SOME GARDEN PLANTS

HARDY VARIETIES THAT EVERYONE CAN EASILY CULTIVATE.

Practical Information Concerning the Way to Plant Them and When—Arranging a Rock Garden.

Boston Transcript.

At the meeting of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, this morning, E. O. Orpet, of South Lancaster, read a paper on "Hardy Garden Plants," which was in substance as follows:

"In the cultivation of these plants a good preparation of the soil is absolutely necessary; it should be so as to be permanent, for most of these plants never succeed so well as when they are left undisturbed and get deep root hold in the soil. To secure the best results the soil should be of good depth, with a good supply of natural moisture and free from large tree roots. The soil should be dug at least two feet in depth and made rich at starting, for a bed or border of these plants should never be dug after it is once planted. Any needed fertilization should be given by top-dressings, in autumn, after the advent of cold sufficient to make everything dormant for the winter. There are some plants which are not desirable on account of their rapidity in increase and their ability to appropriate a good deal more than their share of the border. One of these is Achillea serrata, sometimes called the pearl, for a small plant, set in the spring, will by autumn have taken to itself a square yard of soil, and will be most difficult to dig out from among other plants. The smooth-leaved sunflower (Halianthus laevis) is a decidedly decorative plant, but spreads among other plants so that it is almost impossible to eradicate it. The pretty anemone Pennsylvancia is also objectionable on this account, and the variagated form of Aegopodium padagraria or bishop's weed increases so as to become exceedingly troublesome; thousands of dollars have been spent to dig it out from Central Park, New York. There are other plants of this description, and the lesson is that if such plants are confined to the wild garden we should have less of this class of plants.

"It is well to plant thickly at the outset, using the sorts easily raised from seed, and thinning them out as the better plants take hold, gradually working out the desired effect. After the plants are set it will be found that some are better adapted to certain localities than others, and transplanting is required to get each into a suitable place. The fall is the best time for transplanting, and there is more leisure for it than in the spring. Lilies should always be planted in the autumn, and also narcissuses and other bulbs. It would seem as if lilies are not appreciated as they deserve in our outdoor effects; at Kew gardens last summer I was impressed with the freedom with which they were planted, not only in their natural orders, but among the beds of shurbs of low growth and evergreens, especially rhododendrons, and the effect was very beautiful and would endure for the greater part of the summer as the various species came into bloom. These can be grown here with equal or greater success. They are impatient of a dry soil in summer or of one in which moisture is excessive in winter, but in ordinary garden soil they will thrive with the greatest success. The best of all positions is among the rhododendrons, and here we have a succession until September frosts. The shade of the rhododendrons gives a cool soil at all times and a slight protection from late frosts to the young shoots in spring, and in the fall leaves placed about the roots of the rhododendrons are a sure guard against severe cold and also against premature starting. It was once regarded as an astonishing feat to flower Lilium giganteum outdoors, but in such a position as that described there is no difficulty in not only flowering it for one sason, but the plants increase rapidly, and, when well grown and flowered, there is no other lily and but few plants of any kind that can approach it in majesty. In the garden of Hon. John Simpkins, at Yarmouthport, the flower stems grew more than ten feet high. Care must be taken to procure bulbs true to name.

A HARDY LILY.

"Another lily of tested hardness here is L. sulphureum, or Wallichiaanum superbum, as it is often called, though not so correctly. It is as hardy as the Tiger lily, and, like that, produces a little bulb in the axil of each leaf which in a year will grow to the size of a hen's egg. It is one of the most lovely of all lilies; the specific name sulphureum aptly describes the soft yellow interior of the large flowers. Lilium Henryi will be a decided gain to our gardens when it is more plentiful. It is from central China. Plants at Kew last summer grew eight feet high and bore over thirty of the apricot yellow blooms to a stem. Lilium auratum polyphyllium is another good garden lily that is not common. It seems to be a well-marked form of L. auratum with very broad foliage, and will thrive in the border as well as L. Speciosum, the flowers being almost identical with those of the type. Lilium auratum platyphyllum, or, as it is often called, L. auratum macranthum, is one of the finest lilies for the garden; indeed, it has been called the 'King of all Lilies.'

"No garden seems to be complete in the early spring without a selection of narcissuses, and, taking the best, there are no more reliable bulbs for garden use. Many new kinds have been lately introduced, among which those of Spanish origin, after flowering once, dwindle away and rarely succeed in gardens. But among those of hybrid or garden origin, there are few that will not succeed in American gardens, and these hybrids and garden varieties are by far the best kinds. There is a phase of narcissus cultivation that is too rarely seen here; that is their naturalization among grass in wild or shady places. The poet's narcissus and those allied to it, and the Incomparabilis section, and, in fact, all those of starlike forms are most eligible for this purpose. For cutting for indoor decoration there are few to excel Empress, Horsfieldii, Michael Foster, and William Wilks, all of which are bi-colors and bloom in succession. Countess of Annesley, Emperor, Sir Watkin, and Princeps, all belong to the larger flowered yellow section, and to these may be added the Incomparabilis and Barrii sections, which are well adapted to our climate. It is preferable not to plant these in a mixed or herbaceous border, but to keep them in a separate border, which in summer is planted with annuals that shade the soil from the burning sun. The narcissuses are planted in rows, sixteen inches apart, and the annuals, such as stocks, asters, mignonette, etc., are set between. When the annuals are cleared off in the fall, a top-dressing is given over all the beds and this is all the fertilizer they seem to require. The should be lifted and replanted every three years. It is quite in keeping with a herbaceous border to have clumps of narcissus mixed here and there, along the margin, and, where few are grown, this is perhaps the best way, but if the number of varieties is large it is better to have them where labels will not be disturbed, and where each kind is near the other for comparison.

THE GAY TULIP.

"There are a number of species of tulips other than those generally used for massing for color effects, which are most beautiful in the mixed border, and they have also greater vigor and taller habit, and grow on for any number of years without deterioration. Tulipa Gesneriana may be taken as the type of these late-flowering kinds, and there are few bulbs that give such rich coloring as this without being gaudy. Other species are the Horned Tulip (T. cornuta) with petals narrowing to a point; T. Greigi, with rich colors and prettily spotted leaves; T. vitellina, pure yellow, and many others not often seen cultivated, some of which are real gems in the rock garden. The so-called Darwin tulips are the 'breeders' of the Flemish and English raisers. The lovely colors of this section give them a peculiar charm—rich, dark and velvety colors predominate; yellows are absent, and no two in a mixture are alike. Their stems are erect and stiff, and they are admirably adapted for cutting. They like a soil that is not liable to dry out, or the quality of the blooms suffers. They should be planted in groups of six or eight, and each year the quantity of bloom will be about doubled from each clump.

Another beautiful hardy plant that is not common, but is perfectly reliable, is Eremurus robustus. It throws up a spike five or six feet high, which for the greater part is covered with pale pink flowers, that open in quick succession, so that most of them are in bloom at the same time. It is not easy to raise from seed, but once planted there is no fear of losing it. We cannot do without annuals in the mixed herbaceous border, for if perennials are relied on, there is sure to be a scarcity of bloom in July and August. Some of the perennial plants, such as Martensia and Oriental poppies, die off after flowering and leave gaps which are not pleasing, but it is easy to dot in zinnias, asters, stocks or taller growing annuals to fill them, and give a greater profusion of bloom. Another important point is the desirability of having a permanent backing to the borders if they are extensive, or especially if wide. Rosa rugosa, hydrangea paniculata, pyrus japonica, syringas and lilacs, each used separately, give a stability to the effect which would not otherwise exist. In the early summer, before the tall larkspurs, sunflowers, asters and boltonias get high enough to serve as a background, the early flowering shrubs greatly enhance the effect, but perhaps the most striking of all is the late summer, when the long belt of hardy hydrangea is at its best; this is kept well pruned, and the shoots are thinned out to give size to the panicles of bloom. The fraxinella should should be cautiously handled on account of its poisonous qualities.

"For those who have a proper location, there are few more interesting features of outdoor gordening that the rock garden, when the moss pinks, columbines and various spring flowering bulbs are in bloom. Most hardy plants are easily raised from seed, and a healthy seedling plant, though it has not bloomed, is preferable in the long run to any other; there is no serious check in transplanting, neither has it been weakened by flowering. The best time to sow seed would be as soon as gathered, but we usually have too much hot weather at that time, and it is best to wait until a cooler time in the fall. Where there is a greenhouse, they can be sown in winter, but it is much better to get them large enough to winter in cold frames, where they do not start much earlier than outdoors, and they can then be placed in their permanent position as soon as the ground permits. If grown in the greenhouse, they need as careful hardening off as if not hardy, for they are made as tender as any plants by their treatment indoors. Some seeds, such as aquilegia stuari, aglandulosa, anthericums, hellebores, rosa rugosa, and many others germinate much better if subjected to frost while in the earth, and herein is one of the main advantages of sowing early fall."

GAZED TOO LONG AT A TRAIN.

A Georgia Boy's Eyes Now Delight Him with Strange Illusions.

Atlanta Constitution.

A man, who is endowed with one of the strangest faculties that mortal ever possessed, has been discovered at Sylvania. He is different from other men only in his eyes. He says they were injured when he was a boy gazing too long one day at a receding train. Whether this was the cause or not, from that day until the present time the first impression a swiftly moving object makes upon his eyes is continued on it for an indefinite time, even after the body itself has long stopped moving. This may not be a perfectly clear explanation to those who do not understand the exact nature of his case, so to make it plain I will give a few instances, numbers of which, of course, occur every day.

Not long ago he was one day watching a cat out in the yard, as it was attempting to creep upon a bird. When close to its prey the cat suddenly made a spring and then, according to his way of viewing it, the feline kept right on sailing through the air as far as his eye could reach, and was at last lost in the blue distance. And yet it was only an illusion, he knew—for looking down on the ground at the end of perhaps half a minute he saw the cat just where it had really landed.

Except in a few cases he is rarely ever deceived by this strange idiosyncrasy. Nor is there ever an illusion with stationary objects, or objects moving ordinarily slow. There must be a sudden movement to put in motion this curious freak of his optics. One morning he saw one of his neighbors walk up to a fence and spring up into the air to jump over it. He was not surprised when he saw him go shooting on up through the pure ether above. He watched him apparently about a minute, until he was lost to sight amid the clouds that floated overhead. And yet, at the end of the illusionary period, he saw his neighbor right side up with care on the other side of the fence. As he explains it, it seems to be a kind of reverie that the eye falls into on these occasions and which, when it fades away, generally in about a minute or less time, leaves the real object and its real position as clearly defined as they are to other folks.

One afternoon he was watching some boys at play in the road. One of them, a very active little fellow, took a running start and turned a somersault—and then he saw what no other man, perhaps, had ever seen. Down that road the little fellow went over and over on hands and feet, turning somersaults after somersaults in endless succession. For about half a mile he watched the youthful acrobat as he went spinning over the hills and far away. It was a peculiar and amusing thing to see the boy go whirling down the road with such ease and rapidity. He did not alarm himself about him, however, for when the spell was ended he saw the little fellow playing in the sand with his companions. What becomes of the true image when the eye falls into this strange reverie he does not know—the fiction or fantasy seems to monopolize the whole scope of his vision for the short time that it lasts.

He says he has lots of sport sometimes when he goes out rabbit hunting. Very often he delights in all the excitement and pleasure of a chase for a long time after common-eyed hunters have ceased to enjoy it. For instance, he went out the other day with a friend and a couple of good dogs. In a large, open field they jumped a rabbit and it started across the field with the dogs close behind. In reality it was only a few moments before they had caught and killed it; but to him they kept right on in hot pursuit clear across the field and into the woods beyond. It was intensely exciting, and he was clapping his hands and shouting to the dogs while his amazed companion, with the rabbit in his hand and the dogs by his side, was wondering if he had gone crazy. Thus, whenever he goes out, he always has the pleasure of a long and exciting chase. There is only one inconvenient thing about it, however, and that is he never enjoys seeing the dogs capture the prey.

INFECTION SPREAD BY BOOKS.

There Is Some Danger of This Sort, and Precautions Should Be Used.

Westminster Gazette.

The question whether or not disease is disseminated by the books in public libraries is continually cropping up, and a renewed interest has just been given to the subject by the announcement that a librarian has died of tuberculosis contracted from books which had been infected by consumptive patients. But many points would have to be determined before the blame could be directly attributed to the books in this case.

Tuberculosis, as we now know, is, of course, a very infective malady, and some most remarkable instances have recently been recorded of its infectiveness, by means of the tubercle bacilli. But the general belief in scientific medical circles is that before the bacilli can take root in a healthy—that is, uninfected—person, there must be some predisposition to the disease derived by hereditary transmission. Thus the librarian who died of tuberculosis, contracted, as it is alleged, from the infected books, may have been a person who would have become tuberculous in any case. His family history may have been one in which the hereditary taint of tuberculosis was strongly marked. Moreover, the sedentary nature of the occupation and the close confinement to ill-ventilated rooms probably contributed not a little to the accentuation of the family predisposition. Under these circumstances, then, any such person would be liable to contract the disease anywhere after exposure to the infection.

There is, however, one disease which undeniably can be disseminated by books, and that is scarlet fever. The contagion of scarlet fever has been transmitted in letters by post, and experience shows that its vitality is very great. A striking instance in which the disease was conveyed by a book may here be mentioned.

A surgeon performed an operation upon a lady in a bedroom at the top of his house. The case was quite sucessful—so much so that within a few hours after the operation the patient felt well enough to ask for something to read. The nurse looked about the room for a book or a newspaper, but, finding nothing of the kind, she opened a small cupboard by the side of the fireplace, and abstracted therefrom a yellow-backed novel, which she handed to the patient. The patient soon became absorbed in the volume, and continued on the following day to read it. Within forty-eight hours after the operation, however, he temperature suddenly arose, she began to become exceedingly ill, a deep red blush suffused the skin, and all the signs were present of an acute febrile attack. There could be no question that the case was one of scarlet fever; the intensity of the attack at one time was such that the patient was in great peril of her life. But she ultimately made an excellent recovery, both from the operation and the scarlet fever.

But whence had the infection been derived? Inquiry into the case clearly solved the mystery. Some six months before the bedroom where the operation had been performed had been a nursery, in which three children had been laid up with scarlet fever. The room had been thoroughly fumigated, disinfected, and repapered. But in these necessary processes the little cupboard had been entirely forgotten. It had never been cleared out, and the rubbish it contained, together with the novel, had been placed in it when the scarlet fever patients had become sufficiently convalescent to be removed. Thus the rubbish and the book, contaminated with the contagion, had been left undisturbed until the nurse in the above operation case, some months afterward, abstracted the novel for the patient to read.

But while the possibility under certain circumstances of books being able to convey scarlet fever poison is beyond dispute, there do not appear to be any well-authenticated cases in which the books of public libraries have been proved to be guilty of this crime. Indeed, the evidence so far in existence, undeniably points in the opposite direction.

A medical man of large experience in Boston, United States, has stated that he has never known an instance where there were any grounds for believing that contagious diseases were carried by books in circulation in the public library. In the year 1872 a severe epidemic of smallpox prevailed in Boston, and the medical man in question saw every patient, and traced, where possible, the history. In no instance did he connect the infection with the use of books. As the circulation of this library is more than 2,000,000 volumes a year, the evidence is very convincing.

The American Library Association also has twice investigated the subject of books and contagion, and in no instance was it able to trace spread of disease to the circulation of library books. While, however, the evidence so far is negative upon this point, it goes without saying that proper precautions should be taken to disinfect books, or otherwise to deprive them of any infective properties upon every occasion in which they have been known to circulate in suspicious neighborhoods, and it would be well that by-laws should be framed refusing the issue of books to households in which infectious cases were ill. Again, it would be best that books read by scarlet fever patients should never be allowed to reach the hands of healthy persons. The proper place for such books, after their purpose has been served, would be the fire, where it would be certain that after their disinfection would be properly consummated.

A DISAPPOINTED NIHILIST.

The Last Years of Stergius Stepniak—A Glimpse of His Home Life.

Pall Mall Gazette.

It is now about ten years ago since I first met M. Kracheffski, or rather Stepniak, as he called himself. Stepniak means literally inhabitant of the Steppe, and hence outlaw. In those days a mystery hung over him which has not been cleared up since. He was then generally reported, among those who knew, to have been the murderer of General Mesentzeff, and that fact alone made him a fascinating personality. There was something fascinating about the very circumstances of Mesentzeff's murder. For the benefit of those who do not know who Mesentzeff was, I may as well state that General Mesentzeff, chief of gendarmes, was the head of the hated "third section" of the chancellerie of Alexander II. The Nihilists, who were then in the beginning of their activity, warned him that he would be made a public example of, and then informed him that they had sentenced him to death. Thereupon, one day, in full daylight, as he was driving through the streets of St. Petersburg, he was shot dead. In the confusion which ensued a man was seen to jump into a hackney sledge drawn by a white horse and was driven away with lightning rapidity. No sign of the murderer could be found. That night at each of the gates of St. Petersburg a sledge with a white horse was seen to drive out, but the murderer was not in it. He disappeared, leaving no trace behind him, and the police were completed baffled. This occurred in 1877 or 1878, nearly twenty years ago, and Mesentzeff's murderer has not been discovered.

It is believed that he escaped to Geneva, foregathered with the famous Vera Zasoulitch, and lived a subterraneous life there. A few years after the murder of Alexander II appeared "La Rossia Soterranea," in Italian; it was subsequently translated into English as "Underground Russia," and was Stepniak's first book. Soon after its appearance he came to live in London, and one Sunday he delivered an address at William Morris's house on the Russian peasantry. To this meeting I was taken, and at its close I was introduced to Stepniak. He spoke English fluently and grammatically, but harshly and unpleasantly.

A strange, uncanny-looking man was Stepniak, with rugged, unprepossessing features, a large mouth, a leonine head, covered with a huge mane of crisp, curly hair, and a small, ragged beard. In those days he was stout and fierce, with a short, plump neck, and remarkable hands—they were large and energetic, with big thumbs and short fingers. His eyes were small, leaden and without expression. He was accompanied by Mme. Stepniak, a woman of singular refinement and beauty, delicate features and a graceful figure, sparkling black eyes and elegant ladylike hands. She is a perfect type of the South Russian brunette—a complete contrast to him. Stepniak was very civil, gave me one of his enormous hands, and invited me to his house in St. John's Wood.

I went one Sunday night. It was a small house, resembling the hut of a Russian peasant, and stood in its own grounds. As I entered the garden gate and walked up the gravel path leading to the house a watch-dog commenced barking. The shutters of the windows were closed, no light was visible. I rang the bell. There was a small peep-hole in the door. This was opened, and somebody peered at me. Then the shutters of one of the side windows was opened and somebody looked out into the darkness. Presently I heard the removal of bolts and bars and an old woman let me in. Stepniak stood near her, his hands kept furtively behind him, as though he had a revolver ready to shoot an enemy. On recognizing me he received me with genial Russian hospitality, and took me into his poorly furnished study. Stepniak seemed to dread being kidnaped by the ubiquitous emissaries of the Czar and spirited away to Russia. His wife and he lived on truly Nihilistic principles. One-half of the house was hers, the other his, and they had a common room, a sort of neutral meeting ground, just as Tchernishevski advocated. In this common room Mme. Stepniak received me with a certain fierce dignity. Tchaikovsky, the Nihilist, was also there. It was a melancholy party, and I spent a miserable, uncomfortable hour or so, and felt quite pleased to get out of the house alive. What impressed me most during my visit was the fact that in the course of conversation the Emperor was always referred to as "the fool." Stepniak seemed to cherish a fierce and malignant hatred for the Emperor. It was horrible to hear him talk of him.

Since then I have frequently met Stepniak, and found him a modest, simple-minded, unostentatious man, who lived a life of extreme poverty, and yet found means to help his poorer brethren. He carried out his views in practice, and shared what little he had with others. He worked extremely hard and injured his health by it. Of course, he was a fanatic. In his press campaign against autocracy it is difficult to understand what good he imagined he was doing. He poured forth the vials of his wrath in his "Russia Under the Czars," "The Russian Stormcloud" and "The Russian Peasantry," but these works were too obviously prejudiced to convince his readers, and their effect on Russian public opinion was nil. In fact, during recent visits to Russia I have often heard from Russians in sympathy with the revolutionary party, perhaps revolutionists themselves, that Stepniak had lost touch with modern Russia. His articles in the Times and the books referred to, besides those he wrote in collaboration with Mr. Westall, embittered the relations between England and Russia, but did not enlist any considerable amount of sympathy on his side. In his "Russian Stormcloud" he maintained that the autocracy was a standing menace to the peace of Europe, and seemed to preach a kind of crusade against it.

But he did not succeed in turning his academic diatribes to practical use. He was no Mazzini. Besides, the times were against him. The heart had been knocked out of the Nihilist movement, and those who sympathized with it in Rusia felt the uselessness and hopelessness of sacrificing their lives for it. It had done no good. The murder of Alexander II had not inaugurated a happier era; on the contrary it had set the clock of Russian progress back a whole generation, if not more. Stepniak must, therefore, be regarded as a disappointed man, who wore out his days fretting over the futility of his efforts to bring about a revolution, and literally "spoiling for a fight." I believe he would have gladly gone back to Russia if he had thought he could have done his country a service by killing somebody. But his party thought he would be more useful in London as the center of a regular network of refugees, revolutionary propagandists. His correspondence was voluminous and arduous. He had correspondents everywhere, even in Bulgaria, but, as I said before, accomplished nothing. In my opinion the venom of his hatred clouded his mind and to a certain extent hampered him. He was certainly wanting in the calm philosophic breadth of Prince Krapotkin, and he did not seem to have the organizing power of a leader. Thus he pined like a caged eagle. In latter days he had grown thin and haggard; probably his struggle for existence also told on him. But what must have embittered him more than all was the sad backsliding of so many of the most promising of his party, such as Zikhomiroff, for instance, whose book, "Russia, Social and Political," was one of the severest indictments of the present regime, and who subsequently recanted and is now one of the most rabid reactionaries, and leader-writer of the Moscow Gazette.

The truth must be told; the Russian revolutionary party is dying from sheer inanition; Russians are disgusted with it. It promised so much and did so little. Besides, the aristocracy has been too strong for it, and has crushed it completely. It was in sympathy neither with the ignorant peasant nor the man of culture. Stepniak was one of the last of the Mohicans, and even he had sadly fallen off. The atmosphere of English public opinion is infectious. We are all so tolerant, so easy-going; we have such faith in gradual measures, in patience, and in justice, we are so cheerful and plausible, such hypocrites. The fanatical revolutionary requires a more rarified atmosphere. But in Stepniak's last book, "King Stork and King Log," we still find some of his old fire, some of that intolerant and unimaginative exaggeration for which Stepniak was always distinguished. But it burns with too fierce a flame. English freedom and vulgar Philistinism had begun to enter his soul—it had commenced to eat him up. In his latter years he was even capable of smiling pleasantly and making conventional polite speeches. His old irreconcilable air had left him. Of his personal courage there can be little doubt.

WITHIN FORTY MILES OF LHASA.

Experiences of English Travelers in the Unexplored Wilds of Thibet.

Mr. St. George Littledale and Mrs. Littledale have just returned to England after accomplishing a remarkable and hazardous journey across Thibet. They were accompanied by Mr. Littledale's nephew, Mr. W. A. Fletcher.

The party left England in the autumn of 1894. They entered the north of Thibet from Kashgar across the Kuen-lun mountains by the Cherchen river, with a great caravan of horses, mules and donkeys. The travelers kept well to the west of the route followed by Prince Henry of Orleans and M. Vonvalot. For two months they were traveling at an altitude of seventeen thousand feet, and on their approach to Lhasa had to cross a difficult pass, rising to a height of about twenty thousand feet. The hardships that were endured were most trying to all, and Mrs. Littledale suffered seriously. Of about a hundred animals only a score or so succeeded in reaching the neighborhood of Lhasa. The result was that Mr. Littledale had to abandon most of his collections, including many natural history specimens. Still, he has succeeded in bringing home a fair collection of birds.

By the pass referred to above the party succeeded in reaching within forty miles of Lhasa, nearer than any European has got since the days of Abbe Huc. This success was not attained without risk. Leaving the pass was a troop of 250 men armed with matchlocks, who threatened to fire if the party dared to pass. No one was more determined to go on than Mrs. Littledale, although there were only three armed sepoys with the party. As a matter of fact, the travelers did pass through the gantlet of matchlock men, not one of whom fired a shot.

Mr. and Mrs. Littledale had quite made up their minds to enter Lhasa. They would have done so, but when they camped, after crossing the pass, the donkeys on which were all their baggage, provisions, etc., had not turned up, and, indeed, they did not do so till after the lapse of some time. Partly on this account and partly on account of Mrs. Littledale's health, Mr. Littledale determined not to force the position, but to turn westward toward Ladak. The Thibetans insisted on the party returning as they came, across the terrible pass, but this they absolutely refused to do, and, as usual, on the display of firmness the Thibetans yielded and allowed the travelers to go their own way. Mr. Littledale would have liked much to go south into Sikkim, but under the circumstances this was impossible. He therefore proceeded northwest by Tengri-Nor and the group of lakes which lie between that and Ladak. The party arrived at Srinagar a few weeks ago.

Although Mr. Littledale did not succeed in actually entering Lhasa, he has accomplished far more than anyone expected he would do, considering the conditions under which he traveled. He has traversed a very great extent of uneplored country, both in approaching Lhasa and in leaving it. His map is an admirable piece of work in view of the circumstances under which it must have been executed. There are about thirty sheets, each about eighteen inches square, on which are plotted, with wonderful minuteness, the features of the country through which the party passed. The scale of the map is five miles to the inch. It forms a substantial addition to the least known part of central Asia. Altogether, the expedition promises to take a high rank in the history of geographical exploration.

THE FIRST GREAT POET LAUREATE.

Dryden, the Laureate of Charles the Second.

Temple Bar.

The first great poet laureate—and if we omit the "shadowy" Spenser and Jonson, only three great English poets have been laureates from the time when the office was founded, in 1660, till the death of Tennyson, in 1892—was Dryden. Dryden's place in English poetry is a high one, but what is there special to be said of him as the laureate poet? It can only be replied that, great as his name is in other departments, as laureate it is little more than a pitiable one. To begin with, it is rather curious to remember that the laureate of Charles II had gained his first poetical success by his metrical praise of Oliver Cromwell. At the restoration, however, Dryden at once changed his tune and had a new song to sing. It is not necessary to believe that there was any real insincerity in this. But the fact remains that on the restoration, Dryden welcomed Charles in a strain of the most exaggerated flattery, going so far in absurdity as to say that the whiteness of the cliffs of Dover (where Charles landed) was a sign of England's repentance and sorrow. Dryden burnt his literary incense again at the coronation in the same exceedingly wasteful manner.

This was laying a foundation for court favor, and as the king liked the poet's plays and Dryden had powerful friends, his succession to the post of laureate was natural enough. Davenant held the office for the first eight years of the reign; two years were allowed to pass before the office was filled up, and then Dryden stepped in. Things began pleasantly for him, for, in addition to his annual £200, he was paid £400 for the arrears of the two years during which the office had been vacant, and these sums of money were, of course, far more valuable then than they are now. But this cheerful state of matters did not last. The king did, at some unknown date, grant Dryden another £100 a year, but the treasury was to often in a crazy condition, and all his payments fell into arrears. For so long a period as four years he did not receive a penny. His complaints were very urgent and bitter. They may have been natural enough, but there seems a want of manliness about them.

In the preface to one of his plays Dryden says that he subsists wholly by the King's bounty; rather a humiliating and, of course, an exaggerated statement. He continued to flatter Charles in his plays, and when the King ended his "unconscionable" delay in dying, the laureate duly came forward with the official lamentation. Dryden, who had been so bitterly reproaching the government for its failures to pay him his pensions, now, of course, discovers that Charles was the "great encourager of arts." Yet even in this utterly extravagant eulogium of the virtues and merits of Charles II—for Dryden does not hesitate to compare Charles to the King of Kings—he cannot quite keep those unfortunate pensions out of his verse.

PAUL VERLAINE.

Character and Career of a Brilliant Modern Poet.

New York Herald.

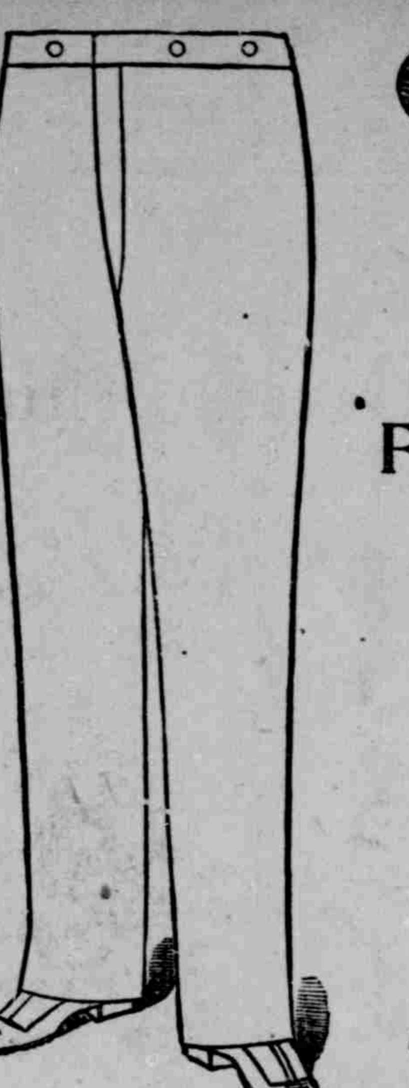
Paul Verlaine's art as a poet would in any event have brought him fame. His own candor and the irrepressible curiosity of his admirers rendered him notorious. His personality possessed a strange and morbid attraction. Many who knew scarcely anything about the quality of his verse become interested in his character as a man.

He posed as a modern Villon, with bitter moments. He lived his life in his own way on the pavement and in the hospital. He wandered half over Enrope, with the insolence and hopefulness of the true beggar student. By his own account there were few crimes he had not cheerfully committed. A drunken attack upon his friend, Arthur Rimbaud—scoundrel and fumiste, who died not long since in respectable obscurity—was atoned for by a stretch in a Belgian prison. He treated his wife, we are told, with unshamed brutality, and addressed to her the daintiest lyrics. But he had courage as well as genius; he fought with valor at the siege of Paris, and, having volunteered from a forlorn hope, set down with characteristic candor the terror wherewith his own recklessness inspired him. He also took an active part in the Commune, and, as if to prove his dual personality, not only checked the vandalism of his colleagues, but afterward sang the praise of "le prince mort en soldat."

Paul Verlaine was born at Metz in 1844. He published his first volume of verse, "Poemes Saturniens," in 1865. One or two other books followed, and then in 1881 came "Sagesse," a volume of religious verse, written for the most part in a monastery. It marked him out as the natural leader of that band of ardent youth who style themselves "decadents et symbolistes." Since "Sagesse" was written he has published other books that show a return to his earlier moods and new phases of his mental life.

As a rule Verlaine lived in the common lodging houses and hospitals of Paris. Mr. George Moore a few years ago described a visit he paid to this strange and fitful genius in his own abode. "In a dark corner, at the end of a narrow passage, situated at the top of the last flight of stairs, we discovered a door. We knocked. A voice made itself heard. We entered and saw Verlaine. The terrible forehead, bald and prominent, was half covered by a filthy night cap, and a night shirt full of the grease of the bed covered his shoulders; a stained and discolored pair of trousers was hitched up somewhere about his waist. He was drinking wine at 16 sous the litre. He told us that he had just come out of the hospital; that his leg was better, but it still gave him a great deal of pain. He pointed to it. We looked away."

In 1893 Paul Verlaine paid a visit to London, where he lectured on contemporary French literature, and was made much of by the connoisseurs and the curious. His verse is marked by admirable qualities. "It is as refined," wrote one critic who knew his subject, "as the blameless work of Mr. Francois Coppee, and far more exquisite. Though his sentiment changes with his changing mood, though now in a foolish pose he glorifies 'le tres-haut Marquis de Sade' and then sings the praise of the Holy Church, his allegiance to his art never falters, and in his heart he is neither the scoundrel nor the poltroon that he and his worshippers would have you believe."



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FRANKLIN'S EXPERIMENT.

Significance of His Flying a Kite in a Thunder Storm.

Cassier's Magazine.

It was a square kite, not the coffin-shaped affair shown in story book pictures. To the upright stick of the cross Franklin attached his pointed rod—a sharp wire, about a foot long—and provided himself with a silk ribbon and a key; the ribbon, to fasten to the string after he had raised the kite, as some possible protection—how much he did not know—against the lightning entering his body, and the key, to be secured to the junction of the ribbon and string to serve as a conductor from which he might draw the sparks of celestial fire—if it came. When the thunder storm broke he went out on the open common near Philadelphia and faced death—faced the tremendous power of the lightning stroke, before which all people of all ages had quailed in terror; faced what most of the world then believed to be the avenging blow of an angered God. True, he believed that electricity and lightning were the same thing, and, therefore, had no different properties or effects, but he did not know it. The best existing theory which accounted for electrical phenomena at that time was his own. The laws of electrical conduction or resistance, now so familiar, were not even suspected. Who could predict that the lightning would obey any law? Beside, he had produced tremendous shocks with his Leyden jars in series and had killed birds with them. More than that, he had been terribly shocked himself by the same means—stunned into insensibility and nearly killed. He had said, again and again, that an electric shock, if strong enough, would blot out a life, though without a pang. If his idea was correct, if his conviction was true, he was about to face an electric discharge beside which that of the most powerful of man-made batteries would seem weak and insignificant. All the world knows what happened. The kite soared up into the black cloud, while the philosopher stood calmly in the drenching rain watching the string, until he finally saw the little fibers of the hemp raise themselves. Then without a tremor he touched his knuckle to the key—and lived. For the spark crackled and leaped to his finger as harmlessly as did that from his old familiar electrical machine and allowed him to charge his jars with it with the same impunity. He sent the story of what he had done abroad, without a particle of trumpeting. He was not a discoverer for revenue. No stock markets awaited the announcement of his claims; no newspaper stood ready to blaze forth his achievement in the interest of the money jugglers. His own narrative barely fills one of the little columns of the Gentlemen's Magazine for Oct. 19, 1752, and it has at its end only the initials, B. F.

AN INDIGNANT CHICAGOAN.

Mr. Jamison's Difficulty with a Spanish Idiom.

Albuquerque (N. M.) News.

Five Chicagoans arrived at Albuquerque one day late in August. They were taken in charge by Frank Blake, a Chicago boy, who has lived in the West for some years, and were soon shown all the sights of the quaint old town. As they walked along the principal street, Mr. Jamison looked up at a building and remarked:

"El Jornado Hotel; nice building."

"Yes," said Blake, "but you must pronounce it right. It is El Hornado in the Spanish tongue. J is always H out here."

"That so?" answered Jamison. "Funny custom. What's this church here—the Cathedral San Juan?" "San Huan," corrected Blake. Mr. Jamison looked pained, but accepted the correction. A moment later he broke out again. "What's that; La Jolla?" "La Holla," spoke the ready mentor at his side, and Jamison's eyes began to roll. So it went through the whole town. Blake corrected Jamison at every turn. When they all got back to the hotel Jamison had a strange, drawn expression on his face, but nobody paid much attention to him. He went into the dining room and called a waiter.

"Bring me," said Mr. Jamison, in slow, measured accents, "some fricasseed hack rabbit, with apple jelly, and let me have a mint hulep before the meat, please."

The waiter stared at him, and somebody at the next table snickered. That was the last straw. The Chicago man sprang to his feet, ablaze with indignation. "By hingo!" he thundered, "what hackass dares criticise my Spanish hargon? By the great humping Hudas! Him Hamison, of Hackson boulevard, and I'll give some of you fellows a swift holt in the haw in four seconds. Oh, yes, I suppose you think this is a higantic joke, but I don't. You're having lots of hoy with me, but I'll come over there and hoin in this hovial hamboree in about half a hiffy if you don't quit your hoshin. I'm no hay, and I don't come from New Jersey. If my friend, Horge Henny, of the Marquette Club, was here, we'd do some huggling with you hackals, and don't you forget it—"

Here the waiters and the rest of the Chicago delegation dragged Mr. Jamison away. He recovered under careful nursing, but made all haste to get out of New Mexico as soon as he could catch a train.

Retribution Dread and Swift.

Times of India.

A lady of position was going to her own ekka from Ramnager to a place in the center of the Bar tract. The driver was a trustworthy servant of the family, and it was for this reason that the lady had not divested herself of the ornaments she usually wore. But the sight of the jewels was too much for him, and at an exceptionally lonely spot in that lonely country he suddenly asked his mistress to hand him her valuables. On her suspecting his real designs and hesitating, the miscreant showed himself in his real colors. He bound her hand and foot, and informed her that he would first kill her children and then slay her.

By her earnest entreaties she prevailed over him to begin with her first. He had an ax in his hand, with which he aimed a blow at her, but, the head being loose, it flew away and fell a few paces off, the handle only remaining in his grasp. He stepped into the grass to look for it and disappeared behind a mound. She awaited her doom with all her nerves on the strain until she gradually fell into a swoon, and when she came round the first thing she saw was her husband bending over her and her babies tugging at her clothes.

After she had left, it seemed, a nameless uneasiness had seized her husband. He could not reason away his vague fears, try as he would, and at last he mounted his horse and followed the ekka. He had proceeded but a few miles when the dreadful sight of his wife and children lying bound in cords on the ground met his eyes. Having heard her story, they both went in the direction the miscreant had taken to pick up his ax. They found his corpse already lying blue and bloated. Retribution had come in the shape of a karundia of the dread variety known as khaki, rare even in these snake-infested parts, whose bite instantaneously paralyzes the victim and decomposes the body in an hour. The ax-head which saved the lady's life is to be preserved as a family heirloom.

THE TERM "JINGOISM."

First Came from a Famous London Music Hall Singer.

New York Press.

The distinguished honor of having given to the world the useful and expressive term "jingo" belongs to a certain music-hall singer, who, for many years, has been a prime favorite with the frequenters of London variety halls. The name of this contributor to the recently coined phrases of the English language is G. H. Macdermott, usually described on the London programmes in bold-faced type that casts the names of the lesser lights into the shade, as "The Great Macdermott."

Macdermott, who is a big, blond-mustached man, of magnificent stage presence, with a fine physique and a tremendous voice, set the whole of London wild at the time of the Russo-Turkish war, a score of years ago, by the singing of his patriotic songs. They were intended as a music-hall note of warning to Russia, whose soldiers were at that time trying to crush the life out of Turkey, and marching on, attended by a prodigious slaughter of soldiers on both sides, with the gates of Constantinople as the objective point. Englishmen were watching Russia's progress with jealous fear. British ships had assembled in the Mediterranean in great force, and the feeling that we now call "jingoism" was rampant in the British Isles.

The Great Macdermott, with the genius pertaining to a nature that could acquire such an imposing handle to his name, struck the popular chord with a resounding twang and soon all London was singing the Macdermott chorus:

"We don't want to fight,
But, by Jingo, if we do,
We've got the ships,
We've got the men,
We've got the money, too;
We've fought the Bear before,
And, if we're Britons true,
The Russians shall not have
Constantinople!"

The air resounded with the shrill shrieks of schoolboys singing the chorus through the streets; the ears were tortured with the refrain whistled by the errand boys, while at every public house Saturday night free-and-easy defiant the words were howled forth in various keys and to the unmusical accompaniment produced by hammering pewter pots on wooden tables.

The war spirit seemed to seize everyone and drive everything off its balance. Warlike rivalry sprung up between the juveniles of various neighborhoods of London. At night roving bands of boys, armed with fearful looking clubs, would go forth to meet other boys living in sections supposed to be engaged in a deadly feud with the attacking force. No serious encounter ever took place, one or other of the bands invariably taking to their heels, leaving the victors to parade up and down, loudly assuring the inhabitants that they didn't want to fight, but, by jingo, if they did, the ships and men and money would be speedily forthcoming.

The war spirit became so pronounced that it needed only a loss of balance in the House of Parliament to plunge the country into a fight. The opposition to the government in the House made a weapon of the popular song by ridiculing Lord Beaconsfield and his party as "jingoes," and holding up jingoism to contempt. The jingoes struggled valiantly to make the term "patriotism" crowd out the new expression, but "jingoism" caught the popular fancy and held its own.

War was happily averted, but nothing could shake Lord Beaconsfield's hold on public favor or Macdermott's popularity with his audiences. When the "jingo" song was sung the audience joined in the chorus, and shouted it over and over again until they were hoarse and the orchestra had lost itself in the turmoil.

Then came the treaty of Berlin, and Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield, and Lord Salisbury, who had been Britain's representatives at the meeting of European envoys, were received with wild shouts of joy when they returned to London after having secured the Island of Cyprus as a British possession. Macdermott had by that time worn his jingo song threadbare, but he had another one ready, which soon promised to become as popular as its predecessor. The new song ran something like this:

"The good old ship Britannia
Has been riding out a gale
In the sea of Eastern troubles,
But she has not lost a sail.
To our brave Commander Dizzy
We will prove a loyal crew,
And, boys, whatever happens,
We'll be real true blue.

"Then stick to your colors, boys,
And pull well together;
Stand by the good old ship
In all sorts of weather.
To our tried and true commander,
We will our duty do,
We're sons of old Britannia,
And we're real true blue."

To make the song additionally effective, Macdermott waved a blue handkerchief at the singing of the chorus. This was the signal for jingoism to howl itself hoarse again. A stranger would have thought bedlam was let loose during the singing of this song at a popular London music hall. After the chorus had been sung until the audience was exhausted, some one would climb on a seat and howl for "Three cheers for Beaconsfield." Another would call for three times three for Gladstone, in opposition to the previous man, and frequently the services of the stalwart individual who officiated as "chucker out" would be called into requisition before the noisy element could be repressed.

But it pleased Lord Beaconsfield to keep alive the jingo spirit, and among the documents of which the Great Macdermott is the proud possessor is a letter from Beaconsfield, commending him for the manner in which he was sustaining the patriotism of the people. Apparently the great jingo songster had not the power to sustain this feeling for a very extended period, however, for at the next general election the jingo Beaconsfield party was snowed under and the peace-at-any-price Gladstonites came into power.

LAYING A CABLE.

It Is Far Less Difficult than the Necessary Repair Work.

John H. Wilson, in Donahue's Magazine.

A word about the composition of a submarine cable may not be out of place. The cable consist first of a core comprising the conductor made of a strand of copper wires, and the insulating covering of gutta percha or India rubber to prevent leakage of the electric current. Outside of this is a layer of tanned jute yarn. This protects the gutta percha or rubber from the sheathing of steel wires which is the next covering, and which varies according to the depth of water in which the cable is to be laid. Outside of this again is a combination of jute yarn and a bituminous mixture. This is applied in a melted condition from a spout as the cable is passed underneath. During the time the cable is being manufactured and laid, electrical tests are continually taken to insure perfection. The finished cable is then kept coiled in large circular iron tanks under water. Similar tanks are in the cable ship, and when at sea the lengths are paid out over a large pulley at the stern. The speed is regulated by several retarding wheels and a brake wheel, over and under which the cable has to pass. The strain to which it is subjected at any given moment is indicated by a dynamometer.

When all the cable has been paid out the end is carefully sealed up and attached to a stout rope. This is lowered to the bottom of the sea and the other end of the rope attached to a buoy, which is to mark the end of the cable, which is usually laid in three sections. The last to be laid, for instance, was started from Waterville and laid out to a given point in deep water. The second section was laid from Canso on the American side, also into deep water, after which the intervening 1,500 miles were laid and all three spliced together. Under ordinary conditions about seven nautical miles can be laid.

But the laying of a cable is as nothing to the difficulties experienced in repairing it, especially if the work has to be done during rough weather, when the sea runs mountain high, and the gales continually blow the ship away from the scene of operations. Sometimes the cable is found buried in sand several thousand fathoms from the surface of the water. When it is only a flaw and the strands themselves are whole the task of repairing it is slight; but when the cable has actually parted and both ends have to be found and again spliced together it is sometimes a work of several months.

PIANO TOUCH ON PAPER.

A Device That Has Lately Been Used—It Is Simple.

St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Evenness of touch is the elusive quality that a piano student thinks himself fortunate if he can attain in a dozen years of laborious practice. One of the reasons for the tediousness of progress in touch study is the difficulty of telling by the mere sound whether the notes are pressed with absolute equality or force. A device that can be relied upon to give a graphic representation of the tension and pressure of the fingers, in such a form that a student can actually see what he is doing, and correct his own errors, may be the means of saving years of hard work to piano players. Such an apparatus has been constructed in France. It is quite simple in construction, and consists chiefly of a rubber tube placed under the keyboard, united at its extremities by a registering drum, also of rubber. When the notes of the piano are played, the pressure on the tube causes a wave of air to be sent through it into the drum, to which is attached a pen that records its movement on a moving roll of paper. The wave makes the drum vibrate, and the motion is communicated to the pen, which leaves irregular remarks on the paper. The board on which the tube rests is regulated by means of wedges adjusted to a screw. When raised, it almost reaches the notes of the piano, and the appliance is then ready for the work of registration. When no music is being played the recording tape shows simply a straight line. The instrument is extremely sensitive, and the peaks seen on the recording tape vary in height according to the degree of force with which a note is struck. In case of an even shake the peaks show like a long-drawn-out range of miniature mountains of uniform height and shape; a characterless, lopsided shake, on the contrary, is shown on the paper as a series of weak, irregular and jumbled markings. This instrument is likely to be of great service as an educational agent. Even artists of high attainments can derive much benefit from it, since the performance of a pianoforte classic by a great artist can be graphically impressed on the recording scroll and can be afterward followed and studied from beginning to end. This may prove to be almost as valuable as a method of musical tuition as the phonograph is found to be in the reaching of language accent and enunciation.

Inquiry for Mr. Freres.

New York Press.

One of the panicky "pikers" in the street is incensed that Lazard Freres should make so many shipments of gold back and forth. "I don't know who the mischief the fellow is, but it seems to me he is running the whole gold business. It's a million to-day, two million to-morrow, a million and a half the next day. Mr. Freres must be a Jim dandy. Who is he and where did he come from?"

One of our leading contemporaries spoke of a gold shipment a day or two ago in these words:

"Lazard Freres has withdrawn $1,000,000 in gold from the assay office, which he intends to ship to Europe to-morrow."