suitable in size and share for either living-room or hall are \$15 to \$25.

Practical gifts in mahogany that are within reach of the average purse include tea trays from \$8 up, book blocks at \$5 or \$6 a pair, muffin stands that may be had from \$12 to \$25, the useful little magazine stand that is a comparatively new piece at \$15 to \$20, drop leaf tea tables at \$20, nests of card tables at \$28 or \$30, not to mention the more expensive "pie crust" tables and mahogany chairs of various designs, many of them charming reproductions of Colonial pieces. There is scarcely a house to which something of this sort would not be



These bells are exquisitely cast in the figure of a little, old-fashioned lady. They may be had in two sizes



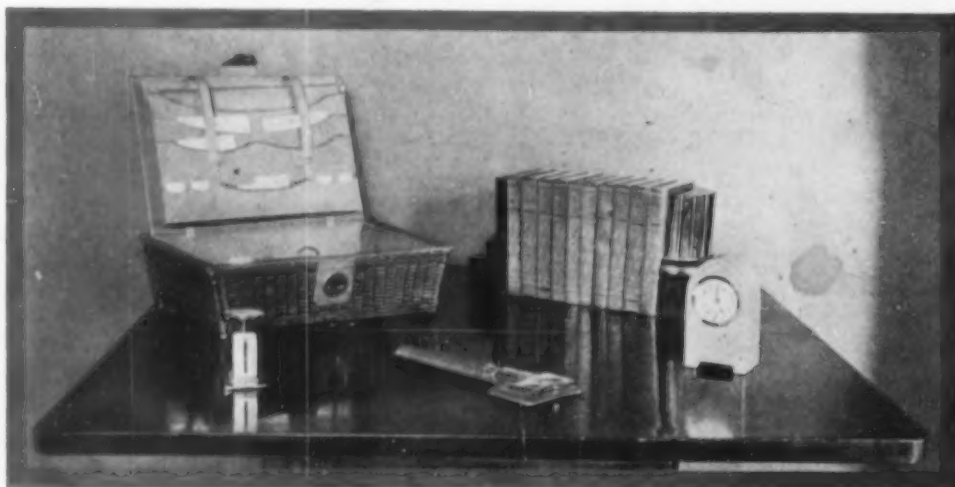
Andirons of iron are combined with a crane and the old-fashioned torch top. They are valuable for large fireplaces of all sorts



This set is particularly attractive for the guest room. The china may be had in various colors to match the scheme of decoration



A dark-toned bamboo jardiniere of an unusual form and graceful design



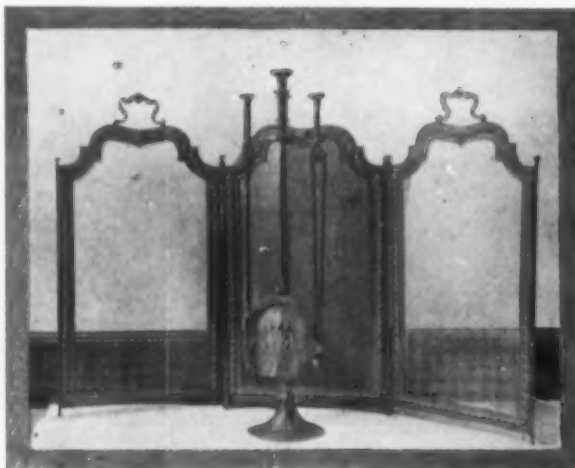
A group of articles universally appreciated. The basket writing set is lined in leather and is adaptable for traveling. The book blocks, clock and desk shears come in a great assortment, offering choice for various tastes



Lamps of this sort have shades of favrile glass

an attractive addition, nor a householder to whom it would not be acceptable.

Lamps and candlesticks are among the most serviceable of gifts, provided they are thoroughly useful and not too ornamental; the candlesticks particularly when not too suggestive of useless bric-a-brac. Tall lamps with floor standards from five to six feet in height are again in popular favor and may be had in various styles, from the wooden standard with glazed chintz shade to the heavy bronze standard with shade of Favrile glass. Rather a novelty in the latter is the small shade only ten inches across, that is adjustable like the shade of a reading lamp, and is useful as a piano light.



Fire screens and andirons are suitable for all sorts of fireplace architecture. They may be had in a large assortment

The small reading and desk lamps come in such a variety of designs that it is possible to make this acceptable gift at almost any price, and the solid comfort to be extracted from one of these little movable, adjustable lamps that may also be a thing of beauty, can scarcely be over-estimated. In candlesticks there are exquisite designs worked out in bronze that may be had in any finish for \$5 and up, and the mahogany candlesticks copied from antiques are effective and always in good taste, while excellent models in brass are much less expensive and quite as serviceable.

To the list of particularly acceptable gifts should be added several things that are useful in the bedroom.



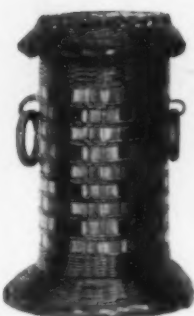
A household convenience is the table for bedside use that may be had in many designs and materials



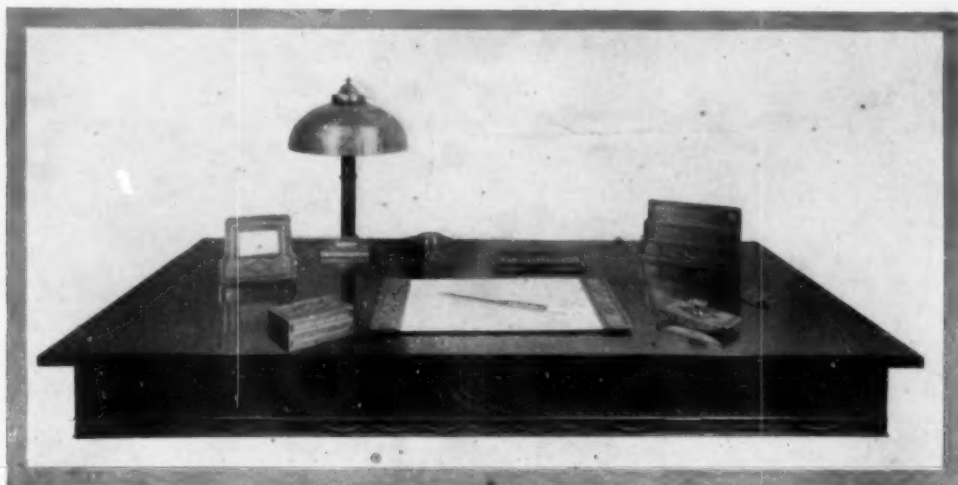
The little prayer mats are often used as wall decorations on account of their soft and beautiful colorings



The one-piece Japanese fire screen is a present of moderate cost and considerable attraction. Patterns come in many color schemes



Baskets of this sort make attractive lamp stands or may be used as flower vases



Desk sets are now made in all completeness containing articles from a lamp to a stamp box. Either individual articles or the complete set may be purchased. The lamp with shade of favrile glass is made to match the other articles



When used to contain a lamp this form of bamboo basket is quite attractive. Appropriate shades may be had that are of similar material lined with silk

For holding the reading lamp there is the bedside table that is small and light and just the right size, and may be had in stained wood with two drawers for only \$4.50, or in mahogany for as high as \$45, and for further nocturnal comfort there is the little set consisting of tray, ice-water pitcher, glass, candlestick and match box, that comes in ever so many pretty designs and costs \$8 to \$10.

For the householder who is so fortunate as to have one or more fireplaces there are numberless things that make attractive and useful gifts. Brass andirons range from \$6.50 a pair up to practically whatever one chooses to pay, and the andirons that have a crane to which is suspended a



The gate-legged table is valued for its compactness. There are many sizes from this small design to the large dining table

kettle are particularly good. They come in wrought iron for camps or bungalows, and also in iron or brass in a smaller size for use in town houses. \$3.75 will purchase an ornamental pair of bellows, and \$7.50 is the price of some new kettle stands for the hearth that are made of brass in openwork effect with rather tall supports. Fire screens of iron and brass can be had for a moderate sum, brass fire sets that swing on a holder newer in shape than the old familiar stand are \$13.50, and coal scuttles and wood boxes in various designs are to be had at a wide range of prices.

The large pieces of antique embroidery that cost from \$15 to \$25
(Continued on page 398)



Nests of tables for card parties may be had in finished mahogany or in rough oak for the porch. They are valuable space savers



India prints are not only adaptable for summer home furnishings, but find uses in the winter scheme of decoration



This small table of the pie crust order has a tip-up top. In mahogany it is suitable for the tea service



MAKE YOUR GROUNDS AN ATTRACTIVE WINTER REFUGE FOR THE BIRDS THAT BRAVE THE COLD—ESTABLISHING THE OPEN AIR LUNCH COUNTER AND HOW TO IDENTIFY ITS PATRONS

BY HOWARD H. CLEAVES

Photographs by the Author



WHETHER your home is in the city, suburb or country it lies within your power to establish a free lunch counter for the benefit of the feathered folk that brave the winter storms. In a certain section of Central Park, in the heart of New York City, there are several feeding stations for winter birds. Suet, crumbs and seeds are placed here daily during the cold months by a kind lady who lives near the park and as a result chickadees and nuthatches have become so tame as to feed from the hand. Shy birds like the brown creeper and red-breasted nuthatch regale themselves on suet while dozens of per-

sons throng the walks only a few yards off. Juncos or snowbirds, white-throated sparrows and downy woodpeckers are regular patrons—the first two gleaning crumbs from the ground; the latter favoring the suet that is bound to the tree trunks. If such are the possibilities in the midst of a great city what could not be accomplished with moderate effort in small towns and in the open country?

Let us suppose that your house and garden are in a suburban locality and not too far from fields and woodlands—what, then, can you do to attract the winter birds? The two chief things that make it possible for birds to pass the winter in northern latitudes are shelter and food supply, and if these be created and maintained on your suburban or country place you may be certain of the regular visitations of hosts of feathered folk. Many a person who lacks a knowledge of bird life offers the excuse that his time is occupied with other things and that he is denied the privilege of going afield as the naturalists do. But who cannot spare a few moments each day for the purpose of placing crumbs, seeds and the like on a window ledge or food counter? And once the custom is established you may stay at home and study many of the birds, for they will come to you instead of your going to them.

If you are thinking of setting fire to that pile of trimmed-off branches beside the chopping block near the woodshed defer the burning until next spring, for during the snowy months a couple of song sparrows and possibly a winter wren may find it a good resting-place at night and a shelter from the cutting winds through the day. And by way of expressing their gratitude the song sparrows will commence singing as early as the middle of February and about the first of May will have a nest in the border of your garden. The winter wren may not sing for you, but he will entertain with his acrobatic movements, whisking about among the twigs in the brush heap and becoming so bold in his search for the grubs as they fall from the wood you are splitting that he may perch on the handle of your axe even while it rests in your hand. There will not be the least difficulty in identifying the winter wren with his scant four inches of length, his exceedingly short tail that is pointed straight over his back most of the time and his coat of very dark brown feathers. Once you have seen the winter wren you will never forget him. And as for recognizing the song sparrow, that too should present no difficulty. A brownish bird narrowly marked on the back with black, breast light, streaked with dark brown and usually marked in the center with a blotch of the same color, as if the streaks had melted



A house sparrow perching on the chickens' food box, awaits the hen's departure

and run together. The bird's length of six or seven inches is made up largely of tail, and when flying, the song sparrow spreads the feathers of this organ with almost every wing stroke. The principal sound emitted by these birds in the coldest periods of winter is an occasional "tsip" or "chip," but their late winter and spring melody is so cheery and buoyant that this sparrow goes by the local name of "Summer sweet" in Nova Scotia.

The goldfinches would appreciate having you leave several stalks of sunflowers standing. These birds visit sunflower heads in late summer and during the fall and may be retained as winter visitors if a food supply is left them. The bright coat of yellow and black and his peculiar dipping flight distinguish the goldfinch from other birds, and although his plumage loses much of its brightness in the winter, still you can recognize him by his flight and manners.

In fields where corn is stacked one may almost always detect signs of bird life. Juncos and tree sparrows delight to feed about on weed seeds and leave a lacework of tracks where they have gone hither and thither on the surface of the snow. Red cedars offer excellent shelter and chickadees, pine siskins, blue jays and others are not slow to avail themselves of it when night approaches. Thick masses of honeysuckle vines that sometimes cling to porches are often sought as roosting places by birds; and dense hedges furnish good windbreaks. A tepee of cedar poles set closely together and draped with the old vines of last summer's morning-glories makes an acceptable refuge in the absence of something better and I have even known the resourceful house sparrow to burrow into the sides of haystacks and there spend the night unmindful of the cold blasts without.

Any of the above-named features could easily be created without much expense or labor on almost every country place, but for the benefit of those who care to go to further trouble on

behalf of the birds a list of shrubs, trees, etc., whose fruit or shelter is attractive to birds, is inserted at the end of this article.

Undoubtedly the greatest amount of joy for the least labor is to be obtained by the establishment of a food counter near enough to the house so that the birds may be observed from the windows. November is not too early to make preparations, although perhaps not a great many birds will come to the spread until the first snowstorm conceals their natural food in the woodlands.

There are several methods of procedure. Some prefer to place a shelf on a level with the window ledge in order that the food supply may be readily put into place by simply opening the window, but certain it is that there are birds which will come to a food shelf if it is a short distance from the house and yet are not bold enough to approach the window ledge. A shallow tray supported by braces to a tree trunk a few yards from the window is very satisfactory and should if possible be placed on the south side of the house to afford the birds the benefits of the sun's rays while the meal is in progress. Some ground gleaners like juncos and white-throated sparrows seem better

satisfied to feed on crumbs or seeds that are thrown out broadcast, but it is always advisable to clear a space for this purpose, lest much of the food sink into the snow and be lost.

The downy and hairy woodpeckers and the brown creeper are in their elements only when clinging to the side of a limb or the trunk of a tree, and prefer not to stand on a horizontal flat surface, such as a shelf. For their convenience, therefore, a piece of suet or perhaps a dog biscuit should be bound to the tree trunk, and if the several kinds of birds that patronize this particular food supply disagree, a number of such stations should be established, and all patrons can then gorge themselves at their ease.

Some difficulty is likely to be experienced with English or house sparrows, for if companies of these piratical vagabonds form the habit of visiting the lunch counter it will be speedily



The white breasted nuthatch, one of our common winter birds, may literally feed from your hand



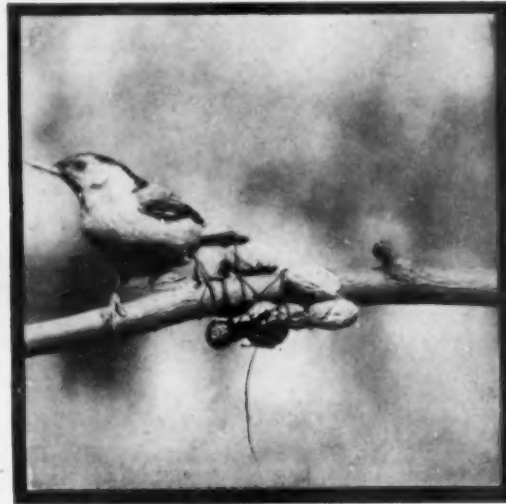
The nuthatch is somewhat of an acrobat, and comes to the food headfirst down the trunk. The tufted titmouse, however, is more dignified and retiring, and comes only when the downy woodpecker, shown in the last picture, is absent from the "lunch counter"



The nuthatch is extremely fond of peanuts in the shell



He stops feeding when an intruder approaches too closely



And in a moment he turns to fly away to a nearby tree

cleaned out and the desirable guests driven off. A swinging shelf should prove an effective remedy, and had best be suspended from a limb by means of wire or strong cord and allowed to move some in the wind, although not enough to dislodge the supplies from its surface. The woodpeckers and chickadees may be safeguarded in like manner by inclosing their suet or fat in a network of cord and hanging it from a branch by a wire or heavy string.

Certain birds are omnivorous to the extent of being able to adapt their tastes to almost any food that is offered them, while others are more particular and must be catered to even in severe weather. The greater the diversity of supplies, therefore, the larger will be the variety and numbers of your patrons. Suet, dog biscuit, seeds and crumbs have already been mentioned, but to these might be added peanuts in the shell, cracked and whole corn, sweepings from the hay loft, acorns, chestnuts, buckwheat, etc.

Suppose now that the spread out of doors is well nigh complete with most of the above dainties and that the guests are appearing—it now becomes your duty as host to acquaint yourself with the identity of the different visitors. "But," you may object, "I am no bird student and don't know how to begin." It must be admitted that the hundreds of bird names in the books are likely to be confusing, but when the birds themselves are at hand and, as in the present case, these are only a portion of the permanent and winter residents, the difficulties are reduced to a minimum. When a man turns in at your front gate and comes up the lane toward the house he usually has not gone far before you have classified him as either an acquaintance or a stranger, and if the former he is almost immediately identified as James Hackett or Tom Satterlee or whoever he may be. In forming your conclusion you had unconsciously noted the man's size, his gait, his dress and his mannerisms. If he were to approach in the dark you could tell him by his voice alone. Birds are identified in very much the same way. To the beginner they may all seem very similar, but when you come to know them you will

realize that the points of difference between the birds are really more numerous and striking than those which distinguish your human friends.

Written descriptions of birds are never quite satisfactory, somehow, and it is not my object to occupy space here in an endeavor to set forth in great detail the markings of various species; but a list of the birds that are likely to come to a winter food supply in the vicinity of New York City may be of some assistance.

Smaller than (English) sparrow—American goldfinch, chickadee, red-breasted nuthatch, brown creeper, winter wren.

About the size of sparrow—Tufted titmouse, white-breasted nuthatch, song sparrow, tree sparrow, purple finch, junco.

Between sparrow and robin—Downy woodpecker, hairy woodpecker, cardinal, horned lark, snow bunting.

About the size of robin—European starling, blue jay, meadow lark.

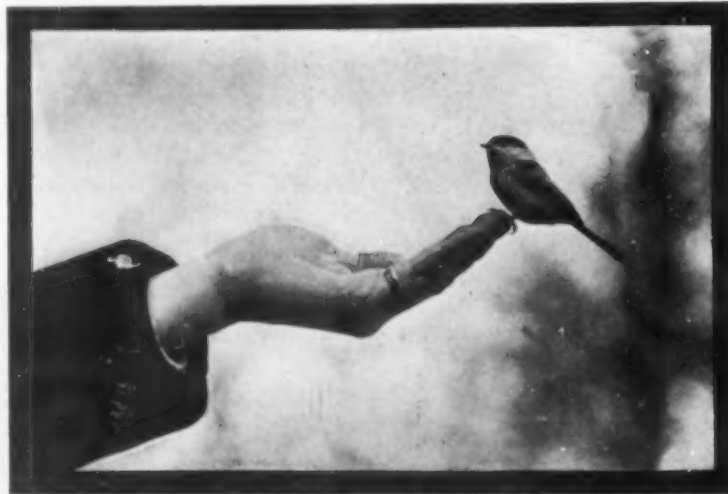
Larger than robin—Bobwhite, crow.

Some of these are shy birds and cannot be expected to come close to the house. The meadow lark, horned lark, snow bunting, bobwhite and crow may safely be assigned to this class, but if you will clear a place in the

fields behind the barn or on the border of the woodland you may be favored by an occasional visit from each if the spot is kept well stocked with provender.

This custom of feeding and sheltering the winter birds is gaining a stronger foothold each year and has long since passed beyond the experimental stage. In fact, the National Association of Audubon Societies, whose members are advancing further each day in the matter of bird protection, has under consideration the establishment of a special relief fund for the purpose of rushing aid to birds in any section of the country where the weather conditions have rendered it temporarily impossible for them to avail themselves of a natural supply of food. For instance, during the severe winter of 1911-12 numbers of black

(Continued on page 388)



Chickadees become remarkably tame in the winter where they are regularly fed



From a miscellaneous litter that the wrecker sells for junk, material was collected to remodel the old stable until it had this appearance. There was not much new added, a little stucco, a little brick, but almost all the materials used were originally in the old mansion that was torn down

An Adventure in House Building

HOW AN OLD STABLE WAS TRANSFORMED INTO A MANOR HOUSE AND HOW THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN OLD ENGLISH ESTATE WAS DUPLICATED IN A PHILADELPHIA SUBURB

BY JAMES L. BURLEY, ARCHITECT

Photographs by M. L. Schamberg

IN a park of about 20 acres at Merion, a suburb of Philadelphia, stood the well known Baird mansion with its stables, conservatory and other outbuildings, and in its day one of the show places of that city. It was built in the early seventies of the last century, during the dark ages of the history of architecture in America and was a castellated structure of brownstone, terra cotta and brick. The interior was rich in hardwood, much of it elaborately carved and worked after the approved manner of the period. Like many of its prototypes it was aban-



Stone and stucco combined in this way suggest different periods of growth

doned by the family as a place of residence, and was used for a boarding school for a time, finally passing into the hands of a group of homeseekers, the park to be divided into building sites and the mansion itself torn down for the building material in it.

Among those purchasing sites, Mr. Zollinger became possessor of a plot about two acres in extent. Upon this was located the old stable, a substantial and well constructed building of stone, brick and terra cotta, with the remains of a great conservatory built against it. It was his original intention to



The Christmas House & Garden



demolish this building and erect upon its site a residence. However, the fine wood carving of consistent Tudor detail rendered available by dismantling, and the lines of the barn suggested remodeling. It seemed a pity to tear down anything so well built and so enduring. The proposition was then turned over to the architect and part renovation of the structure considered. There was something in the lines of the old building suggestive of an English manor house and their imaginations set to work could see developed from it another such house as those providing the chief charm of the English countryside. The owner's enthusiasm grew as the possibilities became apparent. The actual advantage of creating in America a home that would approximate that type of English manor house made a strong appeal.

Remodeling of this type is no small matter, and in this place it might be well to say that only the most sympathetic co-operation between client and architect can bring the results herein attained. There is an immense amount of study involved compared with that necessary to produce a new building of equal size, and as the end in view is not as definite as in the case of a new building, a considerable amount of patience is required and a willingness to meet unexpected cost. For in such work unforeseen difficulties arise, and unless the owner is willing to go ahead slowly, he is apt to be disappointed. But on the other hand there is an attraction that does not develop in the construction of a new house, a fascination which grows from adapting to good purpose something that was heretofore useless, and redeeming to good advantage a building that would have served in the ordinary course of events no economic use. In this way one becomes a magician, and by the magic of a constructive imagination

turns an ugly and useless stable into a beautiful residence.

Actually when the work was completed it was discovered that the final expense was but two-thirds of what it would have cost to build anew such a structure.

Then, too, it really was the closest approximation to the way old English houses grew. There, many years, perhaps centuries, of adding to the main house gave the final result we appreciate to-day. Here at Marion the process was just the same, although the time was a very short one. That is, the house grew part by part and thus has achieved the charm that one appreciates in the old country.

The first thing that was considered was the adaptation of the plot to the building—a not unusual reversal of the proper method of procedure, even in cases where it is not necessary. However, the stable occupied a good situation and the land was easily fitted to it. The stable as it appears in one of the pictures and in a plan, had rectangular foundations. Along the front ran a row of stalls, and upon this side the stonework was most solid. In back most of the area was occupied by a court and a great cement floored room where the carriages were washed. The roof was supported by great solid pillars. At the west section of the barn was the carriage room that went up two stories, but had

merely a wooden second floor above stairs. The walls and foundation were extremely solid and thick. If the former first floor plan is consulted, the condition of the building will be at once apparent.

A cellar was excavated under the stable or east wing. Part of the carriage house already had a cellar. The foundation walls were fortunately very deep and little underpinning was necessary to carry them below the new cellar bottom. This was easily done with concrete. Just outside the building was found a large underground reser-



The high leaded glass window opening into the great hall is particularly effective in so large a room



One knack in remodeling is the adaptation of materials to new uses. This caen stone fireplace was too narrow. The addition of the keystone rendered it available



The Christmas House & Garden



voir formerly used for storage of rainwater; this was connected with the cellar and now forms a wonderful mushroom cellar.

In order to make the hayloft available for bedrooms, dormer windows and gables were cut in the roof on the south side and six well lighted bedrooms and two baths were obtained, otherwise the original roof remained untouched on this wing except for the removal of two ventilators which were too evident indicators of the original purpose of the building.

By means of stud and plaster partitions the stall room yielded a kitchen, pantry, breakfast room, dining-room and stairway, while the box stall was found to suit admirably for a laundry. The building had not been used as a stable for probably ten years, but the inside walls were all whitewashed before being furred and plastered to prevent the possibility of any lingering odors suggesting the former occupants. The stable yard, enclosed by a high wall, was converted into a walled garden, and the covered porch which had been the carriage wash, when enclosed in glass became a spacious and livable piazza repaved with composition paving blocks as before. Part of the courtyard was taken for a drying and kitchen yard and separated from the garden by a high wall.

The owner, taking a keen pleasure in the evolution, de-



In the tessellated hall the mantel is of carved Carrara marble adapted from a larger piece



As solid supports were necessary for the additional development of the upper story pillars were used which suggested the vaulting in the hall

cided not to hurry the work, but to do it gradually, so a start was made on the east or stable wing and this was completed and the owner living in it before work on the section formerly the carriage house or west wing was begun. As will be seen by a reference to the plan the east wing is a complete house in itself if the breakfast-room is used for a dining-room and the dining-room for a living-room.

Six months after the work was started the owner moved into the complete east wing and nearly a year was taken in completing the west wing.

The west wing was a large square building and did not yield so readily as the east wing to its new functions, nor was it proportioned to the scale of the east wing, its massive single gable and bulk overbalanced the smaller masses and detail of the latter so that considerable structural alteration was found necessary. Two gables were made to take the place of one on the south, thus lowering the ridge of the roof to the level of that of the east wing. The width of the north wing was reduced to form the great hall in better proportion. Out of the carriage house were evolved a vestibule, vaulted hall, the great hall, reception-room, lavatory and stair hall on the first floor, and two bedrooms and two bathrooms on the second floor.

As has been said the success



Possibly the owner never would have had the enjoyment of a great hall had it not been rendered available by his scheme of remodeling



Practically all this woodwork was collected piece by piece and enough consistent detail was found to combine in this screen and gallery

The Christmas House & Garden



While the west wing was being worked the east wing was occupied and the owner had the pleasure of being at hand to watch developments

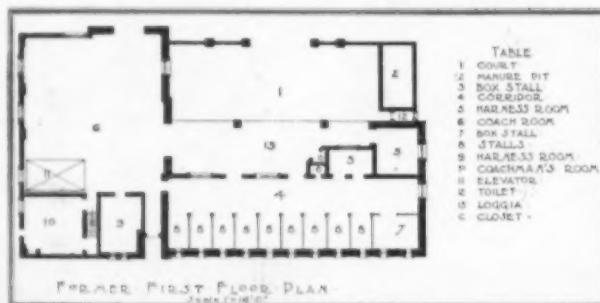


The stable originally appeared like this. At the extreme left the conservatory may just be made out. Behind this the wall was of brick

of alteration work is measured by the extent of the structural changes made. After a certain point tearing down and rebuilding may have been the proper course from an economic standpoint. In the present instance the walls, roof and floors were the structural elements that it could be hoped to save; the entire internal lining was clearly understood to be a matter of new construction. There were, of course, few old partitions to contend with and in the internal arrangements of rooms there was comparatively a free hand given the designer. Where the old walls had to be extensively cut for openings it was found more economical to use cement stucco to cover the scars than to re-trim the openings with stone. The old walls where the conservatory joined the main building were of common brick, and stucco was applied here as the exterior finish. This accounts for the mixed character of materials shown on the exterior and consequently the free use of several periods or styles in the design. This might be criticized from an architectural standpoint judged by the purist and perhaps with justice if the building were a new one, but since it is an alteration job the free use of materials



Remodeling produced many interesting features in the garden as well as in the house



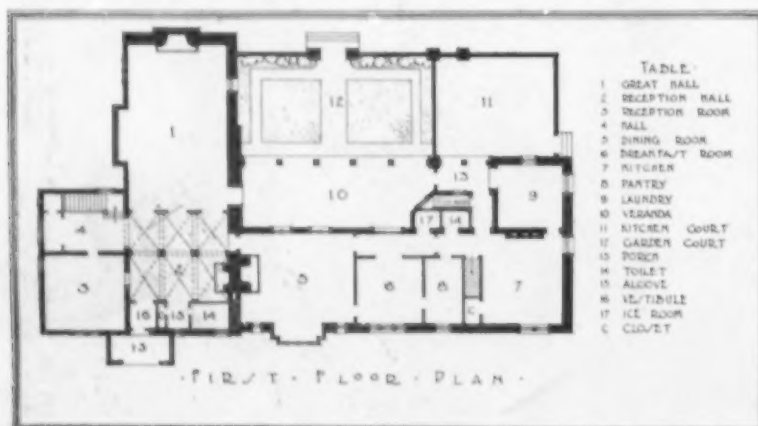
The extreme western wall, which appears in the original plan of the stable, was removed

and styles is perhaps one of the positive charms and really indicates the fact that this building was evolved and did not spring full fledged from the brain of the designer.

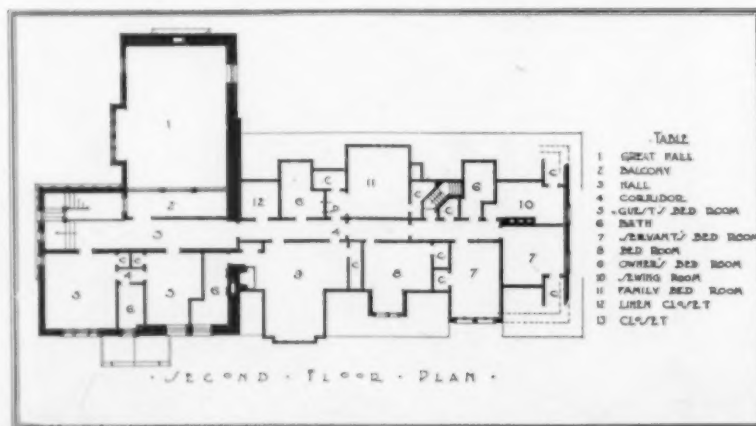
As we have said the original mansion had been torn down and great wealth as well as embarrassment of materials obtained. Out of a mass of paneling, doors and trim in oak, walnut and mahogany with much hopeless carvings and quirks, enough was obtained by selection to panel the breakfast-room in walnut, the living-room in oak and reception-room in mahogany, which was promptly painted white. Practically the whole screen in the great hall which is in oak was collected piece by piece from various parts of the old mansion. The greater part of the trim and all the doors were obtained from the same source and modified or redeemed by new moldings. All floors throughout are hardwood relaid from the mansion.

All the mantels except in the great hall are taken from the mansion after being shorn of much hideous and meaningless ornament principally over-mantel monstrosities so dear to the heart of the bric-a-brac loving tastes of the Victorian period.

(Continued on page 388)



The east wing is a complete house in itself and if the breakfast room is used for a dining-room and the dining-room for living-room, the west wing may be shut off



Above stairs the same arrangement is possible. If it is desirable at any time in the winter to shut off part of the house, the east wing can accommodate the family

Handicraft House Furnishings

FURNITURE AND FURNISHINGS THAT LEND DISTINCTION TO THE SMALL HOUSE—REAL ARTICLES OF HANDWORK AND STOCK MATERIAL OF ARTISTIC EFFECT THAT MAKE THE HOME ATTRACTIVE—STENCILS AND STENCIL WORK

BY SARAH LEYBURN COE

Photographs by the Author, J. T. Beals and Others



JUST about the time somebody decided that great-grandfather's mahogany drawing-room furniture was infinitely superior to the black walnut and antique oak crimes of the seventies and eighties, somebody else discovered that great-grandmother's kitchen and bedroom furniture had good lines and was worthy of reproduction. Then a third somebody was bold enough to make a hand-woven rag rug and declare it better looking than Brussels and twoply ingrain, and the whole handicraft scheme was launched.

That it was not merely a fad, to be driven to death one day and forgotten the next, is proved by the way that it has steadily increased in popular favor by the demand for furnishings designed on simple lines and by the way that the large manufacturers are turning out substantially made articles to meet this demand.

When we speak of handicraft furniture here let it be taken to mean all that vast supply of materials that are either handwork or give the impression of handwork: those things that have the feel of being exclusive because they appear to be made only for the location in which they are used. Many of them are stock patterns and stock designs, but they give the effect of a certain individuality.

The handicraft scheme, which one invariably associates with the Puritan and Colonial types of furniture, may be quite correctly described as the exponent of simplicity and straight lines, and therefore of good taste and restfulness. The Puritans had to be simple whether they chose to or not, and householders of the present day are profiting by their example—in one respect at least. Following close on the revival of this type of furniture came the vogue of the conventionalized design, a result of the reaction from the carved atrocities and over-elaborate decorations of the antique oak period. The earnest promoters of the handicraft idea adapted this improved form of decoration for their hand-woven rugs and hangings, and an entirely new and original form of house furnishing resulted, one that is at once artistic and satisfying, dignified and ornamental.

Of course, the handicraft scheme is not suitable for every type of house, and in the formal mansion it is quite out of place; but for homes of moderate pretension, where simplicity and good taste are of first consideration, there is no more satisfactory plan for furnishing.

One of the most delightful characteristics of handicraft is its genuineness. There is a distinction naturally, between the hand-woven rugs and hand-made furniture of the handicraft enthusiast and the machine-made furnishings of the person who is content to buy and not create; but in either case the rug is made of strips of cloth and does not try to hide it, the curtains are of the simplest materials with no pretense at imitation of expensive stuffs, and the furniture stands for what it is, without masquerading as mahogany or oak under a protecting veneer.

Fortunately for those persons who are particular about having

the genuine hand-made articles, there are enthusiastic handicrafters on every side who sell their products, so that such furnishings are really a question of expense and not of individual talent or energy. On the other hand, however, one can buy in the shops, rugs, hangings, wall-papers, couch-covers and pillows designed and decorated in handicraft patterns, and it is only a matter of taste and careful selection to achieve satisfactory results at comparatively small cost.

While it is true that good taste is just as essential in planning a room of this sort as in one more expensively furnished, the very simplicity of everything seems to make for good results. If one decides on a satisfactory color scheme and is consistent in carrying it out, things seem to adjust themselves, as it were, and there is less chance of failure than when furnishings and decorations of a more elaborate nature are attempted.

To most persons it is quite likely that the very sound of the word handicraft suggests stencils and Russian crash, table-runners and strange-looking pillow-tops, for these are the first symptoms of the handicraft craze. It is quite true that in one way stenciling has been done to death, but in another it plays an important part in some of the most artistic schemes of decoration and furnishing; just how important it is hard to realize until one takes the trouble to look into the subject. There is a whole lot of difference between the work of a decorator who, by a judicious use of stencils, gives a distinctive touch to a room or brings out certain details in design, and that of a woman who buys a \$2.50 stencil outfit and in the first flush of her enthusiasm



This interior gives the effect spoken of above as handicraft. The curtains are printed with a border, the furniture is comfortable, simple, and distinctive

decorates everything in sight until one feels quite sure that the only things to miss the wholesale ornamentation were animated objects that could voluntarily escape.

The real reason for stenciling is to fill in and round out the decorative scheme of a room in an unobtrusive way, not to form its most conspicuous feature. If cleverly handled, the same motif can be suggested on the walls and curtains, even on draperies and pillows in a room without looking overcrowded; or the stencil can be applied sparingly, merely filling an occasional space that would otherwise seem too bare or in need of a bit of color.

Wall-papers in block print or stencil effects are obtainable for use with handicraft furnishings, and where the fittings of a room are plain and on simple lines, with few pictures in evidence, the large-figured papers are quite satisfactory. A new paper that is actually hand-stenciled is now to be had. The designs are reproduced from rare specimens of antique silks, and are most unusual in effect, many of the figures being too large to print by the ordinary process, so that there is no possibility of machine imitation.

For plain walls ingrain and oatmeal papers are used, with cut out or stenciled borders, and painted walls finished with narrow stenciled designs are steadily gaining in favor. On some accounts the last two methods are rather more satisfactory for the ordinary handicraft



Curtains of all sorts may be stenciled with characteristic designs from the frieze. The units should not be repeated too often

room than a figured wall decoration, and in combination with the wood paneling so much used for dining-rooms and libraries, the painted walls and stenciled borders constitute one of the most practical modes of wall treatment. In addition to the colored border the stencil is sometimes used with good effect on the wall space between the panels of wood, forming alternate panels of decorative figures and plain wood. This scheme should be approached with caution and worked out with care, however, in order not to overdo the idea and get a result that is anything but satisfactory.

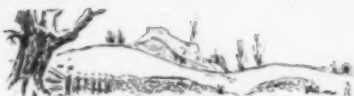
With the use of the stencil in the wall decoration, color schemes can be perfectly worked out and the figure of the border can be reproduced in curtains and draperies, giving a touch of individuality not to be had in any other way. Except for the most energetic and patient of amateur decorators the wall stenciling should be left to a professional workman, in spite of the fact that it looks easy and tempting. Even when done by such a workman it will not prove an expensive method of

decoration, as a stencil for the narrow borders now in vogue costs only fifty or sixty cents, and the charge for applying it is five to six and one-half cents a foot, while for painting the walls in a solid color the cost for paint and work is three and one-half to four and one-half cents a square foot.

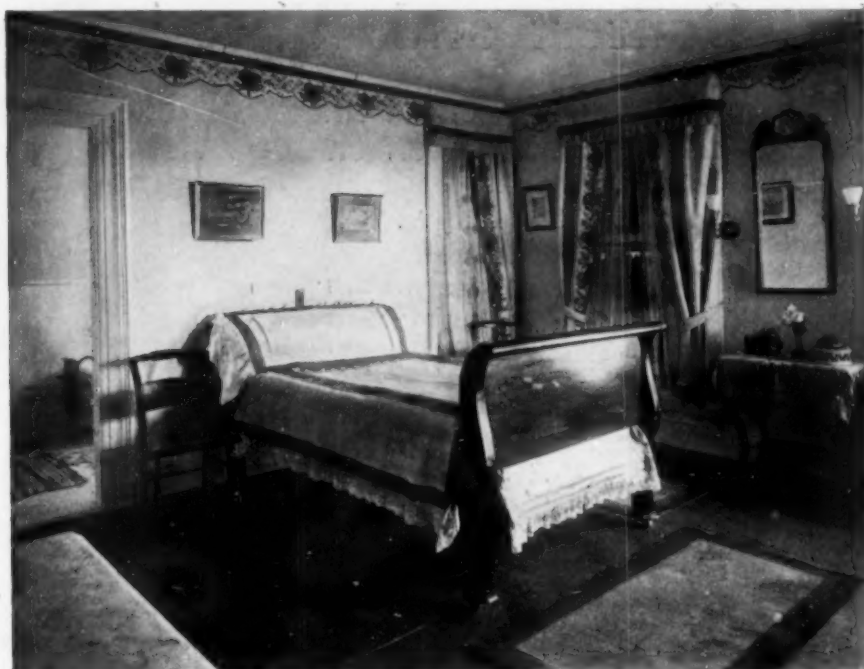
Taking advantage of the fad for wall-papers and cretonnes that match, excel-



On either side of the central picture are characteristic stencil designs the units of which were repeated from a frieze. The one at the right is particularly interesting in a wistaria pattern that seems to wind across the curtain. The central illustration shows one type of furnishing where a handicraft scheme has made use of the old-fashioned hand-woven coverlets in two shades of brown



The heavy rush bottom chair gives the impression of handwork



Although the cut out border and the strip sewed to the counterpane and curtains may be purchased, this bedroom creates the impression that much individual effort was used in its decoration



Reproductions along Colonial lines may be had that are suitable

lent results may be obtained by the use of a plain or small-figured paper, with a cut out border, the design of which is carried out in the cretonne, as shown in the photograph of the bedroom.

The figure of the scalloped border is repeated in the cretonne bands that finish the curtains and ornament the bedspread, while a cretonne duplicate of the narrow decorative strip at the top of the border is used as a border for the lace-edged valance over the curtains and also for the spread, and to carry out the idea still further the tiny diamond-shaped figure in the wall-paper is repeated in the openwork designs of the thin curtains.

In nothing more than floor coverings has the handicraft movement made itself felt, and in nothing has it effected better results. Carpets and rugs in loud colors and shrieking patterns have been replaced by good examples in solid colors or two-tone effects with borders of dignified sign, as well as by the useful rag rug that is continually assuming a more important place in house furnishings of a certain class. For country houses, bungalows, seashore cottages, and in any house the furnishings of which are simple, it is suitable, and not the least of its advantages is that it is so inexpensive that it can be frequently renewed. This refers to the machine-made rugs that are to be bought in the shops. The rugs woven by hand are usually guaranteed to be washable, as the strips are dyed in fast colors before they are put into the loom. There are numbers of places where these hand-woven rugs may be had in sizes and colors to order, and while rather more expensive than the other variety, they often prove more



Woodwork of straight lines given a natural finish, hand-made tiles, rag rugs, plain background of Japanese grass cloth, these are elements of the handicraft scheme

from 24 x 36 inches to 9 x 12 feet, and even larger if desired, and at prices that are anywhere from fifty cents to thirty dollars. They come in the regulation mixed effects as well as in all of the standard colors, greens, blues and browns of various shades with

white borders, and the more expensive ones have decorative borders worked in with a shuttle after the rug is woven. There are designs that show houses and trees and figures in the crude outlines suggestive of the quaint old samplers, while quite the newest borders are reproductions of the shadowy patterns of French cretonnes, woven in lovely colors on a white ground. Some of these rag rugs are even done in the designs and colors of Navajo blankets, and are striking looking, to say the least.

A new variety of woolen rug that comes in solid colors with decorative borders is quite as suitable for furnishings of this character as are the rag rugs, and probably

more desirable for winter use, as it seems warmer and more comfortable. It is woven in the same way as the rag rug, heavy strands of twisted woolen thread being used instead of the cotton strips, while the binding threads are of cotton, just as for the rag variety. It is substantial and decorative and may be had in any desired color, as the manufacturers will dye the wool to match samples if the color required cannot be found in the ordi-

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A Garden Contest and What it Developed

HOW ONE SUBURB CREATES AN INTEREST IN GARDENING—THE BEAUTY THAT RESULTS—EXPERT CRITICISM ON GARDENS THAT WON PRIZES.

BY HAROLD A. CAPARN

Photographs by Albert K. Dawson

POPULAR interest in gardening and garden design is growing constantly. The signs of growth are plain to anyone and perhaps none of them better shows the seriousness with which the subject is regarded than the Montclair Garden Competition, held annually during the past three years. It is believed that some account of it and a brief discussion of the principles of design involved and other pertinent matters will be of general interest. Each year the number of the entries has increased and their average quality improved. The attitude of the people of Montclair towards them seems appreciative, and the general results encourage the hope that, in one form or another, the idea may be adopted in other places. It is to be expected that not only would gardening and the composition of gardens become better understood thereby and the pleasure in them deeper and more widespread, but that the popular taste and feeling for art in general would develop with the gardens, and life would gain by the addition of something worth while.

A fund of \$500 presented by Mr. James N. Jarvie has provided for the prizes and expenses of the competition which has been managed by a committee consisting of Mr. Michel Le Brun, the architect, Mr. Arthur Underhill, the landscape architect, and Mr. Julian Tinkham. Prizes were awarded for entire places and for gardens alone, a garden being considered to be a separate part of the grounds usually enclosed. The points on which



I This garden is notable for its good design. The cleverness of its centering will be noticed if one considers the vista obtained between the catalpa trees toward the dark recess on the opposite side of the street

inseparable. So far the idea has worked admirably. Differences of opinion have been small and when adjusted by discussion it has always been felt that the decision has been the expression of all parties to it.

Last year certain points in one or two of the places entered for competition were discussed in the report, and this year criticism of individual places was definitely requested from several sources. This was a somewhat invidious task, as praise alone would not only be unconvincing, but be little helpful, while blame

most stress was laid were pictorial effect, and livableness; in both these are included the layout or relation of parts, and in the latter attainment of privacy. There have so far been two official judges in the garden competitions. Gardening and garden design are an essentially popular art, and the view of the intelligent layman is well worth correlating with that of the professional garden-maker. To avoid the possibility of any bias in favor of mere technical excellence, there has been as well as a landscape architect a judge versed in design of other kinds. In 1910 Mr. John W. Alexander, the painter, officiated, in 1911 Mr. Edwin H. Blashfield, the painter, and this year Mr. Walter Cook, president of the American Institute of Architects. The composition of the painter and especially of the landscape painter is naturally in close relation to that of the garden designer, while that of the latter and the architect are often

is apt to be misunderstood and resented. But after due consideration the judges decided to select for criticism such of the entries as appeared to illustrate best points of most general application, it not being possible within the length of a report to discuss every one in detail. The criticism was quite frank—the only kind that seemed worth giving—as impartial as possible and such as would have been made in private conversation without any idea of printing it. And as far as is known to the judges, it was received in good part, although some of it was, no doubt, not very easy to endure when so much thought and money had obviously been spent on the work. But if the criticism be analyzed it will be found to contain more praise than blame, not merely on the average, but in almost every individual case. Where defects were dwelt upon they were such as could be amended at relatively small trouble and cost. The layout or disposition of parts was in nearly every case more or less good and the mistakes were in details, generally of planting, easy to alter or replace.

The underlying principles of garden design are the same as those of any other kind of design; but the materials or media are so different from others that it takes a good deal of study and experience to discern how the principles apply. As in the case of architecture, sermon writing or symphony composing, one must set about a garden with a definite conception, a clear idea of what is intended and the kind of sentiment it is meant to produce in those who see it. You cannot make up the design of a garden as you go along, though you may to a greater or less extent make up the details. Then the afore-said definite conception must be adapted to the condition, the size, shape and general character of the ground and surroundings and the things that will grow there. The design ought, in fact, to rise out of the conditions, not be



II The outlining of these beds provides the design lacking in the rose plantings themselves



III The growth of trees here adds materially to the advantage of the place; the low growing material, however, is not thoroughly consistent with it



IV At the right of this picture is the flower garden shown in No. I. From this aspect it is too small and restless for the mass of the house

imposed on them. The conditions, of course, include what the owner happens to want or prefer. So out of these two sets of things—what the owner wants and what he can with consistency have in that particular place—the finished product should evolve. He may desire an enclosed garden, greenhouses, pergolas, statuary and so forth, or a mere setting to the house of lawn and trees or shrubbery; he may desire something very elaborate or very simple, formal and informal or both, and any of them might be quite appropriate; but in any case they must be consistent. If the ground is hilly and irregular, the layout will plainly be very different from that of a flat area; and if there are good sized trees, the treatment is likely to differ considerably from that of a bare lot. A few good trees may be sufficient to furnish the lawn and make a setting for the

house; whereas, if there are none a shrubbery arrangement would suggest itself for the sake of quick effect, and the ultimate expression be entirely different. There are nine and thirty ways of writing tribal lays and every one of them is right, states Mr. Kipling, and it is the same with gardens. But whichever of the nine and thirty is selected, it must "carry through" and be complete in intent or it will not be right. It must not be made of parts added to one another in a haphazard way, no matter how beautiful they may be in themselves. It must be complete and consistent in the same way as a well designed table, building, or poem, are consistent and complete, every part being necessary to the whole and nothing being admitted merely because the designer happens to like it. The way to get a thing like this latter, whether it is a tree, bush, plant, statue or anything else, into a garden without violence is to make the garden or part of the garden to fit it, not to drag it in whether it belongs or no.

One reason why, amid the multitude of gardens of various kinds, there are relatively so few good ones is that people are misled by the charm of the individual things in them and cannot think of them as parts of a scheme. The average garden owner is content to exhibit to his friends his fine bed of asters or specimen blue spruce or superb mass of rhododendrons. But this reduces a garden to the level of a nursery, or place for raising plants. Your garden should be so made that the visitor entering says, "What a beautiful place," so that it is a good place to be in and needs no explanation. Its charm ought to appeal to any impressionable person whether knowing or caring anything about plants and flowers or not. It is a curious thing that it should be possible to collect a number of plants, trees or bushes into one place, any one of which would take a prize at an exhibition, yet the ensemble would be unattractive. On the other hand there are many scenes in Montclair and other places made up of the simplest elements, ordinary trees, bushes and turf and unpretentious architecture which are full of charm. Most people who make gardens overlook this very important point and set out the things they like best, or rather that they think they like best, and wonder why they somehow don't look so well as they were expected. In this way brilliant colored things like scarlet salvia, small



V This stone settee is on the lawn shown in No. I. It is an effective piece of composition with its two small, well matched, blue spruces



VI In a few years this well conceived little garden should be very charming. The two rows of plants on either side of the lawn would look better if inclosed by rows of box edging



VII The planting of evergreens here is too close to the house, besides the contrast with the cannas at the end is unpleasant

shrubs, or Japanese maples and small evergreens abound in suburban grounds. The trouble is not that they should abound, but that they should abound where other things belong. They are incidents, trimmings or details used as main features. It is like using small and flimsy furniture in a large room or making the skirt of a dress of lace or ribbons.

This brings us to another important principle of design, that of scale, or the relative sizes of parts and the whole. As we all know, nothing is great or

small excepting by comparison. This holds good in garden work as in other things, yet it is little understood. Everyone knows that a piece of furniture may look too large in a small room and too small in a large room. Yet few people seem to think that the principle applies out of doors, but it is every bit as important as indoors. A lawn ought to have its frame of planting proportioned in size and extent, or the lawn will look bare and the

planting mean. A large house will be exaggerated in bulk and conspicuousness by a fringe of bedding plants or small evergreens at its base. The larger a walled garden, the higher will be its wall and the larger its beds. And so on. So that in the selection of planting material one should consider carefully whether it will enter into comparison with the larger features, such as the house and lawn, or whether it will be secondary and placed where small grow-



ing things would be appropriate.

Probably the chief cause of wrong scale and other common faults of garden design is the impossibility of completing it until years of growth have passed over it. When it is finished, it is usually a mere apology for what it is intended to be. All the planting material is of wrong size and shape and out of proportion. The large things are small and the small ones large, relatively. Shrubs and trees look like sticks, and even though they may be set close enough to become crowded in a few years, it requires much imagination and experience to get any clear idea of the final effect. It is not at all wonderful that a few people who pay for gardens can see from the present to the future and imagine the luxuriant masses of foliage that will one day take the place of the poor little trees and bushes as they come from the nursery. The owner, impatient for results, is very apt to try to anticipate by putting in or taking out without any knowledge of what injury he may be working, or by getting in a quantity of planting material that may take his fancy, especially small evergreens. They are very attractive in themselves and require no trained imagination to see what they may be. But they should be used with discrimination and in enclosed places or in retired parts of the main planting.

Another fundamental mistake, to be seen almost



VIII The planting on this place makes an admirable picture on the whole, but there is incongruity between the bed plants and the light, graceful vines



IX This place is striking because of its simplicity and the finished effect resultant. Almost every detail is carefully blended so that it looks as if any one could easily reproduce it



X This inclosed garden has attained privacy, but fails somewhat because there is small difference within and without the inclosure

everywhere, is what Rep-ton called "dotting" or "frittering"; that is, setting things about aimlessly with no perception of their relation to other things. Many a planter seems unable to see an open space in a lawn without desiring to put something in it. This might be put in other ways. Don't put in a flower bed, bush or tree merely because there is an open space. The open center is the commonest motive in informal design, and anything put into it is likely to be an obstruction or a detriment.

Planting material of high and abnormal color, such as Koster's blue spruce, Japanese maples and various "golden" and "silver" shrubs, are far too popular. Such things have a certain loud quality, like a green hat or a vermilion necktie. They are accents only and should be used with much reserve.

It would plainly be out of the question to go into the subject of garden design more than cursorily in this article; but it is

hoped that the points raised will aid in stimulating and guiding thought, and some of them are illustrated by the pictures made from photographs in some of the gardens entered in the last competition. The following short criticisms are added which may assist the reader in forming his own judgment. They should serve to illustrate these doctrines and be of value in demonstrating what the judges considered as good and successful. (Continued on page 396)

Improving the Efficiency of Your Heating Plant

HOW TO LOCATE PIPES AND RADIATORS TO INSURE THE BEST RESULTS—SMALL REPAIRS WHICH YOU CAN MAKE YOURSELF

BY CHARLES K. FARRINGTON

IN deciding where to place your radiators be sure and plan to put one on the first or second landing of the front stairs if possible. Such a location helps much to distribute the heat evenly, and as radiators can now be obtained in so many styles and sizes, you should have no difficulty in placing this one. In these days when doors are as a rule not used in the rooms on the first floor it is of the utmost importance to have a warm hall. A radiator placed as described above will make this possible, but be sure and have it large enough, for plenty of heat is required at this spot.

There seemed to be no location in a certain hall for a radiator, so a coil of pipe was placed underneath the stairs and by enclosing it and obtaining fresh air from outside an "indirect" heating apparatus was made. The heated air passed out through ornamental grille work, which was of course made of metal, as was also the pipe leading to it and the box enclosing the coil, to prevent danger from fire. The effect was very pleasing, and decided economy in floor space was obtained.

It is a good plan to place two radiators in large rooms. Then in severe weather you can always obtain enough heat; and on mild days one of them need not be used. The cost of the additional radiator is not much when the system is being installed; and it need not require much additional piping, as it can be set near the other. You will be pleased with the results.

Nearly every person who uses either steam or hot water heat knows the value of covering the mains leading to the radiators to prevent the loss of heat by radiation where it is not needed. Such covering is sold at a reasonable price, and is usually fastened on to the pipes with tin straps. But the average cellar air will soon rust these straps in summer, even if the cellar is well ventilated and there is no water in it. But if you paint the straps it will protect them, and the cost of doing so is trifling. When they rust through they allow the covering to fall from the pipes, which causes needless expense in replacing it.

Where pipes from your hot water heater run through exposed portions of the house be sure and cover them to prevent the water in them from freezing in cold winter weather: when the furnace fire is low it is apt to do so. Few persons realize this; and also that pipes containing hot water which has become cold will always freeze first. This is especially noticeable where two pipes, one containing hot and the other cold water, run side by side. The cold water pipe will invariably freeze last.

The small air valves which release the air from radiators when the steam enters, without the disagreeable necessity of allowing it to escape by opening a hand valve each time, have now been so improved that they will entirely let the air out, and yet retain the steam and any water which may be present from condensation, as soon as steam enters. If you were disappointed with the earlier models you can now obtain satisfactory ones at small cost. Be sure to buy those which can be adjusted with a small wrench. They are very good. All steam radiators should have some sort of an arrangement for freeing them from air if good results are to be had.

If your radiator valves leak, before having them re-packed, try screwing them down with a wrench. Any person can do this, and it frequently saves you a repair bill. If the steam escapes at such places, in addition to the annoyance of the water which collects from condensation, and which often damages ceilings, etc., you will lose much water out of your boiler. Where there are a number of leaks it will astonish the average person to find how much water will be lost in a few days, and the steam which is also lost reduces the pressure, and so makes the house more difficult to heat.

In a house with which I am familiar a hot water furnace was installed to take the place of an old hot air one. An arrangement was contrived by utilizing one of the old hot air pipes which were not now used, so that by pulling a cord from the second story the coal door of the heater could be closed by the owner without getting out of bed. The cord ran directly from the bed down the pipe, and some distance away from the furnace it was joined to a length of metal chain which was fastened to the furnace door. The chain was used to prevent any danger of fire. This device gave great satisfaction to the members of the household, as it enabled the house to be warmed sufficiently by breakfast time. Another cord and chain could be connected to the draft in some furnaces, and this would also help in getting the fire up in case, as is usual, the draft is shut off at night.

Many furnaces are constructed with the grates set so low that when they are shaken the amount of ashes which falls below touches the grate, or at least, interferes with the draft if the caretaker does not take them out each time. It is difficult to get this done, and therefore you run the risk of a burnt-out grate, which is expensive and annoying. Have a sufficient space underneath the grate even if you have to make it, and so avoid danger from this cause.

Many of the latest pattern grates tilt to allow the fire to be dumped when necessary, but if the fastening (which is often the shaker and an iron hook) slips out—I have found by bitter experience it does often on a cold winter day—and the fire comes down, it is very annoying. After having this happen with an otherwise satisfactory grate a number of times, I decided to have a machinist make an iron pin which could be inserted and fastened, to prevent the hook from unlocking except when the pin was first removed. The cost is small to make this change.

In managing a steam furnace always test with the gauge cocks to determine the height of the water in the boiler, and do not depend altogether upon the amount shown in the gauge glass. It may be accurate many times and then suddenly fail. This is sometimes caused by sediment stopping up the opening below the glass, or the valves above and below it may have been closed. I have known a fire to be lighted when the gauge glass showed water in the boiler when there was none. The valves had been shut to enable some repairs to be made to the glass, and after the work was finished they were not turned on again. It is a serious matter to have a fire underneath a boiler in which there is no water, as it usually if not always means a large repair bill.

If there is a small valve to allow the water in the gauge glass to be drawn off, by all means use it frequently. This will help to prevent stoppage from sediment, and it also keeps the gauge glass clean.

It is common practice these days to put steam and hot water heating pipes inside the walls. But before the walls are put up, and also before the pipes are connected with the radiators, you should test them, by connecting them with the city water. This usually has a high pressure, in most instances far beyond that which the piping will have to stand with a steam or hot water heater as arranged for heating the average dwelling, and if any defects develop they can be easily remedied at this time without tearing out walls or otherwise disturbing the house. It should be borne in mind that the furnace is a machine and requires that intelligent care that is necessary to other machinery. If the heating system is not overhauled every year, it should at least be given some personal investigation.



A PRACTICAL SCHEME FOR USING THE WINDOW BOX ALL THE YEAR—DETAILS OF ITS CONSTRUCTION, LOCATION AND PLANTING—THE BEST PLANTS AND THEIR CHARACTERISTICS

BY F. F. ROCKWELL

Photographs by Mary H. Northend and Others



THE art of window box gardening has been developed to a much higher degree in England and France than it has here. Climate among other things is responsible for this difference. But the opportunities that lie before us in this matter have so far been neglected, and incidentally one of the greatest pleasures of gardening overlooked. Next to the small greenhouse, which of course is not possible for everybody—although they should be more generally possessed than they are—the window box offers an opportunity to provide oneself with the pleasures

of gardening during the usual barren season of fall and winter.

Three of the great advantages window boxes offer are, the saving in space and work in taking care of the plants, and in keeping the place where they may be, clean. A window box three feet long, eight inches wide and six inches deep will accommodate a larger number of plants than several large pots and will require a great deal less attention in the way of watering and furnishing proper plant food. If properly made, too, there will be no trouble from muddy drainage-water and stray pieces of earth, as there frequently is when pots are used unless great care is exercised in making a place for them and in watering, etc. One argument



The window box should be so made and painted that it is, when planted, a really harmonious addition to the room



The surfaces upon which the plants rest are tiled here, so that whether boxes or pots are employed, water from them does no harm

that is urged against them, that the plants cannot be turned around as they can when placed in individual pots, does not necessarily hold good, for it is a simple matter to make boxes that can be turned end for end, when it is deemed that this will prove a desirable thing. The details of the construction and supports of such a box are suggested in the accompanying cut.

Another argument against window boxes is that during the part of the year they are not in use, they are ugly and in the way. As a matter of fact there is no reason why they should be empty



A good use of window boxes above an entrance doorway. The boxes can, of course, be removed when desired

at any season of the year, if one will take the small trouble to ascertain what plants are suitable for use in them at different periods of the year. The window box, where it is used at all, should be kept perpetually occupied. But where for any reason this is not practicable, the detachable box may be taken down and stored away, or moved to some other place and used there until again wanted in its original position. This all-the-year-round service for the window box is an idea that one seldom sees made use of, and it is the purpose of this article to show the possibilities there are in this direction and give information concerning the details of construction, plants, soil, etc., for carrying them out in a way adapted to the requirements of the individual home.

The first things to be considered are the various types of window boxes and the adaptations possible in their use.

The kind which one most frequently sees is simply a deep, narrow box often with no means of drainage or ventilation. It is made by a carpenter knowing nothing of the requirements of

plant growth and fastened securely against the window sill, either inside or out, but generally the latter. The simplest plant box should be provided with ample means of drainage, and should never be fastened close against the sill or below it because water or even moisture gathering in this joint has no way of drying out, and in a short time will decay the wood, and also because a free circulation of air, so essential to healthy plant growth, is prevented. If the box is a plain one, just four sides and a bottom, the latter should at least contain several good sized holes, say $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 inch in diameter, and be filled in such a way that free drainage is allowed by providing some rough material like broken charcoal or brick, or sifted coal-ashes, to place in the bottom before the plant soil is put in.

It is little more work to construct the box so that poor drainage and the disagreeable dripping of mud water after planting, will both be impossible. This is achieved by the simple expedient of putting in a false bottom, which may be done in any of several



The contrast between the red of geraniums and the white Marguerites is at once simple and effective



The Christmas House & Garden



different ways. One of the simplest and most lasting is simply to make the sides deeper than for the ordinary box, say ten, instead of eight inches, and put below the regular bottom (A-B), which is held in place by four small blocks in the corners, a second bottom of galvanized tin or zinc (A-C-B), sloping from both ends to the middle, and having there an outlet which may be plugged with a cork, a short piece of lead pipe being good for the purpose. Upon watering, all surplus moisture drains down through the holes in the regular bottom and may be drained out later at the opening at C, and used for watering the box again, in this way saving any of the plant food which otherwise would be washed out of the soil and wasted. (See diagram on page 395.)

It goes without saying that plant boxes, of whatever sort, should be well made and thoroughly painted. Otherwise they are short lived indeed, for the moisture and warmth to which they are subjected will make short work of them. All joints should be painted with white lead before the pieces are put together, and nail or screw heads painted over with lead. An inside lining of galvanized zinc will increase the life of the box many years and prove not very expensive, while copper is still better. The boxes may be finished by a heavy coat of "outside" dark green or any other suitable color, or may be made very attractive by giving them a covering of rough bark or birch-bark. Generally any further ornamentation will seem out of place, unless it is designed to fit in with the general finish and furniture of the room.

Generally boxes to be used outside may profitably be made heavier and larger than those used inside. It is a mistake, as suggested above, to think that it must be empty and idle half of the year, for there are cold weather plants which will not only thrive, but beautify the usually dull winter appearance of the house and grounds. But, unless this winter feature is desired, a still better way, and a perfectly practical one, is to have a movable box, with rope handles like those shown at D, which are out of the way when not in use and inconspicuous. The ad-



A unique addition to the window box features is a sort of ladder which serves as a framework for climbing ivy

vantages of such an arrangement are many. In the first place you can have a collection of your choicest plants inside your window in winter and outside of it in summer; or if the situation there is too exposed to the sun as is often the case, you can move it bodily during the heat of mid-summer to a more congenial situation in partial shade. Your box can be filled for the winter outside—making no muss in the house—and the plants grown for several weeks under ideal conditions, and got into the

(Continued on page 392)



When placed outside of casement windows the box should not be too close if the windows are often opened and closed



The jutting beams which here support the boxes are in themselves true architectural features of the house

The Place of Mirrors in the House

LET YOUR MIRRORS BE NOT ONLY USEFUL ADJUNCTS BUT ORNAMENTAL ONES AS WELL—SITUATIONS IN WHICH THE DIFFERENT STYLES ARE BEST EMPLOYED

BY KATHARINE NEWBOLD BIRDSALL

Photographs by Mary H. Northend

BEFORE the days of gas and electricity we strove for brilliance in our homes by those means within our reach; we reflected the rays of the candle and lamp by many mirrors, and by the polish of copper and brass—the looking-glass of the ancient Hebrews. To-day we are striving to veil the excess of Twentieth Century light—to tone down the brilliance for which our ancestors longed.

It is this softening process as well as the exercise of good taste that requires judicious selection and arrangement of our looking-glasses. Where in Colonial times the mirror was required to double the light of the mantel candles, and the glass prisms of the fixtures were to catch and distribute rays into the recesses of the rooms, we have to-day such cunning arrangement of electricity and gas that the mirror does not serve as utilitarian a purpose as in olden times. The "built in" mantel glass has little excuse for existence—it is merely a tradition and belongs with the house built in the past few decades. It is not required to reflect either the candles on the mantel or the center light, nor is it a toilet necessity. The new house has plain mantels without glass. If a mirror is desired over the mantel, let it be one with an excuse for occupying so prominent a place; let it be an antique over-mantel mirror of the proper shape and design to grace the space and the room, or at least one of the good reproductions—*real* antique looking-glasses are almost as scarce as the proverbial hen's teeth.

The hanging glass over the mantel is not in good taste, even if an antique, unless it tones in with the general finishing and furnishing of the room. If the antique does not "go" with the furnishings downstairs put it somewhere else—a bedroom can almost always accommodate an extra mirror, unless it be of too heavy a type or elaborate a design. It takes a heavily furnished room to stand either the severe Empire mirror or the heavy style of Louis XV.



A convex mirror with branches for candles such as was popular during the Sheraton furniture period may be used in various places about the house



Excellent harmony with its surroundings is attained by this over-mantel mirror with its divided glass and tastefully carved frame

The American Colonial mirrors—a wide choice—are the safest for present days use; Colonial covers such a multitude of styles and is so universally utilitarian.

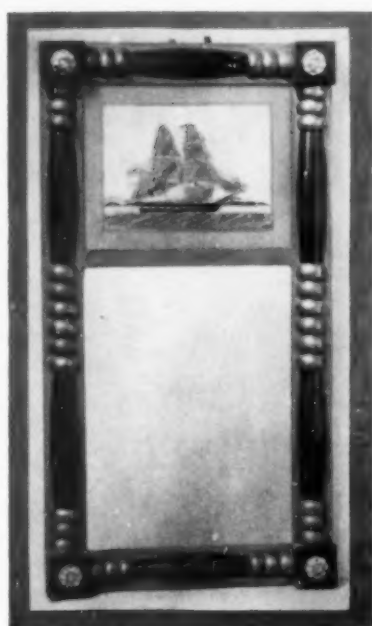
In the right place—in the proper surroundings and right space—a mirror is a most desirable wall ornament; but a small glass hung in the center of a long wall is apt to be as great an eyesore as the large glass hung in so small a section that it overlaps the woodwork of door or window frames between which it is hung.

We must not overlook the use of the mirror as a picture—a moving picture of nature, if you will. If you have a space in the living-room or dining-room whence a bit of woodland or water, or a vista through the trees, or even a single tree, makes an attractive picture, do not fail to make use of the opportunity to secure a

living masterpiece by placing a mirror so that the picture is held therein, with nature's ever-changing coloring and action—a picture which is yours only so long as nature wills.

Queen Anne wall mirrors and recent copies thereof are of many types; the ordinary ones, with flat frames usually of mahogany, are suited to almost any room in the house, to the halls or to the stairs. The classical lines are easily recognized, particularly in the broken "pediment" or triangular section at top—the favorite form of decoration for the looking-glass frame of the time of Queen Anne. The top of glass itself is often curved or otherwise shaped. The

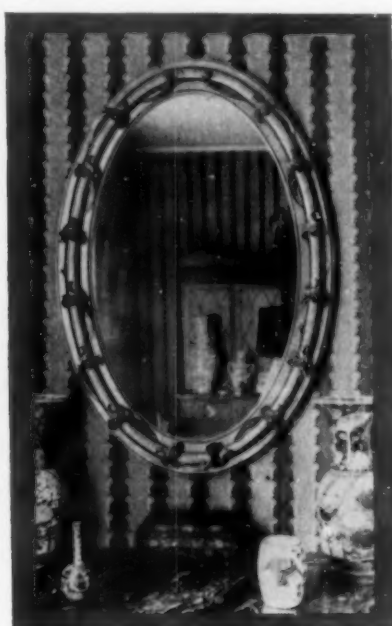
more elaborate frames, with moldings and beadings, and carvings and "embroidery" of plaster in fruit, figures and flowers, are better suited to large rooms. It is advisable to find your mirror space before finding your mirror, to avoid the embarrassment of some householder who cannot provide a suitable spot for the bargain antique or the almost as desirable reproduction.



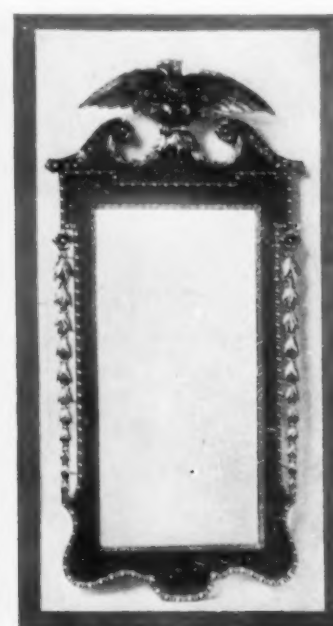
A Colonial style with perhaps too heavy a frame



Two ornamental pins at the bottom hold this to the wall



An old oval mirror with leaf design on the frame



A style that harmonizes with Chippendale furniture

Colonial rooms should have the simpler types of mirrors with broad, flat frames, either with or without divisions in the glass.

French rooms need the florid ornamentation of rococo work of the gilt mirror, or the flamboyant or flamelike design.

If your furniture is "period" furniture, and you wish to have mirrors to correspond as nearly as possible, here are a few general rules to follow in selecting:

To correspond with Chippendale furniture select a mirror with a curved top, with open and fantastically ornamented frame carved in soft wood and gilt.

Adam furniture is matched by oval mirrors with festoons, garlands and medallions as decorations—light and charming.

The Heppelwhite designs are, like the Adam, graceful and charming, and mostly in ovals, ornamented with festoons of the favorite falling bellflower pattern.

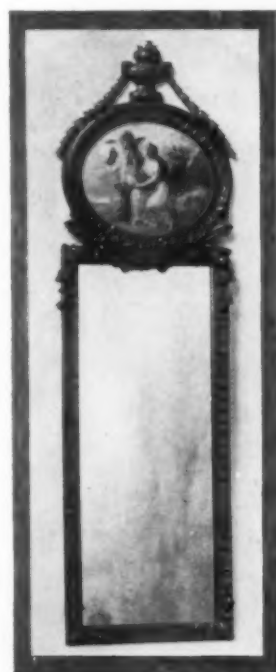
The Empire mirror is rectangular, marked by columns at the

sides and sometimes at top and bottom as well; and in the case of a mantel mirror, between the glasses.

The mirrors popular in the day of Sheraton furniture were usually concave or convex, with gilt frame and branches for candles. Many of these are still preserved in American homes. These concave and convex glasses, by the way, were known as *mirrors* in Colonial times in contradistinction to the plain glasses which were called *looking-glasses*.

The looking-glass for the toilet is confined to the rooms above stairs; its only really utilitarian place downstairs—unless, of course, there are bedrooms on the ground floor—is near the entrance door, or in the kitchen: near the entrance where a guest may glance before entering the reception or living-room proper, and the resident before going into the street; in the kitchen where the maid may view herself before she answers the bell or goes

(Continued on page 399)



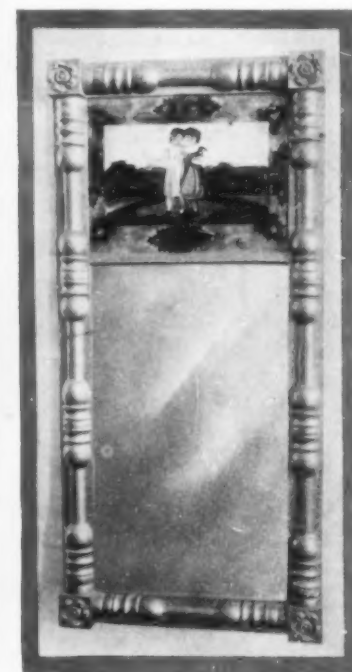
Such formal styles suit the drawing-room



This is a common Colonial form with the black silhouettes in the upper panel



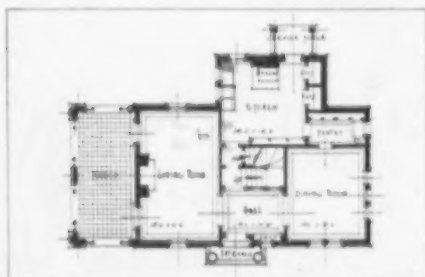
The Empire style has columns at the sides and gilt ornaments



The painting scene is often an important feature



A very simple, small house is this of Italian inspiration, and yet there are many features of attraction about it. The use of decorative casts on the walls is growing more in favor and here is especially fit as it provides variety on an otherwise plain surface

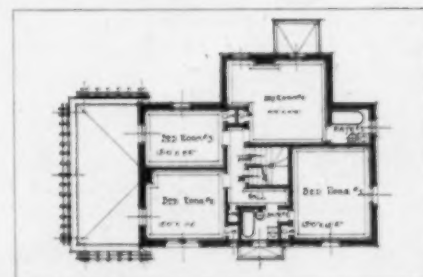


The living-room opens onto a paved porch that is capable of being easily closed in winter

THE HOME OF HENRY F. SAWYER

KENSINGTON,
LONG ISLAND

Aymar Embury, II, architect



The plan is very compact. In a small area four bedrooms and two baths have been provided



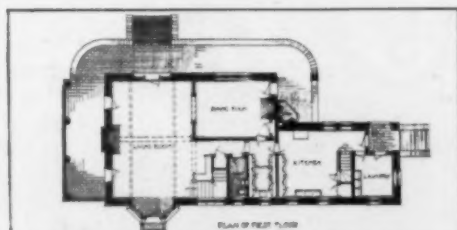
A course of brick headers above the doorway adds life and color



The stairway is in white with dark treads and banisters and the white woodwork is echoed in the baseboards and door frames



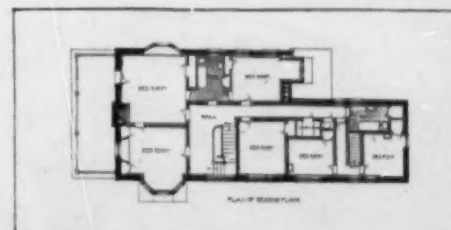
The Germantown stone that is the logical building material in this section is used for the first story of the house. The upper stories are covered with rough cast stucco that blends well with the general tone of the exterior. The double-gabled roof is very common to England and is a pleasing variation from our common style



As there is a rapid slope in the land the piazza is built up around one side of the house as a terrace

A HOUSE AT CHESTNUT HILL,
PENNSYLVANIA

George Spencer Morris & Richard
Erskine, architects



Most of the bedrooms are built opening on a long hall and are given the advantage of outlook



The woodwork is white even to a white beamed ceiling and the walls are left in plaster finish; color is obtained in the rugs



The dining-room is entered by an arched doorway and looks in upon a large fireplace in the living-room. The decoration is very simple



Inside the House

Timely Suggestions and
Answers to Correspondents



The Editor will gladly answer queries pertaining to individual problems of interior decoration and furnishing. When an immediate reply is desired, please enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope.

Echeverias for Table Decoration

TO get something new in the plant line for use in the house is seemingly at first thought an almost impossible proposition, but this is simply because not enough consideration has been given to the matter. There are many ways of making even the commonest plants exhibit such unusual characteristics when used in unusual ways that they evidence strongly the element of novelty.

For instance, the tiny little plants commonly classed as echeverias are usually supposed to be useful only for the much frowned upon carpet bedding, but as a matter of fact any variety of this plant can be made to serve attractively in the house. *Echeveria secunda glauca* is a flat, rosette shaped plant, dark green in color, and decidedly stiff looking. But if a num-

ber of the smaller plants, not more than an inch in diameter are placed in one of the conventional table pans such as are used for small ferns they will in a very short time prove their suitability as a table ornament.

For this purpose they should be put in the pan close together, in a soil with a large percentage of coarse sand, watered sparingly and put on the table. At first they will look flat and unattractive but soon they will change, not only their color, but character of growth, each plant turning a lighter green and sending up a center growth two to three inches high that will be even lighter than the plant itself. The effect is decidedly novel. Because of being closely in the pan one plant supports the other, making a uniform growth that shows at its best when under the lights

at night and the many little accessories of the table are in place. To relieve the severity of the lines it might be well to use a little *anacum* or *Lycopodium* for the edge of the pan.

A small box three inches wide and the width of the window filled with these plants is unusual and pretty. I know they will do well when used this way for I have tried them. The little plants are inexpensive and the methods of propagating them are also interesting. If a leaf is placed in sand, or even the old stump of the plant is so treated, from both the leaves and the stump tiny plants will spring up, provided they are placed in the light and water withheld from them.

Window Flowers Without Soil.

LAST winter I placed a table in each of the two south windows of my dining-room, putting on these tables three glass jars holding a quart of water each. In the jars before the first window I put branches of the barberry, apple and quince—several of each, and on the other table a few branches of forsythia, calycanthus, cherry and plum.

The barberry, with its sharp thorns and many branches, was pretty to look at even before it began to branch out, which it did in a very short time. The leaves set in small clusters, or rosettes, and were of a bright, rich green color; then came the flowers, like tiny yellow roses, fading to white from tip to base. The scarlet fruit, together with the changing flame-colored leaves, make it a plant of great beauty.

The apple blossoms, carried up on long straight stems, were both curious and beautiful; the petals were pure white—no pink tint in the blossoms—and well-opened, showing the bright gold of the anthers and stamens. The leaves also were very beautiful, the gray-green color with the whitish blue tints so unlike in shape and color any of the other leaves. And then the blossoms of the quince, so large, and with petals so thick and velvety—looking almost like a camellia.

In the second window the brilliant golden bells of the forsythia, blooming in advance of the leaves, were most effective. The flowers have a fresh, rain-washed ap-



Echeverias, when set closely in their receptacle, form a thick, uniform growth that shows well under the table lights at night



pearance, and the leaves, coming after the flowers, look clean and beautiful in their tender willow-green coloring, covered, as they are, with a clear, bright varnish.

Dresden Lamps

THE delicate beauty of the Dresden china figure, it is evident, has been fully appreciated by the designers of electric lamps, and some of the most beautiful of these lamps have standards on which the little figures are effectively used as ornaments. While not suitable, of course, with furnishings of any and every sort in a music-room, drawing-room, boudoir or any apartment more or less elaborate in its fittings, such a lamp adds a charming bit of decoration, and serves the purpose of illumination quite as well as one of more practical appearance.

The exquisite little figures with their delicate coloring and perfection of detail are used in groups as well as singly, and some of the groups are quite ornate in their design. White and dull gold are usually employed for the base and standard of such a lamp, the actual colors appearing only in the ornamental figures and their surroundings.

With lamps of this character there is opportunity for the use of elaborate shades that serve to carry out the idea of daintiness, not only of color but of fabric as well. Silks and laces with fringe and gold tinsel are used to make the loveliest of shades that are a fitting accompaniment to the Dresden figures. The shade on the lamp in the illustration is of Valenciennes lace over gold color silk, with narrow gold lace at the top and silk fringe around the lower edge. Lamps of this descrip-



These attractive Dresden lamps may be had in a variety of sizes



The sconce, when properly designed, is both ornamental and useful

tion may be had in several sizes, from the little light for the boudoir, only eight or ten inches, to the table lamp anywhere from eighteen inches to two feet in height.

Sconces

WITH the exception of a few imported sconces of copper and brass that are to be found occasionally in the antique shops, most of the candle holders in this form that are offered for sale in this country are of Sheffield plate. Excellent examples, many of them copies of old pieces, are shown, for single candles, for pairs and for three, or occasionally for four and five. All of these modern sconces have the candle holder branching out in bracket form rather than attached to a circular piece and fastened to the lower edge of the shield, as in the illustration. This is a cruder method, and is seen in many of the sconces that come from Holland and other parts of Europe.

There is no prettier light for a room than that of several candles used as side lights, so that the sconce may be thoroughly useful as well as ornamental if one desires. Various sizes and designs of shields are shown in the Sheffield plate, some with plain, dignified lines, others with the elaborate borders that one always associates with this ware, and a few, though by no means the best examples, have mirrors set in.

If preferred, these same sconces may be had in copper. The silver-plating is simply left off, and as only the best grade of copper is used for Sheffield, such sconces are good-looking and quite satisfactory, and seem more in keeping with the decorations of certain rooms than the silver ones.

Preparing Christmas Boughs

AS Christmas approaches and we begin to think of decorating the house with greens, the following suggestion should be of service: Dip the broken or cut ends of

the fir and pine boughs used in decorating in melted paraffine to prevent the pitch from oozing out and leaving spots wherever it may touch. A few minutes given to this will be well spent.

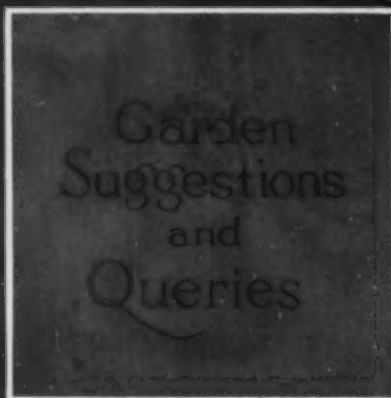
Quaint Clocks from Germany

AMONG the recent importations from Germany are some fascinating clocks for the nursery and kitchen that are decorative in a most appropriate way besides being very satisfactory timekeepers. The nursery clock is quite an imposing affair about fifteen inches high, of white painted wood with a dial done in bold black figures and an enormous pendulum of shining brass that marks time merrily. The decorations are in bright colors and are largely educational in their general tendency. They show a funny little school scene with a schoolmaster, two unhappy urchins and a blackboard at the top, a bag for school books in one lower corner and a bunch of Teutonic-looking switches in the other. At the same time, however, Mother Goose is ably represented in the upper corners by a lamb, presumably Mary's, and the mouse made famous by its peregrinations up the clock.

Timepieces for the kitchen have dials made of china plates decorated with Delft scenes in addition to the figures that indicate the hours. In some of the clocks the plate is inclosed in a wooden rim two inches wide, but many of them consist only of the decorated plate which hangs on the wall just as any ordinary clock would do, and makes a most suitable addition to a blue and white kitchen or one decorated in light colors.



The quaint figures give this nursery clock a peculiar appropriateness



Conducted by
F. F. ROCKWELL

The Editor will be glad to answer subscribers' queries pertaining to individual problems connected with the gardens and grounds. When a direct personal reply is desired please enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope

Work Outdoors

OUTDOORS there is little to be done at this time—but do that little well, for it is important.

First of all, if the ground is not yet frozen hard, be sure to get out any parsnips or oyster-plants you are likely to need before spring; otherwise you are likely to go without them during the winter, and have more than you can use when the ground does thaw out, and you have to get them out of the way for your spring planting.

Then there is the winter mulching to look after—the mulching that has been waiting for frozen ground; for we may repeat here the fact, which most people do not comprehend, that the mulch is not to *prevent* freezing, but to keep the ground frozen, so there will be no alternate freezing and thawing, which is what does the damage. Strawberries require a mulching with some material like marsh hay, which can be left on in the spring—simply pushing it aside to let the plants through. Roses, or any of the perennials which are not absolutely hardy, or have been recently set out or transplanted, may be covered with dry leaves or dry manure, held in place along the edge if required by a strip of narrow chicken wire, supported on small stakes. This will prevent the leaves or litter from blowing about, and keep the general appearance of the place much neater.



A way to keep house plants tidy is to train them on inconspicuous frames

Winter Spraying

THERE is nothing in which quality makes more difference than in fruit. No matter how carefully we tend the few trees of the home, we will not be able to have excellent fruit until that arch enemy of practically all fruit trees, the San José scale, is conquered.

This scale is best fought in winter and early spring because the trees are then in dormant condition and stronger sprays can be used: there is, moreover, less surface to be covered. The secret of success with spraying lies in doing the job thoroughly. Everything should be covered, top, bottom and both sides: a spray nozzle with a "goose neck" is the most convenient type to use, or you may go over the job twice, to make assurance doubly sure, spraying from opposite directions. For the home orchard of a few trees it will hardly pay to mix your own lime sulphur, but this can be bought ready prepared, or one of the miscible oils may be used.

Pruning Hints

PRUNING may also be attended to at this time, as the weather is more likely to be agreeable now than later, and in early spring you will, or should be, busy with other things. In pruning in the orchard, aim to maintain low, evenly spread trees. If you have old, neglected trees that you are trying to get back into shape, do not try to cut away all the new growth, but save a few of the newer limbs that are in the best position, and as these develop, the old branches higher up may be "dehorned," but it will not do to cut out too much of this old growth all at once. Young trees should be cut out very sparingly; if they have been properly attended to from the first, practically all the pruning they need can be given with the jack-knife.

The grape vines, on the contrary, will require quite severe treatment every year, if you care about having the very best fruit. *Grapes fruit only on new growth*—therefore you are sacrificing no part of the crop by cutting the vines back severely. If you have them trained to lateral wires, as they should be for best results, only two to four "arms" are left, and these are

cut back to not more than ten or twelve buds each—thus providing for a crop of forty to a hundred bunches, a sufficiently large one for a young vine to mature. If the main vine is trained over an old-fashioned arbor, cut back all the laterals each year to two or three eyes.

A Suggestion for House Plants

PLANTS that are to be used for window decoration should receive a little attention before too late in the season. If taken from the garden in a hurry to escape a frost and then jammed into pots it will take a long while for them to recover from the shock and it is to avoid this that this treatment is advised.

Pot them some weeks before being wanted and at the same time cut out superfluous wood and shape them to fit the window. That is, make them tidy looking by cutting back and then put them back in the ground to make growth along the lines you desire them to grow. Between the time of cutting and when they have to be taken into the house they will have made great improvement in appearance.

One of the best ways to follow out these suggestions is to train the plants on frames, which are to be made of stout wire with cross pieces arranged to suit the size and shape of the plants. The frames are not difficult to make and the arms may be soldered or wired to the uprights.



On uprights of stout wire crosspieces of proper length are either soldered or wired



The fuchsia does particularly well in the house, especially if placed in a sunny window after being trimmed and tied up to a frame. Dig up one of these plants and cut it to about one half its height; thin out the superfluous side branches but leave a few of the longest on each side. Make your frame and allow sufficient length on the arms for future growth. Tie the branches to the arms with raffia and then put back into the ground. When taken into the house keep it just moist for some time. Give water only when flowers begin to appear. The severe cutting back helps the condition of the plant and together with the lack of water tones it up for early flowering in the spring. A fuchsia treated in this way will give great pleasure by its abundance of bloom but a watch should be kept, pinch out any tendency to rank growth. A few plants of different varieties will make a window show worth having.

Geraniums, too, can be made to do better than ever before by the same methods. Take an old plant and cut out the center, leaving only a branch on each side. Cut out everything but these two branches and then after tying them to a frame give them the benefit of a few weeks in the ground before housing. These plants will flower when taken into the house and they will also have an attractive shape wholly unlike the plants as they usually appear in windows during the winter. They want, of course, a sunny window just as the fuchsias do, to get best results.

This treatment applies to about all plants grown in the garden, the only stipulation being the necessity of preparation early enough to allow the plants to get on their feet, as it were, before being taken into the house. While the treatment of training was suggested as an example, it remains only for one's particular taste to determine the form of growth, whether high or low, and then make their frames to suit this shape.

New Potatoes During the Winter

THAT a supply of new potatoes is of great service during the autumn and winter months goes without saying. Not many gardeners know that to obtain such a thing is really a very simple matter. The

system is so easy that it might well be practised even by those who have no garden at all. It is well to start preparations for the culture while it is still possible to obtain supplies of the previous season's crop. The tubers chosen should be in sound condition and of a fairly good size; if these conditions are complied with it does not matter much what kind of potato is chosen.

The place in which the potatoes are to be grown must be quite dark. A good-sized cupboard, a cellar, or even a large box will answer the purpose well, supposing no other situation is available. Some arrangement in the way of rough staging

until there is little left of them save their skins. In order that a succession of new potatoes may be provided, it is a good plan to start the old tubers on the shelves in batches at intervals of about a month. In this way it is quite a simple matter to arrange for a supply of this delicacy all through the autumn and winter. In one case which came under notice, good crops of potatoes were still being gathered in February.

In order to secure the best results it is desirable that the potatoes produced in the novel manner should be carefully cooked. The potatoes are said to be nicest if boiled slowly for about seven or eight minutes in an enameled saucepan and then steamed until fully cooked.



After the potatoes have been in the dry mold for six weeks or so, the small white tubers will commence to bud out on them

should be provided, though often enough existing shelves are quite satisfactory. On these it is desirable to spread two or three inches of dry mold. All is now ready for the putting of the tubers in position.

The potatoes should be placed singly on the shelves, so that they are well embedded in the soil, although it is not essential that they should be entirely covered. There is nothing more to do save to examine the tubers for any sign of mold, which should be at once cleared away. Also it is very important to see that no rays of light can reach the potatoes, as this will encourage the production of leaves, a very undesirable feature which prevents the budding out of young tubers.

After about six weeks it will be observed that the potatoes are beginning to bud off small white tubers, and these will steadily increase in size until, when they are as large as walnuts, they may be gathered. All the small tubers will be worth leaving, as these will steadily increase in size until ready for gathering. So the old potatoes will go on producing

gonias, delicate ferns, or other things that will wither or quickly lose their beauty when removed from the humid atmosphere of the florist's. To every thing you purchase in this line apply the test "How long will it last in our house?" Some plants will do well at a moderate temperature and with plenty of fresh air, and these are, of course, much more suitable for your purpose. Such for instance is the beautiful cyclamen, an ideal Christmas plant. And such common things as the geranium and flowering begonias are not to be despised. A good healthy geranium is much to be preferred to a failing azalea, or brown-leaved maiden-hair fern, even if it did cost only one-tenth as much. Elsewhere in this magazine will be found information as to keeping plants healthy in the dwelling house, and in such difficult positions as in partly shaded windows, or for center-pieces. Mention is made too, of plants that are not well known as house plants, although especially suited for this purpose, and you should make yourself familiar with these.

Winter Cheer in the House

THE garden, however, is several months off, and while it is not a bit too early to realize what it can do for us, and to begin to plan what we can do for it, there are other things that demand more immediate attention. One of these is the decoration of the house for the holiday season, and as long after as possible. For this stop and think twice before you spend your money for wreaths, cut flowers, glorious but tender be-



EDITORIAL



CHRISTMAS IF there is one festival among all the year's holidays that is a home celebration, it is Christmas. St. Nicholas is the last image upon the shelf that once bore our household gods. Whatever any man's religious views may be, he thrills at Christmas.

To prove our point, we must speak of one who possessed the true Christmas spirit. He was a little Chinese laundryman who had the linen of certain families in our neighborhood to launder. When the Yuletide season came he pattered around to his customers with a present of a box of those peculiar Chinese nuts and a case of Chinese tea. Why be skeptic and say, "Shrewd beggar"? He alone of all the tradesmen murmured a greeting, and his "Mellie Clistmas" had a genuine ring of good fellowship, and the smile he wore during the holiday season was not a forced one. He left his lesson.

There is an underlying feeling of good will between men, and as December draws toward its close it is evident. However circumstances may prevent our acting out this spirit, there is little to keep the family from cultivating it. With sufficient Christmas spirit inculcated about the hearth there should be impetus enough to carry the proper attitude throughout the year.

And the Country, that is the real place to celebrate Christmas. Snow lies over the fields, smoothing over the bareness of the late fall. The trees wrapped in white cloaks hunch comfortably together. The landscape is transformed into a mystic canvas. Where before bold brilliance flaunted, now the nature artist does an exquisite work. Every dilapidated, wind-tossed twig and fluttering reed has become a delicate crystal lance or sceptre for the fairy folk. There are delicate writings on the white page of the snow, strange ice caverns beneath the huddled bushes and deep into the smooth hills that once were heaped up brush. It is plain that other life is abroad. Who denies that the thing that looks like a dried leaf scudding on the snow-crust is the hurrying car of one of "the little people"? No mere breeze shows such evident definiteness of purpose. Will you deny that there are reindeer and aerial sleighs? Everything is finished so daintily there must be a faerie folk to carve the marble traceries where the barberries once were, for instance, and to gem them with string coral is the work of a magician. The impressionists of fall have given place to the exquisites of winter. Nature has led man into another gallery of a different school.

Within doors the garlanded house hints broadly the echo of the fields. The fire laughs merrily in anticipation of Christmas joys and seems to smack its lips in anticipation of feasts to come. And the individuals are all bewitched—else what means this secretiveness? Work, bustle and hum and an undercurrent of mystery are present.

Nor can the flushed cheek and sparkle of eye be altogether attributed to the crisp air or the exhilaration of a snow-shoe lope across country for fir boughs.

Such is the setting of a country Christmas; thrice lucky he who is blessed with it, happy he who appreciates it. The man who lives away from the city has a big advantage over his urban brother, especially at Christmas, let him make the best of it. Drag in the yule log, let Saint Nicholas reign—the old-fashioned Christmas of love and the giving of gifts; the hospitable Christmas of gathered friends and relatives, of song and merriment.

May the story that begins this Christmas number give you pleasure; within it is our Christmas greeting.

ART FOR ART'S SAKE

ART used to be a healthy creature. It was loved; it occasioned delight and caused pleasure. Its success depended on appreciation—an honest appreciation of intrinsic value. Whether one owned a picture or not made little difference; one could like

it just the same and in that very appreciation become the real possessor of it.

Nowadays we notice a different basis of regard. Intrinsic beauty is a negligible quantity; what counts is rarity, old age and historic connection; upon these factors we place our value. And with such appreciation we turn our homes into museums or curiosity shops, for when worth is dependent on these factors we must actually own our works of art or the interest flags.

There is the genuine sketch by Brush at which we point with pride. It makes no difference to us that he was afflicted with violent attacks of indigestion when he did it, or that it was rescued from the ash heap where he threw it in disgust; if the pedigree is vouched for we cherish it. Few would stop to admire the thing itself; if it came from the hands of the great master, that is enough.

Likewise with things that are old or that belonged to some famous person. The furniture that, let us say, General Grant started housekeeping with becomes an artistic relic much sought after. It might have been acquired in exchange for soap wrappers and been cast out as soon as the General could afford something better. The fact that it belonged to him makes its purchaser oblivious of its battered condition and ugliness, and it is given a place of honor in the house.

So we collect, enticed by the fascinating intimation that our "objects of art" are over a hundred years old, or excavated from the pyramids, or belonged to the second cousin of the Queen.

What happens? The comfortable living-room of a family bearing a very fair reputation for sanity—except perhaps among social rivals—has a miscellaneous conglomeration of utterly useless articles. There is a lecturn acquired from a bankrupt Greek church, some old New England farmhouse chairs, an Egyptian mummy case, four or five brass candlesticks, an Empire cabinet—why prolong the list, there is an infinite combination possible, perhaps more heterogeneous than this.

We do not decry the fun of collecting, but we do advocate consistency, and utility—when the things that are collected are for use and decoration. There are reasons why some old things are desirable—handwork and painstaking craftsmanship, the mellow coloring of age, for instance. But when antiquity is the sole recommendation, the article has no place in the home.

Another consideration is fitness. When one is furnishing the home this must be first insisted upon. The most beautiful Sheraton sideboard is out of place in the dining-room of stained cypress and rough plaster. Either redecorate or sacrifice the sideboard. Like considerations hold for pictures, and hangings and rugs. No one would care to prop up the Sistine Madonna in his country house, even if he could get the original. It is a wonderful painting, and the work of a great master, but—of course this is *ad absurdum*—such blatant incongruities are universally common.

We should begin to drive out those false axioms that point to the past for everything that is artistic. Perhaps Greece acquired a perfection that has never been attained since, but in the intervening years there have been many dark ages when beauty was not discovered either in the works of the painter or the artisan. If we get over this worship of the generation that has gone, we will soon discover that our homes are brighter, fresher, and more comfortable than ever before. For to gather antiques requires the sharpest acumen in these days, and even then the purchaser is apt to discover himself the dupe of a clever counterfeiter.

There are some simple canons to guide us in our art ventures, and perhaps the first is honesty and true consultation of personal taste. Consistency to existing surroundings and adaptability for every-day needs and comforts are final requisites for permanent satisfaction.



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The Furniture of this period exerted a strong influence over the productions of Spain, Flanders and Germany, and even of France and England.

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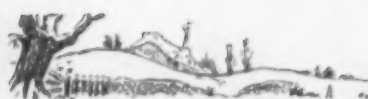
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An Adventure in Building.

(Continued from page 366)

The mantel in the vaulted hall is of Carrara marble, beautifully carved, but only about half of the original is used; all superfluous members were left off. The mantel in the living-room was made of odds and ends.

The vaulted hall and great hall are plastered with Caenstone cement and left in its natural color; the floor of the vaulted hall is paved with white and black marble tiles.

The building is heated by hot water from two boilers coupled together so that one or both may be used separately or together, and the west wing may be entirely shut off in winter if desired and the plumbing drained. The east wing is large enough for the family and one guest room extra so that the west wing need only be used in the event of having guests.

The garden is not less interesting than the house, and is based on the old walls of the greenhouses. Here the same careful planning has been used, and there are several levels that have all the feeling of an old English estate. There is still the need of time to perfect it, for one cannot remodel plants. With a year or two of growth the garden will be worth describing.



Do You Help the Birds in Winter?

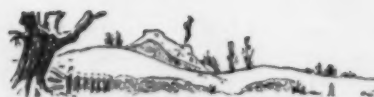
(Continued from page 362)

ducks were starved and frozen to death on Martha's Vineyard, Mass., and elsewhere because of the fact that the feeding grounds of these birds were ice-bound. If enough corn and possibly other grains could have been administered at once in a systematic way the mortality would have been much reduced. Black ducks and others become wonderfully tame or bold in Portland (Me.) Harbor and the Boston Public Gardens in cold weather when they are glad to throw off their mantle of shyness in their eagerness to partake of the simple fare that is laid before them.

It is not to be presumed that everyone can feed the winter birds on a large scale—it would incur too much trouble and expense—but all should be able to maintain some sort of feeding station, simple though it may be. If you have never tried it, by all means do so during the winter of 1912-13, and toward the end of March when your feathered patrons become fewer as they return to their normal ways of feeding in the woodlands you will feel a pang when you realize that the death of winter will mark the close of the "three ring circus" that has performed near your window the past several months.

DECIDUOUS TREES

Sugar maple (*Acer saccharinum*).
Flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*).
White thorn (*Crataegus coccinea*).
Cockspur thorn (*Crataegus crus-galli*).
Native red mulberry (*Morus rubra*).
Tupelo (*Nyssa sylvatica*).



Bird cherry (*Prunus pennsylvanica*).
 Sand cherry (*Prunus pumila*).
 Black cherry (*Prunus serotina*).
 Choke cherry (*Prunus virginiana*).
 Mountain ash (*Pyrus americana*).

EVERGREEN TREES

Red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*).
 Prostrate juniper (*Juniperus communis*).
 White spruce (*Picea alba*).
 Red spruce (*Picea rubra*).

SHRUBS

Shad bush (*Amelanchier canadensis*).
 Spice bush (*Benzoin odoriferum*).
 Blue cornel (*Cornus alternifolia*).
 Gray cornel (*Cornus candidissima*).
 Silky cornel (*Cornus sericea*).
 Red osier cornel (*Cornus stolonifera*).
 Dangleberry (*Gaylussacia frondosa*).
 Huckleberry (*Gaylussacia resinosa*).
 Inkberry (*Ilex glabra*).
 Black alder (*Ilex verticillata*).
 Bayberry (*Myrica cerifera*).
 Shining sumach (*Rhus copallina*).
 Smooth sumach (*Rhus glabra*).
 Poison ivy (*Rhus toxicodendron*).
 Staghorn sumach (*Rhus typhina*).
 Poison sumach (*Rhus venenata*).
 Large-flowering currant (*Ribes floridum*).
 Swamp gooseberry (*Ribes lacustre*).
 Thimbleberry (*Rubus occidentalis*).
 Red raspberry (*Rubus strigosus*).
 Low blackberry (*Rubus canadensis*).
 High blackberry (*Rubus villosus*).
 Common elder (*Sambucus canadensis*).
 Panicked elder (*Sambucus pubens*).
 Snowberry (*Symphoricarpus racemosus*).
 Dwarf bilberry (*Vaccinium coespitosum*).
 High-bush blueberry (*Vaccinium corymbosum*).
 Low-bush blueberry (*Vaccinium pennsylvanicum*).
 Hobble bush (*Viburnum alnifolium*).
 Arrow wood (*Viburnum dentatum*).
 Sheepberry (*Viburnum lentago*).
 Withe-rod (*Viburnum nudum*).
 High-bush cranberry (*Viburnum opulus*).
 Black haw (*Viburnum prunifolium*).

VINES

Virginia creeper (*Ampelopsis quinquefolia*).
 Frost grape (*Vitis cordifolia*).
 Fox grape (*Vitis labrusca*).
 Frost grape (*Vitis vulpina*).

HERBACEOUS PLANTS

Sarsaparilla (*Aralia nudicaulis*).
 Strawberry (*Fragaria virginiana*).
 Pokeberry (*Phytolacca decandra*).



Handicraft House Furnishings

(Continued from page 369)

nary stock. It is not expensive, a rug 9 x 12 feet costing \$27.50 to \$30, and with its plain color and good border, as well as the possibility of working out a satisfactory color scheme, it makes a most suitable floor covering for a room in which the handicraft idea predominates.

To a certain extent curtains and couch covers and pillows can be a matter of individual taste even more than wall and



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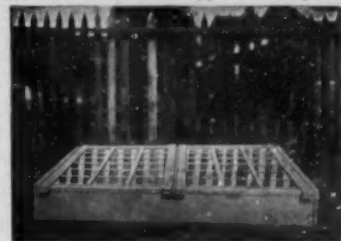
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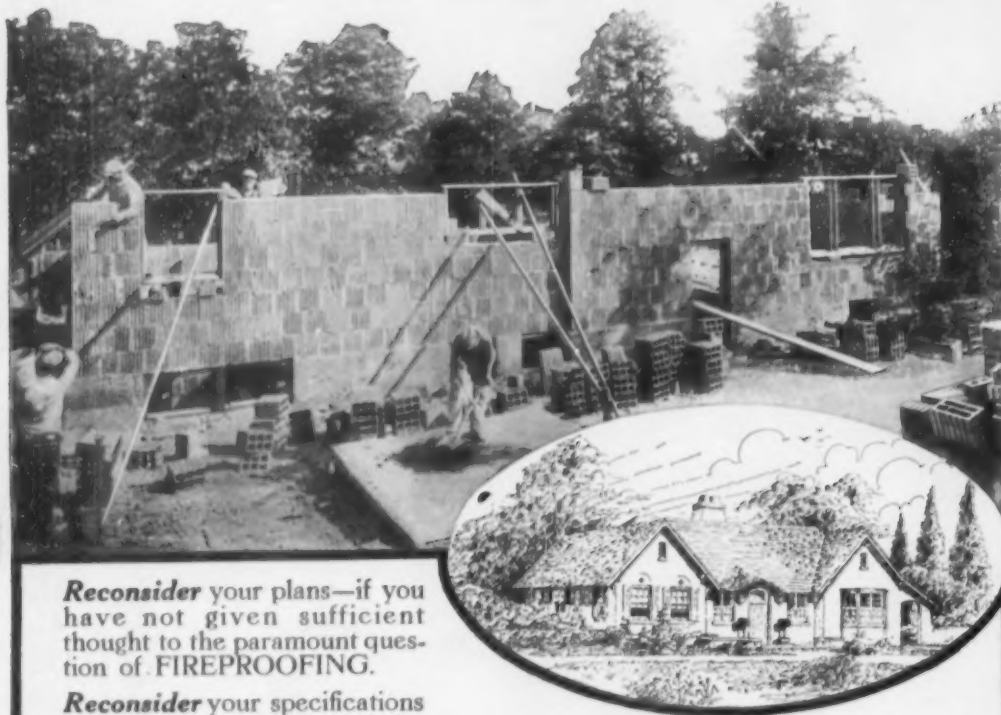
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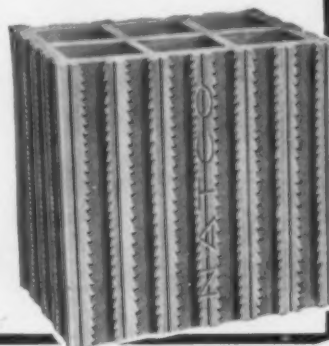
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floor coverings, for in working out a handicraft scheme at least, there is more possibility of using one's original ideas in their decoration, without having to depend on what may be found in a shop. Here too the stencil plays an important part, and by its use decorative effects can be produced that will differ from the general run of decorations in other people's houses, the amount of difference depending on the originality and skill of the designer.

If one does not care to have the bother of stenciling, the materials, colors and stencils may be selected, the scheme of decoration planned to suit one's own taste, and the whole thing turned over to a hand crafter who will carry out the work according to directions.

Materials in coarse weaves are most suitable for hangings and curtains whether they are to be stenciled or not. Fabrics like monk's cloth which comes in good tones of green, old blue, tan and brown, and Russian crash are excellent for portières and couch covers, and scrim in its various qualities for curtains. Russian crash is of course an old story, and has been popular ever since the first amateur stenciler took to the brush, but after all there is nothing more satisfactory, as it washes like the proverbial rag, and when stenciled in fast colors even the decorated pieces come back from the tub as good as new. A good quality in a hand woven Russian crash fourteen inches wide which may be had for twenty cents a yard, has rather a hard finish that makes it smoother than the ordinary hand woven stuff and therefore more suitable for stenciling. Monk's cloth, the loose weave fabric so suggestive of handwork, is particularly satisfactory for portières as it comes in a fifty inch width and is only sixty cents a yard, with a narrower width at forty-five cents; the colors are good, and it may be decorated with either stenciling or coarse embroidery. Then of course for the persons who carry the handicraft idea to the extreme limit there are the hand-woven old-fashioned coverlets made in certain rural districts that are the exact patterns of the bedcoverings of a hundred years ago. These are to be had in combinations of blue and white and several shades of brown, and are utilized both for couch covers and portières.

Scrim is without doubt the most satisfactory material for curtains that are to be stenciled, and it may be had in white, ivory or écru and in various degrees of quality, a medium coarse piece costing thirty cents a yard, while for casement curtains there is a narrow kind, hem-stitched, which is also thirty cents. Of thinner quality than scrim but of practically the same appearance is an art linen that is thirty-three inches wide and costs thirty-five cents a yard. It is so fine as to be almost like gauze, and yet it too has a hard finish, so that it will take stenciling as well as a heavier material.

The selection of suitable stencils should not be difficult, as there is an enormous



variety available, from the little three inch figure that costs twenty cents to a section of an elaborate frieze for a wall 19 x 33 inches in size for \$2.40, or a panel forty-seven inches high for \$3.00. Or special stencils may be ordered, cut from one's own designs, or to correspond with figures in rugs or wall paper.

It is quite worthy of mention, however, that excellent reproductions of stenciled designs may be had in curtain materials and also in portières, if one wants the effect without doing the work, and is not particular about the absence of originality in the decorations. A novelty of this kind is a portière of monk's cloth in écru, with a stenciled border showing a design of conventionalized poppies that may be had in either red or blue. The portières are two and one-half yards long and cost \$3.75 a pair. Good quality scrim with a fancy border in stenciled effect is only thirty-five cents a yard, and for the same price there is a scrim designed especially for bedrooms, that has a colored border at either side.

Much the same effect can be obtained by the application of figures or a running border cut from cretonne, and for a bedroom with cretonne hangings this scheme often proves more satisfactory than an attempt at stenciling or matching the cretonne in a bordered curtain.

One of the many desirable characteristics of handicraft pillows is that they look as though they are made for use and not for show. They really are proof against wear and tear, and although made of heavy, substantial fabrics there is practically no end to their decorative possibilities. Pillows of Russian crash or coarse linen in the natural color are quite as satisfactory as any other kind, as they will combine well with almost any decorative scheme, and when stenciled or embroidered in coarse silk or raffia they often provide just the bit of color necessary to complete a thoroughly artistic room. Rather more elaborate in appearance are the cushions of silk or denim stenciled in an all-over design that gives the appearance of a rare fabric, the sort that is not to be picked up every day.

Among the most effective and serviceable of the handicraft cushions are those made of unsoun hemp, the same quality that is used for making rope. The hemp which comes in perfectly straight strands is dyed any desired color, and woven in the same way that the rag rugs are made, the result being a coarse silky looking fabric that is handsome and practically indestructible. Pillows of this sort costing from \$3 to \$5 are to be had only on order, and are one of the products of the weavers whose work is sold by the New York Association for the Blind.

Rag pillows in solid colors or mixed effects, made of either silk or cotton are to be had in the shops, as well as by special order from hand weavers, and of course there is an endless variety of pillows of burlap or denim in plain colors, that can be bought for a small amount and used to

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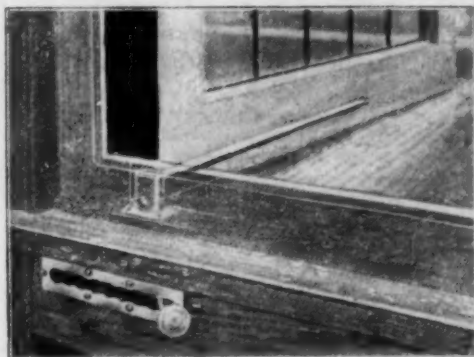
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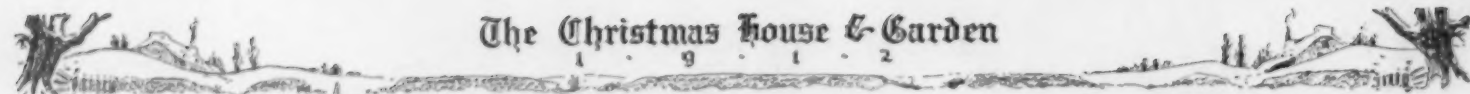


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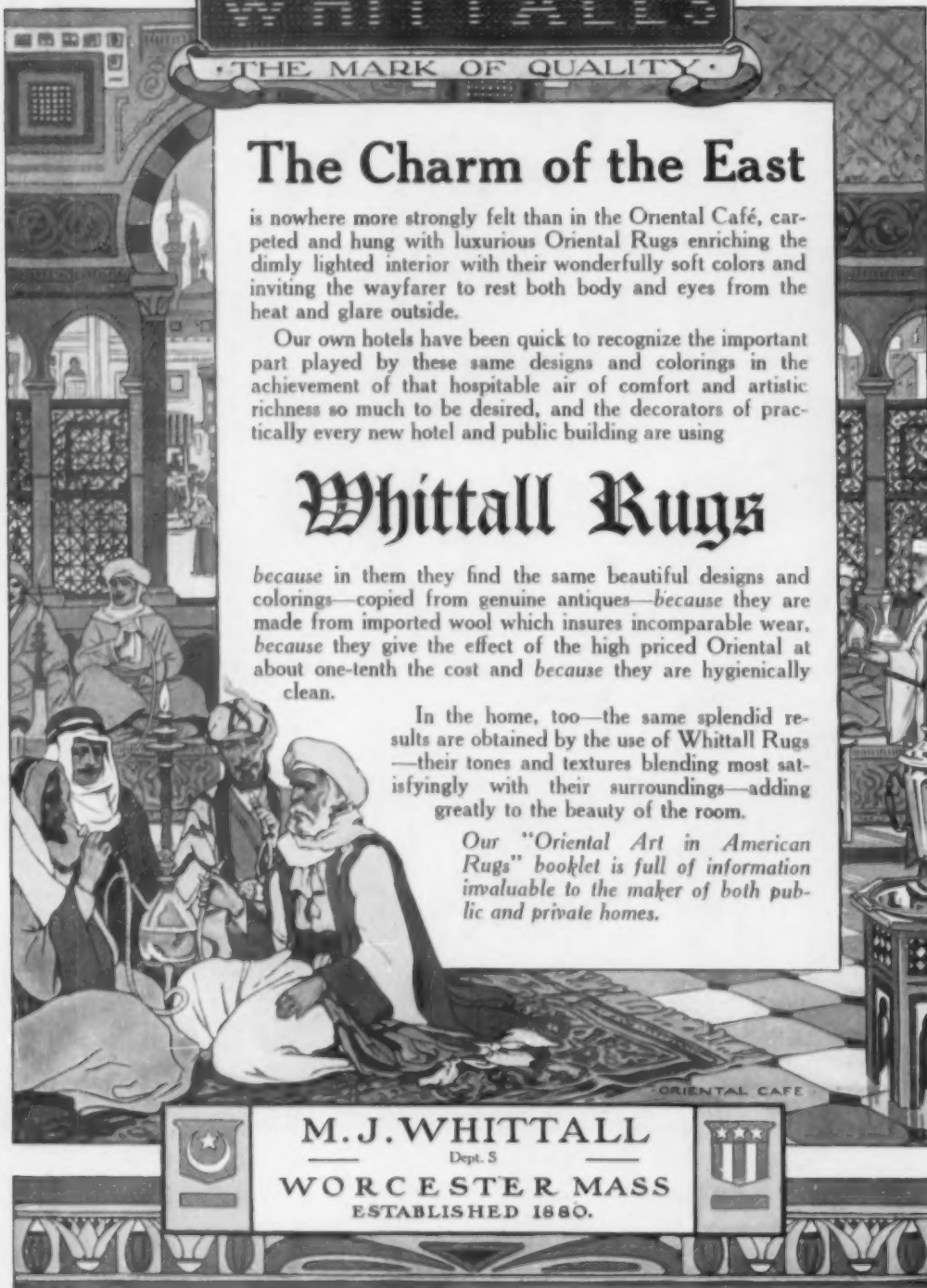
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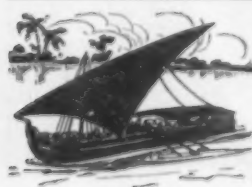
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fill in with cushions of more pretentious design.

In the way of furniture there is nothing more suitable for use with the handicraft scheme than old mahogany, but unfortunately not everyone possesses such treasures, and many people who do prefer to use them in a more formal way, with rugs and hangings of a much more elaborate character. Good reproductions of much of the Colonial furniture are to be had at small cost from various manufacturers, not in an imitation of mahogany, but in plain and quartered oak that may be had in the natural wood or stained as desired. Tables and chairs, settles and chests and sideboards that give an impression of solidity and comfort are designed on dignified, perfectly plain lines, and are just as much in keeping with modern handicraft furnishings as were their prototypes with the rag rugs and homespun fabrics made by the Eighteenth Century house-keeper. Modern handicraft has gone the Puritan mother one better though, for to her simplicity of construction and genuineness of material it has added the decorative touch that brings it into line with the modern idea of luxury and beauty.



Twelve Months of Window Box Bloom

(Continued from page 377)

best of shape for winter blooming, with no setback due to shifting them when the time for bringing in arrives. Then when you want to shower your plants, or give them a fumigating, in case of trouble with insects, the whole box, without disturbing the plants in the least, is moved to a convenient place, and no carpets or floors are wet or furniture scented up with strong tobacco smoke. Shallow mortises cut in the bottom edges of the box, and corresponding ones in the box supports, insure its being held firmly in place at the desired distance away from the window sill. Considering the fact that it is practically no more trouble to make the window box a movable one, and that there are so many advantages in having it of this type, there is no reason for sticking to the old built-in-solid sort.

The window box is exactly different from a collection of plants in pots in that the relative position of the plants, in the former instance, cannot be changed. This must, of course, be kept in mind when the box is being filled, and the general effect planned. Regard must be given the size of the various plants when full grown, so that some small specimen of a tall, rapid-growing sort may not inadvertently be placed in front of a plant of dwarfer habit. The amount of light and the degree of temperature likely to be maintained at night must also be taken into consideration. There is no use putting heliotropes and begonias near a window where the



temperature may go down to forty degrees on cold nights, or geraniums where they will never get the sunlight, and expecting them to do satisfactorily.

The number of plants available for window box use, at various seasons of the year, is quite extensive. The following table includes the most available of them, and the number of good combinations is almost unlimited. As a general rule, however, by far the most satisfactory results will be gained by using only a few different kinds of plants in one box. Too many ingredients are almost sure to spoil the picture.

PLANTS FOR WINDOW BOX GARDENING.
FLOWERS. REMARKS.

WINTER—INDOORS.

Abutilon	(Can be used outdoors in summer.) Medium tall flowering shrub—very free blooming.
Ageratum	Good for borders and mixing with upright plants.
Alyssum	Low or hanging border; in constant bloom.
Ardisia	Evergreen foliage; clusters of bright red berries; very striking.
Asparagus	Warm temperature; climbing or trailing habit; beautiful foliage.
Begonia	Several sorts; some stand sun well; light soil.
Calla	Very rich soil; plenty of moisture; there are dwarf sorts.
Carnation	Medium heavy soil; low temperature; requires good care.
Dianthus	Very hardy; new kinds greatly improved.
Dracaena	Very graceful; good for background or centers.
Forget-me-not	Low growing; free flowering.
Fuchsia	Medium tall flowering shrub; trailing habit; partial shade.
Geranium	Rather heavy soil; full sunlight.
Grevelia	Graceful foliage shrub; very hardy.
Heliotrope	Warm temperature; rather tender; full sun.
Hibiscus	Beautiful perpetual flowering shrub; restricted root room.
Impatiens	Begonia-like plant; ever blooming; partial shade or sun.
Lantana	Climbing or drooping habit; free flowering; very hardy.
Lemon Verbena	Warm temperature; lemon scented foliage.
Lobelia	Fine for edges; very free flowering; bright blue.
Petunia	Hardy; free flowering; procumbent habit.
Primrose	Very free flowering; low growing; partial shade.
Portulaca	Mass of brilliant colors; full sun.
Rubber	Very hardy; slow growing; partial shade.
Snapdragon	Tall; hardy; fine colors; very free flowering.
Stocks	Very sweet scented; free flowering if kept cut.
Tradescantia	Hanging vines; rapid growing; green and variegated.
Verbena	Cool temperature; free flowering; spreading habit.
Vinca	Beautiful trailing, hanging vine; hardy; green and variegated.

SUMMER—OUTDOORS.

Ananas	Most beautiful of the variegated-strap-leaved foliage plants.
Candy-tuft	Medium tall; free flowering; strong colors.
Coleus	Full sun; rich soil; may be kept pruned to shape.
Glaudiolus	Tall spikes; scant foliage; fine in background.
Mesembryanthemum corditolum	Strong growing; very hardy; covered with wax flowers, if given sun.
Paris Daisy	Large; free flowering; sun or shade.
Pandanus Veitchii	Variegated foliage plant; fine bold effect.
Salpiglossis	Tall; scant foliage; beautiful flowers freely borne.
Salvia	Medium height; brilliant reds; full sun.
Zinnia	Medium height; masses of color; rather coarse.

FALL AND WINTER—OUTDOORS.

Aspidistra	Very hardy; plenty of water; green and variegated.
Evergreens, hardy	Dwarf sorts; plant deep; mulch top of soil.
Farfugium, Grande	Will stand zero weather; partial shade; well drained; very rich soil.
Pompon Chrysanthemum	Blooms until very late; small flowers in clusters; fine colors.
Rhodesa Japonica	Evergreen; very hardy; green and variegated.
Sedum, Spectabilis	Beautiful hardy fall flowering plants; low growth.
Vinca, Minor Aurea	Beautiful trailing vine, with golden variegation; very hardy.

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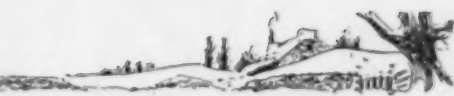
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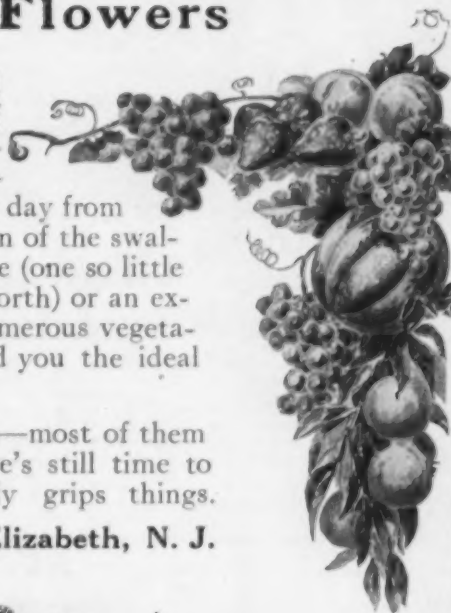
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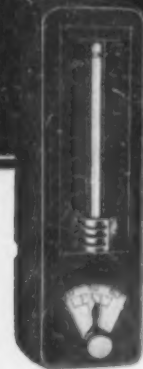
The kind of plants it is advisable to use will depend of course upon local conditions; it may be, for instance, that the outlook from the window in which the box is placed is not a pleasant one, and in this case it would be desirable to use plants tall enough to shut out the view from the lower part of the window, thus furnishing the double purpose of a beautiful ornament and a screen. For such a situation, a row of begonia Vernon, white and pink, in the outer edge of the box, with sweet alyssum and lobelia (white and blue) in front, and vinca, a few plants, or tradescantia trailing down at the front, make a very pleasing, artistic effect. If it is preferable to keep the full view of the window, some lower growing plant, such as English daisies, verbenas, portulacas—or primroses; if the window faces east or west—are used. In this case, the monotonous effect is broken by placing a plant of taller growth, such as a geranium, begonia, rubber plant, lemon verbena or small dracaena, at either end of the box, forming a sort of living framework for the exterior view. Some of the prettiest effects imaginable are to be obtained in this way.

For summer planting outside the window, or on the edge or rail of the veranda—an excellent place for keeping the movable window box when it is not wanted inside the house—the greatest range of effects is possible, for there is generally no restriction as to height or depth, and large dracaenas and rubbers, Paris daisies, tall-growing geraniums, summer vines, such as cypress and *Cobea scandens*, and trailing vines and plants, such as nasturtiums, vinca major, ivy, geraniums, sedums, and German ivy, may be used to great advantage—only, as indoors, the most pleasing results are obtained with masses of one or two colors and forms, rather than from mixtures. One of the most attractive combinations I know is S. A. Nutt or Silverleafed Nutt geraniums, interspersed with dracaenas of medium size with a row of Mme. Salleroi foliage geraniums in front, and a hanging border of alternate vincas and ivy geranium, Corden's Glory. The only colors are red, green and white, but the effect is very striking and well maintained, as all these plants stand the sun well.

The window box is not necessarily restricted to the first story. Very original and beautiful effects are achieved with balcony and bay window boxes, especially where they can be placed on a sheltered side of the house. Vincas and other hanging vines, under such conditions, will attain remarkable length and beauty. Abroad it is no uncommon sight to see several rival window gardens one above the other on the face of the same building.

The most neglected possibility of the window box is the way they are left empty and unsightly from mid-autumn to late spring. In localities where the thermometer does not go below zero there are a number of plants that will come through safely. While undoubtedly more pleasure is to be had by bringing the box in-

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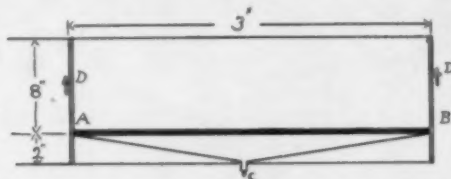
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side for the winter, still, where for any reason this cannot be arranged, the boxes should be made to contribute their share to the winter exterior aspect of the house, and it need be no mean one. For late fall display, such flowers as *sedum spectabilis*, and the pompon chrysanthemum can be used. *Aspidistra*, *Farfugium grande* and *Dracaena indivisa* will stand a great deal of cold weather. For all winter effect, a few evergreens or boxwoods of suitable form, edged with the hardy vinca (*minor aurea*) are unsurpassed, and add a very welcome note to the generally life-forsaken look of things.

Another novel plan, where the right conditions—a sheltered, partly shaded situation—exist, is to have a few plants of the Christmas rose (*Helleborus niger*) where they may display their welcome out-of-season blossoms to the best advantage.



A plan of an improved window box with double bottom. D, rope handles; A-B, zinc bottom; A-C-B, zinc bottom; C, drain

A big factor in determining the degree of success you may attain in your window gardening will be the soil you use. This should not be taken haphazard from any out-of-the-way spot on the place, but should be of a fine, porous, light nature, with about one-third old, well-rotted stable manure mixed through it. In small amounts, enough for two or three window boxes, probably the best way will be to get it ready mixed at some nearby florist's—if you start in after freezing weather, this will be about your only course. Wood ashes will make a good addition, as they help the soil and also add potash to the plant foods therein.

In filling the boxes care should be taken to see that the drainage holes are covered so that they will not be clogged up with earth; and a layer of rough material should be placed in the bottom, and covered with moss before the prepared soil is put in. If you are going to arrange your own flowers, a good plan is to leave the top three inches of soil off, and place the plants, still in their pots, in position, rearranging them as often as necessary until you are satisfied with the result. Then fill up nearly to the surface, and plant, leaving the soil depressed below the sides of the box sufficiently to hold water until it has a chance to soak in.

Some plants require a richer soil than others. Callas, for instance, luxuriate in a soil made rich with cow manure added to a third or more of its bulk, and plenty of water. In cases of this kind, where other plants are to be grown in the same box, temporary partitions may be used, or the plant to be favored may be placed in a



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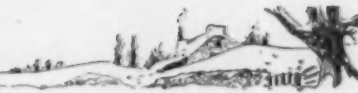
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pot of specially prepared earth, and sunk in the regular soil in the box, where, if necessary, it may be given special treatment in the way of water, liquid manure, etc. Animal manures, preferably containing a large percentage of cow manure, should be diluted to about the color of weak tea. It should never be applied while the soil in the boxes is dry.

Where plants are grown inside, the window should be so arranged that ventilation can be given from the top, or, better still, through another window, to avoid any direct draught on the plants. On very cold nights they should be protected from cold striking through the glass by having several sheets of newspaper inserted between them and the window. And above all else, scrupulous care must be taken to guard against such plant enemies as aphids, mealybug and red spider. Fumigating, spraying with nicotine preparations or aphine, and keeping the air sufficiently moist, will prevent trouble from this quarter.



A Garden Contest and What It Developed

(Continued from page 373)

cessful gardening for the small place. I. Mr. C. C. Van Vleck. A well designed flower garden. The very adroit centering of the garden with its semi-circular seat and Bungei's catalpas on the dark recess in the trees across the street should be observed.

II. Mr. E. P. Earle. A very well designed and executed little rose garden. Roses (hybrid perpetuals, teas and the like) have always a more or less weedy character and are difficult to manage except in a garden of their own which should be secluded. In this one the precise lines of the beds make up for the weakness of the plants. The garden would be more effective if its foliage enclosures were more complete allowing only a glimpse of the wide terrace steps.

III. A good composition on the whole with the great advantage of well shaped trees where they are wanted. The low growing material below is massed well but much of it not well selected for its place. It necessarily comes into competition with the house and the trees, and should have a certain robustness of size and character to be in keeping.

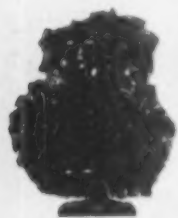
IV. Mr. C. C. Van Vleck. On the right of this picture is the flower garden (No. I). A good piece of composition on the whole, but the planting, though well placed to lead the eye up to and past the house, is mostly too small and restless for the mass of the house and extent of the lawn. The effect of the trees beyond as being so much more in character with the house should be noted. Also the very effective aralia at the veranda.

V. Mr. Otto Jaeger. This stone seat

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is on the lawn shown in (No. IX). A very effective piece of composition with the two handsome and well matched blue spruces. The background of trees on the far side of the street makes an indispensable setting.

VI. Mr. L. A. Cerf. A well conceived little flower garden which may be expected to be very charming when it has had a few years' growth. The shelter on the left is well designed and placed. The two rows of phlox and other plants along the sides of the lawn are not very fortunate and look like an afterthought. A line of box enclosing them would add character. The heavy stone seat fills one with a desire to unite the sundered pieces. Compare the effect of vistas closed by undivided semicircular seats in Nos. I and V.

VII. Mr. S. V. Hill. A healthy horse chestnut on the lawn is a very desirable thing. The planting at the house is not very well done. The evergreens are not well grouped and appear to be set too close to the house and the contrast between them and the row of cannas is unpleasant. But there is a small dogwood placed with good judgment where it will become a treasure and the lawn itself is refreshingly free and clear as far as the picture shows, and should inspire contentment in the beholder.

VIII. Mr. H. Susman. An admirable picture on the whole with the bare limbs of the old tree as a foreground. Here we have a round bed of flowering plants in a place where a round bed must be, yet one cannot help feeling an incongruity between the mass of gaudy bedding plants and the refined and beautiful character of the foliage with its lights and depths investing the architecture.

IX. Mr. Otto Jaeger. This place is striking because of its simplicity and the apparently inevitable character of its layout. It looks as if anyone would have done about the same kind of thing. Yet this is in one sense or another an essential characteristic of all good work, and is comparatively seldom attained. The flower bed filling the space between the wall of trained fruit trees with the cleverly placed sundial and the pair of Italian poplars (unfortunately not a good match) on either side of the dormer window of the stable and the glimpse of the house porch are very happy. The simplicity of this whole scheme is very attractive and well handled, but the danger in such work is that every detail counts and every one out of place or scale detracts plainly from the effect. In this case the small cup shaped tree on the lawn (a trained fruit tree) because of its shape and size is too much isolated from the other trees. It would have been better omitted, or perhaps better still, with one or two other trees near it, arranged to group with the other trees. The small cordon fruit trees to the right of the road look weak and ineffective, but they will lose this character as they get older and neater.



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X. Mr. John B. Hawes. This, by reason of its layout and setting has unusual possibilities as an enclosed garden. But grass and the scanty flowers give the impression of the lawn outside being repeated within. If there were no lawn outside this might be easily made a very attractive layout, but the impression gained on entering it is that of finding a piece of the lawn within the enclosure. There ought to be a marked difference between what is within and without, as the purpose of an enclosure is separation, and there is no object in separating similar things.



Christmas Gifts That Furnish the Home

(Continued from page 359)

make particularly unique gifts if properly selected and used in the right way. They will serve as couch covers, portières or piano draperies, and if chosen with due regard to color a piece of this sort will often give the keynote to the decoration of an entire room. Embroidered Bulgarian scarfs that are much used for making small pillows come in the most beautiful colorings and designs for \$3.50 and up, while Bagdad pillows of ordinary size are \$2 each.

Keeping in mind the needs of one's summer home, whether it is a separate establishment or only the year-round house done over in summer garb, there are numerous things that make suitable gifts. India prints in fascinating designs are only \$3 for the 4 x 9 foot size, or \$4 for the 6 x 9. Washable table covers in attractive and quaint patterns are only 75 cents, and Java print pillows are \$1 each. Serviceable articles made of brown bamboo, a comparatively new importation, include jardinières, waste baskets, lamp stands and baskets of all sizes. These are not only attractive in appearance but reasonable in price, and are suitable with furnishings of almost every description. The Japanese lamps that produce a glow rather than a definite light are quite a novelty, and may be had with standards for use as table lamps or in lantern shape, to be fastened against the wall and made to serve as side lights.

Screens of various sizes and designs, particularly the small decorative affairs are always useful in houses with a certain type of furnishings, and make acceptable gifts so long as they correspond well with their surroundings and are not so elaborate that they overshadow everything else. The little one panel silk screen with a decoration of flowers on one side and a sketchy Japanese scene in black and white on the reverse is quite inexpensive and suitable in a room of almost any sort, while the heavily embroidered three panel screens with frames of carved wood demand surroundings of a decidedly elaborate character.

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The Place of Mirrors in the House

(Continued from page 379)

into the dining-room. These two uses for the looking-glass are perhaps not quite orthodox, but they are extremely practical.

A legitimate spot for a built-in mirror is found in the bathroom, and in the closet door of the bedroom which is too small to admit of space for the cheval glass of a hundred years ago and has no wall mirror sufficiently large to reflect the entire person. This beveled-edge mirror should run the full length of the door, being set well into the woodwork as a frame. If the door is in such relation to the dressing-table mirror or to a wall mirror that one reflects into the other, it will often be convenient to show the back of the figure.

As stated before, almost any mirror will harmonize with the bedroom furnishings provided too heavy a style is not selected for a simple and artistic room. The simple oval mirror, or the oblong with one or two sections of glass or with a picture in the upper section and with plain frame, are in better taste for simple rooms than the more elaborate designs already described. Gilt or mahogany frames always look well with mahogany furniture; but when in doubt of a choice for a room in which the furniture is of no particular kind, choose a frame to match or to harmonize as nearly as possible with the woodwork of the room.

There are no real antique dressing-tables with mirrors attached. Those that were made by Sheraton and Heppelwhite toward the end of the Eighteenth Century had a mechanical device which provided for the raising or hiding of the glass. This type is seldom copied in furniture to-day. The attached mirror came into use in the last century; before then it either hung above or stood upon the dressing-table. In the middle of the Eighteenth Century the little oval, shield-shaped or square swinging glass, standing above its one or two little drawers, was separate and placed on the "chest of drawers." These Colonial pieces, often called shaving stands, are sometimes reproduced in the exact form of the originals, in soft woods enameled or stained to match cheaper grades of furniture, but they are popular only in the copies of the old mahogany and walnut stands.



Some New House Plant Suggestions

(Continued from page 356)

creased or renewed by cuttings, which root readily at almost any time of year with a little bottom heat. They can be grown from seed but this method is less certain, and does not give such fragrant flowers. The heliotrope objects to any sudden change, whether of temperature, watering, or soil, and at once turns brown and drops its leaves. Proper care and cutting back



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will, however, soon restore it to vigor and bloom.

There are several varieties, ranging from dark purple to lilac and white. Le Moine's hybrids have the largest flowers, but are not as fragrant as the smaller sorts. Stocks, also, are altogether too little known as house plants. They have a fragrance that many people enjoy even more than that of heliotrope. The double sorts have large heads of bloom that resemble clusters of miniature roses, in a great variety of colors, including delicate pinks and pure whites that are surpassed by no other flowers. They are easy to grow, and if kept cut, bloom freely for a long time. The best way to get them is to buy plants just beginning to bloom, as there is always a large percentage of worthless singles in plants raised from seed.

Among the most charming of all plants for the house, where proper conditions can be given, are the "Baby Rambler," or dwarf ever-blooming. They require a place kept moderately warm (say not below 50 degrees at night), and moisture enough in the air. Baby Rambler (Mme. Norbert, Levavasseur), and its charming sisters, Annchen Muller (pink), Catherine Zelmet (white), Mrs. Cutbush (cherry red), and "Jessie" (a beautiful cherry red with white center), all make house plants of the most attractive sort. The soil should be rather heavy—that is containing a bigger proportion of loam than your regular potting soil. Pans of water must be kept evaporating constantly to keep the air moist, and a special plant room or at least a bay window which can be shut in by curtains, will give the best results, because the temperature and other conditions may be more carefully controlled there. Some of these, especially the first named, will under good conditions literally be in bloom from one end of the year to the other, and they are well worth taking some extra trouble with. They require more careful attention than most of the other plants mentioned in this article, as the red spider, which finds congenial conditions in a hot, dry atmosphere, and mildew, caused generally by a sudden drop in temperature, or allowing a draft to blow directly on the plants, will soon do a great deal of damage unless guarded against.

In keeping house plants healthy it must be remembered that at best it is hard to get conditions in the living room that will be entirely suitable for the growth of plants. Every effort should be made to prepare a place for them in which such conditions may be made as nearly ideal as possible; plenty of light; evenly regulated temperature; moisture in the air.

For most house plants the temperature should be 50 to 55 at night and 65 to 75 during the day. An occasional night temperature of 45 or even 40 will not do great harm but if reached frequently will check the growth of plants.

Air should be given every day when the temperature of the room will not be too greatly lowered thereby. Avoid direct



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drafts, as sudden chills are apt to produce bad results. Even on very cold days, fresh air may be let in indirectly, through a window open in an adjoining room or through a hall. It is better, when possible, to give a little ventilation for an hour or two, than to risk too sudden a lowering of the temperature by trying to do it all in fifteen minutes.

The amount of water which should be given will depend both upon the plant and upon the season. During the dull days of winter and during the "resting season" of all plants, very little water will be required. It should be given on bright mornings. During early fall and late spring, when the pots or boxes dry out very rapidly, water in the evening. In either case, however, withhold water until the soil is beginning to get on the "dry side" and then water thoroughly. Water should be given until it runs down through into the saucers, but should not be allowed to remain there.

Sometimes it will be beneficial to moisten the foliage of plants without wetting the soil. Just after repotting and in fighting plant lice, red spider and other insect enemies this treatment will be necessary. A fine rose spray on the watering can may be used, but a rubber plant sprinkler costing 65 cents, will be very much better, as with it the water will be applied in a finer spray with a great deal more force and to either the upper or under surface of the leaves—a point of great importance.

Plants growing in windows, where the light strikes them only or mostly from one side, should be frequently turned to prevent their growing one-sided.

Also do not hesitate to use knife, scissors and fingers in keeping them symmetrical and shapely. One of the greatest mistakes that amateurs make is in being afraid to cut an ungainly or half leafless branch. Instead of injuring a plant, such pruning frequently is an actual benefit.

If neglected, dust will quickly gather on the leaves and clog their pores, and as the plants have no way of breathing but through their leaves, you can see what the result must be. Syringing, mentioned above, will help. They should also be wiped clean with a soft, dry cloth, especially such plants as palms, rubbers Rex Begonias. Do not use olive oil or any other sticky substance on the cloth. Always remove at once any broken, dead or diseased leaf or flower. Do not let flowering plants go to seed: nothing else will so quickly bring the blooming period to a close.

The Christmas Prodigal

(Continued from page 354)

"there are eleven kids packed away upstairs like sardines—we hid 'em away while dad and you were lost, and—" but here with a deafening racket the stairs door burst wide open and with a swoop and a scream eleven pajama-ed young bandits with starry eyes bore down upon Aunt Ellen and the Doctor.

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"Great Scott!" exclaimed John, thoroughly scandalized, "you disgraceful kids! Which one of you stirred this up?" But the guilty face at the tail of the romping procession was the face of old Asher.

Radiantly triumphant the old Doctor swung little John Leslie 3rd to his shoulder and faced his laughing family and as old Annie appeared with a steaming tray—he seized a mug of cider and held it high aloft.

"To the ruddy warmth of the Christmas log and the Christmas home spirit—" he cried—"to the home-keeping hearts of the country-side! Gentlemen—I give you—A Country home and a Country Christmas! May more good folk come to know them!" And little John Leslie cried hoarsely—

"Hooray, grandpop, hooray for a Country Christmas!"

Carelessly alive to the merry spirit of the night, the jester presently adjusted a flute which hung from his shoulder by a scarlet cord and lazily piping a Christmas air, wandered to another room—to come suddenly upon a forgotten playmate of his boyhood days.

"It—it can't be!" he reflected in startled interest. "It surely can't be Madge Hildreth!"

But Madge Hildreth it surely was, spreading the satin folds of his grandmother's crimson gown in mocking courtesy. Moreover it was not the awkward, ragged, elfish little gypsy who had tormented his debonair boyhood with her shy ardent worship of himself and his daring exploits, but instead a winsome vision of Christmas color and Christmas cheer, holly-red of cheek, with flashes of scarlet holly in her night black hair and eyes whose unfathomable dusk reflected no single hint of that old, wild worship slumbering still in the girl's rebellious heart.

"And the symbolism of this stunning make-up?" queried Ralph after a while, lazily admiring.

The girl's eyes flashed.

"To-night, if you please," she said, "I am the spirit of the old-fashioned Christmas who dwells in the holly heart of the evergreen wood. A country Christmas, ruddy-cheeked and cheerful and rugged like the winter holly—simple and old-fashioned and hallowed with memories like this bright soft crimson gown!"

Well, she had been a queer, fanciful youngster too, Doctor Ralph remembered, always passionately aquiver with a wild sylvan poetry and over-fond of book-lore like her father. Mischievously glancing at a spray of mistletoe above the girl's dark head, he stepped forward with the careless gallantry that had won him many a kindly glance from pretty eyes and was strangely to fail him now. For at the look in Madge's calm eyes, he drew back, stammering, colored and bowed.

"I—I beg your pardon!" said Doctor Ralph.

Later as he stood thoughtfully by his

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bedroom window, staring queerly at the wind-beaten elms, he found himself repeating Madge Hildreth's words. "Ruddy-cheeked and rugged and cheerful!"—indeed—this unforgettable Christmas eve. Yes—she was right. Had he not often heard his father say that the Christmas season epitomized all the rugged sympathy and heartiness and health of the country year! To-night the blazing Yule-log, his mother's face—how white her hair was growing, thought Doctor Ralph with a sudden tightening of his throat—all of these memories had strummed forgotten and finer chords. And darkly foiling the homely brightness came the picture of rushing, overstrung, bundle-laden city crowds, of shop-girls white and weary, of store-heaps of cedar and holly sapped by electric glare. Rush and strain and worry—yes—and a spirit of grudging! How unlike the Christmas peace of this white, wind-world outside his window! So Doctor Ralph went to bed with a sigh and a shrug—to listen while the sleety boughs tapping at his windows roused ghostly phantoms of his boyhood. Falling asleep, he dreamt that pretty Madge Hildreth had lightly waved a Christmas wand of crimson above his head and dispelled his weariness and discontent.

IV.

And in the morning—there was the royal glitter of a Christmas ice-storm to bring boyhood memories crowding again, boughs sheathed in crystal armor and the old barn roof aglaze with ice. Yes—Ralph thrilled—and there were the Christmas bunches of oats on the fences and trees and the roof of the barn—how well he remembered! For the old Doctor loved this Christmas custom too and never forgot the Christmas birds. And to-day—why of course—there would be double allowances of food for the cattle and horses, for old Toby the cat and Rover the dog. Hadn't Ralph once performed this cherished Christmas task himself!

But now, clamoring madly at his door was a romping swarm of youngsters eager to show Uncle Ralph the Christmas tree which, though he had helped to trim it the night before, he inspected in great surprise. And here in his chair by another Yule-log he found Roger, staring wide-eyed at the glittering tree with his thin little arms full of Christmas gifts. Near him was Sister Madge whose black eyes, Ralph saw with approval, were very soft and gentle, and beyond in the coffee-fragrant dining-room Aunt Ellen and old Annie conspired together over a mammoth breakfast table decked with holly.

"Oh, John, dear," Ralph heard his mother say as the Doctor came in, "I've always said that Christmas is a mother's day. Wasn't the first Christmas a mother's Christmas and the very first tree—a mother's tree?" and then the Doctor's scandalized retort—"Now—now, now, see here, Mother Ellen, it's a father's day, too, don't you forget that!"

And so on to the Christmas twilight



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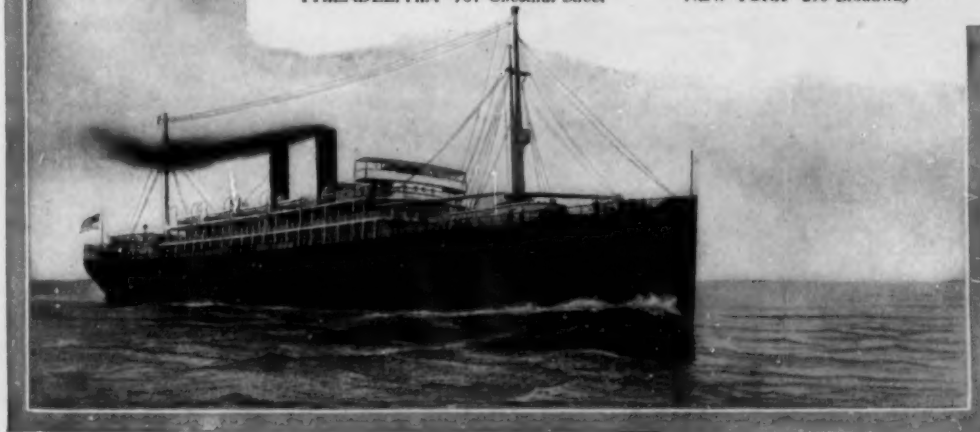
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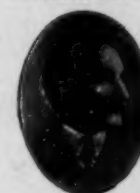


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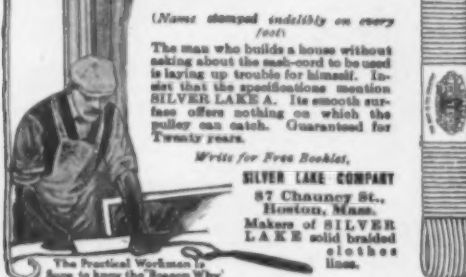
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through a day of romping youngsters and blazing Yule-logs, of Christmas gifts and Christmas greetings—of a haunting shame for Doctor Ralph at the memory of the wild Christmas he had planned to spend with Griffin and Edwards.

With the coming of the broad shadows which lay among the stiff, ice-fringed spruces like iris velvet, Doctor Ralph's nieces and nephews went flying out to help old Asher feed the stock. By the quiet fire the Doctor beckoned Ralph.

"Suppose, my boy," he said, "suppose you take a look at the little lad's leg here. I've sometimes wondered what you would think of it."

Coloring a little at his father's deferential tone Ralph turned the stocking back from the pitiful shrunken limb and bent over it, his dark face keen and grave. And now with the surgeon uppermost, Roger fancied Doctor Ralph's handsome eyes were nothing like so tired. Save for the crackle of the fire and the tick of the great clock, there was silence in the firelit room and presently Roger caught something in Doctor Ralph's thoughtful face that made his heart leap wildly.

"An operation," said the young Doctor suddenly—and halted, meeting his father's eyes significantly.

"You are sure!" insisted the old Doctor slowly. "In my day, it was impossible—quite impossible."

"Times change," said the younger man. "I have performed such an operation successfully myself. I feel confident, sir—" but Roger had caught his hand now with a sob that echoed wildly through the quiet room.

"Oh, Doctor Ralph," he blurted with blazing, agonized eyes, "you don't—you can't mean, sir, that I'll walk and run like other boys—and—and climb the Cedar King—" his voice broke in a passionate fit of weeping.

"Yes," said Doctor Ralph, huskily, "I mean just that. Dad and I, little man, we're going to do what we can."

By the window Sister Madge buried her face in her hands.

"Come, come, now Sister Madge," came the Doctor's kindly voice a little later, "you've cried enough, lass. Roger is fretting about you and Doctor Ralph here, he says he's going to take you for a little sleigh-ride if you'll honor him by going."

Outside a Christmas moon rode high above a sparkling ice-bright world and as the sleigh shot away into its quiet glory, Ralph, meeting the dark, tear-bright eyes of Sister Madge, tucked the robes closer about her with a hand that shook a little.

"Gypsy Hildreth!" he said suddenly, smiling, but the hated nickname to-night was almost a caress. "Tell me," Ralph's voice was very grave—"You've been sewing? Mother spoke of it."

"There was nothing else," said Sister Madge. "I could not leave Roger."

"And now Mother wants you to stay on with her. You—you'll do that?"

"She is very lonely," said Madge uncertainly and Ralph bit his lip.



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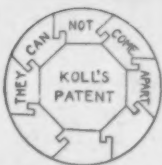
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"Mother lonely!" he said. "She didn't tell me that."

"Roger is wild to stay," went on Madge, looking away—"but I—oh—I fear it is only their wonderful kindness. Still there's the Doctor's rheumatism—and he does need some one to keep his books."

"Rheumatism!" said Ralph sharply.

"Yes," nodded Madge in surprise—"didn't you know? It's been pretty bad this winter. He's been thinking some of breaking in young Doctor Price to take part of his practise now and perhaps all of it later."

"Price!" broke out Ralph indignantly. "Oh—that's absurd! Price couldn't possibly swing Dad's work. He's not clever enough."

"He's the only one there is," said Madge and Ralph fell silent.

All about them lay a glittering moonlit country of peaceful, firelit homes and snowy hills—of long quiet roads and shadowy trees and presently Ralph spoke again.

"You like all this," he said abruptly, "the quiet—the country—and all of it?"

Sister Madge's black eyes glowed.

"After all," she said, "is it not the only way to live? This scent of the pine, the long white road, the wild-fire of the winter sunset and the wind and the hills—are they not God-made messages of mystery to man? Life among man-made things—like your cities—exaggerates the importance of man the maker. Life among the God-made hills dwarfs that artificial sense of egotism. It teaches you to marvel at the mystery of Creation. Yesterday when the Doctor and I were gathering the Christmas boughs, the holly glade in the forest seemed like some ancient mystic Christmas temple of the Druids where one might tell his rosary in crimson holly beads and forget the world!"

Well—perhaps there was something fine and sweet and holy in the country something—a tranquil simplicity—a hearty ruggedness—that city dwellers forfeited in their head-long rush for man-made pleasure. After all, perhaps the most enduring happiness lay in the heart of these quiet hills.

"My chief is very keen on country life," said Ralph suddenly. "He preaches a lot. Development of home-spirit and old-fashioned household gods—that sort of thing! He's a queerish sort of chap—my chief—and a bit too—er—candid at times. He was dad's old classmate, you know." And Ralph fell silent again, frowning.

So Price was to take his father's practise! How it must gall the old Doctor! And mother was lonely eh?—and Dad's rheumatism getting the best of him—Why Great Guns! mother and dad were growing old! And some of those snow-white hairs of theirs had come from worrying over him—John had said so. Ralph's dark face burned in the chill night wind. Well, for all old John's cutting sarcasm, his father still had faith in him and the trust in young Roger's eloquent eyes had



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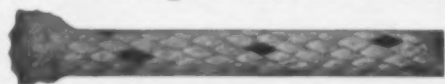
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fairly hurt him. God! they did not know! And then this queer Christmas heart-glow. How Griffin and Edwards and the rest of his gay friends would mock him for it? *Friends!* After all—had he any friends in the finer sense of that finest of words? Such warm-hearted loyal friends for instance as these neighbors of his father's who had been dropping in all day with a hearty smile and a Christmas hand-shake. And black-eyed Sister Madge—this brave, little fighting gypsy-poet here—where—But here Ralph frowned again and looked away and even when the cheerful lights of home glimmered through the trees he was still thinking—after an impetuous burst of confidence to Sister Madge.

So, later, when Doctor Ralph entered his father's study—his chin was very determined.

"I was ashamed to tell you this morning, sir," he said steadily, "but I—I'm no longer on the staff of St. Michael's. My hand was shaking and—and the chief knew why. And dad," he faced the old Doctor squarely, "I'm coming back home to keep your practise out of Price's fool hands. You've always wanted that and my chief has preached it too, though I couldn't see it somehow until to-day. And presently, sir, when—when my hand is steadier, I'm going to make the little chap walk and run. I've—promised Sister Madge." And the old Doctor cleared his throat and gulped—and finally he wiped his glasses and walked away to the window. For of all things God could give him—this surely was the best!

"Oh, grandpop," cried little John Leslie 3rd, bolting into the study in great excitement— "Come see Roger! We kids have made him the Christmas king and he's got a crown o' holly on and—and a wand and he's a-tappin' us this way with it to make us Knights. And I'm the Fir-tree Knight—and Bob—he's a Cedar Knight and Ned's a spruce and Roger—he says his pretty sister tells him stories like that smarter'n any in the books. Oh—do hurry!"

The old Doctor held out his hand to his son.

"Well, Doctor Ralph," he said huskily, "suppose we go tell mother."

So while the Doctor told Aunt Ellen, Ralph bent his knee to this excited Christmas King enthroned in the heart of the fire-shadows.

"Rise—" said Roger radiantly, tapping him with a cedar wand, "I—I dub thee first of all my knights—the good, kind Christmas Knight!"

"And here," said Ralph smiling, "here's Sister Madge. What grand title now shall we give to her?" But as Sister Madge knelt before him with firelit shadows dancing in her sweet, dark eyes, Roger dropped the wand and buried his face on her shoulder with a little sob.

"Nothing good enough for Sister Madge, eh?" broke in the old Doctor, looking up. "Well, sir, I think you're right."

Now in the silence Aunt Ellen spoke



and her words were like a gentle Christmas benediction.

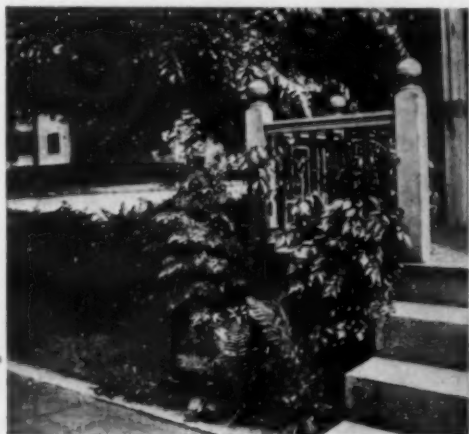
"Unto us," said Aunt Ellen Leslie as she turned the Christmas log, "this night a son is given!"

But Ralph, by the window, had not heard. For wakening again in his heart as he stared at the peaceful, moonlit, "God-made" hills—was the old forgotten boyish love for this rugged, simple life of his father's dwarfing the lure of the city and the mockery of his fashionable friends. And down the lane of years ahead, bright with homely happiness and service to the needs of others—was the dark and winsome face of Sister Madge, stirring him to ardent resolution.

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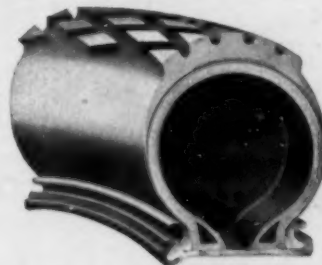
The plant in the picture, reaching nearly to the top of the fence post, stands on the northwest corner of the house, but where it has the afternoon sunshine for several hours in summer.

Passers-by in early July are greatly attracted by it, covered as it is at that time by dainty white umbels, which gently sway to every breeze; these flowers combine gracefully with cut sweet peas and nasturtiums.

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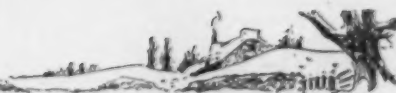
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Philadelphia, 1927 29 Market St	Detroit, 815 Woodward Avenue	Washington, 1140 Connecticut Av	Rochester, 15 Circle Street	Buffalo, 178 W. Ulster Street

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