

CITY'S TINY FLOWER GARDENS

NEW YORKERS TURNING MORE AND MORE TO WINDOW BOXES.

The Summer Dress for the House Not Necessarily Expensive—Tiny Trees as Well as Gardens for City Houses—A Year's Work in Tenements by Flower Guild.

The window box industry grows more popular every year, say florists and nurserymen, as they smile prosperously. They are not at all that their pleasure in this state of things is not entirely due to their personal share in the profits, but to the fact that as good citizens they rejoice in the increased beauty of the city.

This summer dress for the house is not an expensive one necessarily. That it appeals more and more to the Manhattanite is evident, for while years ago the window box was so rare an article of adornment that it attracted much attention to-day there is scarcely a street that does not show splendid specimens of this form of gardening.

As evidence that this interest in flowers is not overstated it may be said that the manager of a conservatory in one of the department stores sent one of his assistants to take notes in a certain district embracing a part of Fifth, Madison and Lexington avenues, and his report showed that he counted 6,000 boxes in that territory last summer. This manager attributed the increased interest in the window box in part to the influence of the London season on the travelling New Yorker, who finds on arrival in London that Mayfair, Park lane, Grosvenor street and other fashionable parts are gardens of bloom, with window boxes at every eye of the houses and the balconies, which form an important part of London architecture, like small conservatories. Against the smoky gray of the houses these bright blossoms make



A FLOWER GIRL.

in with smaller flowers, as well as a down dropping curtain of green vines.

One objection that the New York householder once raised to the window box is practically now removed, for absence from town during the vacation months is taken into the scheme of the flower box man, who makes the rounds of his customers' houses during the weeks they are out of the city and takes care of the flowers, so that they will last far into the autumn.

The late spring has delayed by a couple of weeks the placing of the boxes, but every florist is now busy. Some of the hotels call for forty, fifty or more boxes, and some of the private residences for fifteen or twenty.

Accompanying the boxes are the little trees whose popularity is now assured for out of door decoration. While a Broadway florist was pointing out to the reporter some perfect specimens of the bay which he valued at \$15 each an order came from a customer to send to her Madison avenue home a dozen of these to be placed at the entrance of the porch and in the little garden at the rear. Hardy box and privet are also popular for the backyard gardens and are much more reasonable in price.

Hundreds of dollars are expended every year by some flower lovers in this manner. Other flower lovers contend that with time and patience results nearly as beautiful may be achieved by their own efforts, but in place of boxes made to order the stock article of the department store must be used, seeds must be planted instead of buying the growing flower and an eye must be kept open for floral bargains.

The most interesting as well as the most decorative feature of the window box trade has to do with the life of the tenement districts, where people with the same love of flowers as the more fortunate, but without time and money at their disposal, have their lives brightened by the philanthropy of the thoughtful.

According to the report made by the secretary of the National Plant Flower and Fruit Guild, the guild last summer distributed \$10,176 bunches of summer flowers, \$4,515 bunches of function flowers, 2,800 packages of seeds for window boxes and gardens, 1,484 bulbs for gardens, 4,500

rooted plants for gardens, 3,100 geraniums to children in schools and institutions. In addition 900 permanent window boxes were placed in tenement houses and 53 separate yards were made into gardens. At the headquarters of the guild the mural adornments consist of cabinets of seeds for sale at a cent a package and photographs of the work done for which at the Milan Exposition last year the guild received a silver medal.

Scarcely had the account of the guild's work begun before it was interrupted by the entrance of a small boy, who held his cap



DOWNTOWN.

awkwardly in one hand and his roller skates in another. He had skated down from sixty-third street on the East Side to 70 Fifth avenue, the office of the guild, so that he might save the 5 cents car fare and have more money to spend in seeds. With a generous portion he went away happy.

With the exception of function flowers and occasional gifts, all the flowers are paid for by the recipients, although the prices are nominal. The \$3 box of the department store is here sold for \$1.50, and even less when the people are worthy and manifest sufficient interest to made the reduction worth while.

The guild not only puts the box in place but all through the summer one of the visitors making her rounds comes to look it over, to see that it has proper attention and enough sun and water, and if not the reason therefor.

Another part of the visitor's duty is to keep a list of the most successful boxes. This is to aid in the distribution of prizes, which have been given every year to the best window on the West Side, the best on the east, north and south, as well as for the best one tended entirely by children. In the neighborhood of the various settlement houses the window boxes are especially abundant and well taken care of.

The flowers come from all parts of the neighboring country, for any village or group of people within 100 miles of New York may form a branch for this purpose and secure the free transportation labels furnished by the guild and indorsed by the express companies, so that while the daisy

chain that binds the child of the tenements and the child of the country home is perhaps invisible, it is a real tie nevertheless.

The Germans and the Hungarians are said to be the most successful in growing flowers and to take most of the prizes. The Italian is fond of the back yard garden, the lover of morning glory vines under which he sits with his mandolin.

That love of flowers is very prevalent even among the poorest the anecdotes of the officers of the guild show conclusively. One woman who lived on the top floor of a tenement with her invalid husband and six children had for a downlook only the yard filled with tenement house debris. Last spring she received a bearberry bush from the guild, and with the help of her children cleared a space in the yard and planted it. Looking at it day after day were the eyes of all the other tenement dwellers.

One day a taciturn old man, who had watched her endeavors in planting and cleaning, took a sudden resolve and had the entire yard cleared of rubbish and filled ready for planting seeds. The rest of the

Another little garden was the care of an old woman who toiled up and down three long flights of stairs to work in it, and she told the visitor that she could hardly wait for morning to come, so eager was she each day to find out what had happened.

"Any one who has ever wandered through the tenement streets with a flower in the hand," said an officer of the guild, "must have been struck by the eagerness it excites among the children, who if they do not ask



DOWNTOWN.

to the East Side chapel, the room of the poor invalid, or the tenement house. From one fashionable wedding uptown at least winter 2,000 bouquets were distributed. Whenever such an event takes place the officers of the guild request permission to take the flowers, and as soon as the ceremony is over their employees step to the church or house and in a few hours the blossoms are on their way. When the wedding is at night, the flowers are packed in big baskets and sprinkled.

"The distribution of these function flowers," said the distributing officer, "has an economic side which is worthy of consideration. The capital which provides the hundreds of feet of glass needed to grow the lilies, rose, orchids of the dozen or more bouquets of one debutante is not small.

"The labor and skill required to bring these flowers to perfection and the price of a single bouquet is considerable, and all this labor and expense is for a few days only. Of course they are beautiful, but as one father said: 'Such a waste of money considering the time they last.' The same flowers distributed by the guild and cared for by the flower lovers of the tenements have lasted for more than a week. Seven days of pleasure from what ordinarily delights only for a few hours at most!"

for it outright, and they usually do, not being restrained by any false sentiment, at least follow with hungry eyes.

"Such a little girl watched the familiar face of one of the guild distributors recently and said to him, plaintively remembering the distribution of last year: 'Ain't summer come yet, sir?'"

In the function flowers distributed during the season a branch which is just approaching the climax of the June wedding time, the same interest has been manifested, as in the other branches of the guild's work. The function flowers are those which pass from the reception room and the church



THE DAISY CHAIN.



BEAUTY'S DISADVANTAGES.

an instantaneous impression, and the result has been a duplication when the voyager returns to his own vine and fig tree.

At the florists' establishments as soon as the Easter season is over the attention of the proprietors is turned to this out of door trade, and for the most part flowers and vines appropriate for this need are attractively displayed. The favorite flower for the window box is what the London coterie calls the "bloom of the barriers," that is the scarlet geranium, while pansies, nasturtiums, asters, ivy and vinca are also popular.

Many of the boxes match the color of the house and are painted with waterproof stains, although green enamel is the favorite color. Some of the stores exhibit plaster and marble boxes with a trail of figures in bas relief which can bring the cost of a box for one window up to \$50, although the ordinary window box at \$5 complete seems to satisfy the normal minded flower shopper. This \$5 includes the measuring, the soil, the fitting and putting in place and a couple of dozen geranium plants, with the interesting filed

A LAST DUTY TO A PATIENT.

Mr. Norr's Confession—Detective Cronkite Looks up a Rare Poison and Finds a Missing Man.

It was an uncanny thing to do, but Thomas Detmold, reclusive and hypochondriac, was known to favor uncanny things. Not only had he announced his purpose to the few friends who still called occasionally and to Mrs. Hurlbert, the old housekeeper, who continued to serve him with ill grace, but when he engaged Dr. Lyndon Norr, it was part of the compact between them, being written out plainly and peremptorily by the patient, and indorsed with a solemn promise by the physician.

Why not indeed? According to tradition there had been a case of premature burial in Detmold's family.

He had shuddered at the story as a white faced boy, he was shuddering at it as a white haired man. Why, then, should he not appease so hideous an apprehension by the injunction that immediately after death the main artery of his neck should be cut and assurance thus be made doubly sure?

At all events that night when Norr, not unexpectedly, was summoned to Detmold's death bed, he read in the glassy eye and felt in the icy hand a last reminder of his duty and so, when all was over, he performed it with promptness and despatch.

It was the day after it became known that Detmold had left his fortune, share and share alike, to Virginia Brandon and Andrew Hale, on condition of their marriage within the year, that Dr. Norr called at the law offices of Marcellus & Beavers, and sent his card to the senior partner. The old Judge looked with concern upon one whose character and ability he respected.

"Why, Doctor," he began, "I should say you were in need of your own skillful treatment."

The Doctor smiled forcedly. "I have already diagnosed and prescribed for myself," he replied. "The cause is worry; the cure is confession, which, with your permission, I will now undergo."

"Confession is an ugly word, Doctor, in a lawyer's office."

"I fear it is applicable in ethics if not in law. The blunt fact, Judge, is this—I cut the artery in Mr. Detmold's throat before he was dead."

temporarily suspended but not extinguished until I unfortunately—

The Judge waved his hand deprecatingly. "Better let bad enough alone, doctor," he advised. "In all professions, certainly in mine as well as yours, distressing things happen for which no one is justly to blame, any more than blame should attach to those casualties classed as acts of God. You did your full duty, as you conceived it. If an error was made, it is irreparable. No one living has been injured by it."

"Ah, Judge," cried Norr, his sallow face flushing, "there is the very point, the flaw in your philosophy, which also was mine until I learned the provisions of Mr. Detmold's will."

"The will was an eminently proper one, or I should not have drawn it."

"Bear with me, Judge. I have the barest sort of an acquaintance with Miss Brandon, but as you do, I'm sure, I respect her amiable qualities and admire her charming personality. Would you wish her joined for life to a murderer I thought well of what I am saying. There was foul play; Mr. Detmold's coma or trance, so unerringly simulating death, was unnatural."

"It had been superinduced by drugs, hard to get, known only to a few. Who, then, possessed the knowledge, skill, and above all, the motive?"

"Hale, I say, this mysterious Andrew Hale, whom no one has ever seen, but so many have talked about—an analytical chemist employed at a high salary in Mexico, who left his job six months ago for parts unknown. Ask Mrs. Hurlbert about the strange occurrences up at the house. Let that man of yours—what's his name, Cronkite?—follow up the clues."

"He will find, you will see, that this detestable villain of a hungry heir has made me an innocent instrument."

But the Judge shook his head compassionately as Norr paused breathless. "You are overwrought, my friend," he said. "Even if your brooding suspicions could be demonstrated, no jury would heed them."

"But the probabilities are all against you. Hale will doubtless turn up ere long, not a secret assassin, but the fine, able young fellow people say he is. You will shake off the horrors in dancing blithely at his wedding."

"But if they should be real, notwithstanding," demanded Norr with intense, compelling energy, "have you no duty to perform in behalf of Miss Brandon, even if Hale must go uncouraged of justice? Could you endure to let her marry him?"

"She will lose a cool hundred thousand if she does!"

room he met a young and pretty woman dressed in black. She bowed slightly in response to his profound salutation, and ignoring his evident attempt at exchanging a word, entered unannounced the Judge's office.

"You are busy, Judge Marcellus," she said, "but not too busy to see me."

"Indeed I am, and indeed I am not, my dear Virginia," replied the gallant old lawyer. "With one whisk of my wand I change these musty tomes and rusty benches into a boudoir."

"Say, rather, into a confessional—"

"Wherein you may grant me plenary absolution—"

"Not from your sins, Virginia; they are dead and done."

"No; from committing the mortal sin of marrying a man I do not love. In a word, Judge, I renounce Andrew Hale and all the contingent wealth. I will have none of either."

The Judge glanced shrewdly over his glasses, and then pursed his lips. "I dread Mr. Detmold's will for you, he said. 'It was his wish that you two, his only relatives, but slightly connected to each other, should enjoy his fortune together.'"

"You he loved almost as a daughter, though through your odd notions of independence you had refused to live with him. He had made careful inquiry about Hale, and believed him to be an honest and personable young fellow."

"This is a serious step for you to take, involving the relinquishment of more money than you can ever hope to have again. You are young and foolish and very much alone in the world. Tell me why, then, Virginia. Not as a woman, but as a child."

"You mean candidity? Well, then, Judge, in legal phrase, a certain presuming young man named Adrian Pounce has issued a writ of attachment."

The Judge shook his head with mock severity. "You young people will never learn that sentiment is cheaper than bread and butter," he said. "I am going to help you, Virginia, but in my own way."

"You must promise then to do nothing about discharging your legacy until I have seen Hale and learned his intentions. Perhaps he also is averse to the match."

"The will says that in case either of you declines to marry, the other shall inherit the whole fortune. I think that is all, my dear, until you hear from me; it is always permissible, remember, for the young to hope. But, stay!"

"Cronkite," said the Judge, when the detective answered in response to his ring, "before taking up with you a little matter we have in hand I want you to know Miss Virginia Brandon, a young lady in whose welfare I feel the deepest interest."

"May I assume, sir," asked Cronkite, "that Miss Brandon is concerned in the little matter you are about to explain. Very good. Then I beg to detain her with but a single question."

"It is this: What are your sentiments toward the man you met as you passed through the general room? It was easy enough for me to read from his face and manner his sentiments toward you."

"As a child, now, Virginia," admonished the Judge.

And again Virginia Brandon answered candidly.

Cronkite went forth on his mission of promoting Miss Brandon's welfare with two distinct and strong impressions. One was that Dr. Norr felt an intense passion for the girl, which he had already manifested in such a way as to arouse her dislike. The other was that Mr. Detmold had worked out all right.

The detective's deductions from his first premise developed readily and with increasing threat. Of course it might be that the physician's story was true and that he was sincere in his suspicions of the missing Hale; but the animus he had shown and the secret motive that was urging him on, primeval, unchangeable, led Cronkite to judge the accusation false.

Had Mr. Detmold been in a state of suspended animation? Cronkite doubted it; the opportunity was too obvious; the results to be gained too complete.

engagement, just announced to the Judge. But why, if Pounce was Hale, should there be further concealment of the fact? Perhaps Norr knew why, and had used the knowledge in working out his plot.

This possible bond between the two premises led Cronkite to test the second one first. Having learned where Pounce was staying, he located himself at the modest hostelry called the Ruthven, securing an adjacent room. At the first sound of life on the other side of the partition he stepped to the next door and rapped.

"I beg your pardon," said the detective with a deprecating glance toward the pipe in his hand, "but may I trouble you for a light? 'Tis a fellow smoker's privilege."

The pleasant and manly young fellow who had responded fished out a wax lucifer, struck it against the side of the box, and presented it smilingly.

"Ah, there is another bond between us," added Cronkite; "that of foreign travel."

"Foreign travel? What do you mean?" demanded Pounce.

"Simply that I have never before seen a double headed lucifer outside of Mexico. By the way, did you ever meet an analytical chemist by the name of Andrew Hale while you were there? I am anxious to have a talk with him."

"Come in, then," the young man answered sternly; and the two were face to face behind the bolted door.

"Mission confidential, motive honorable," said Cronkite. "I come from Judge Marcellus in the interest of his ward, Miss Brandon. He wants to know, first, why you met her under an assumed name."

"Because I realized that I must win her heart before I could have her hand," Hale answered.

"Good. He wants to know next why, having succeeded in doing so—he has her word for that—you have not revealed her identity."

"It only to tell circumstances, not to say what they mean. That is your task, isn't it, mister?"

"Well, then, my master chose latterly to lie in the little bedroom of the library on the first floor. It could readily be reached from the street by way of the veranda."

"The morning before he died, while I was dusting in the front room, I heard a voice, I smelled tobacco smoke. Some man was with him. Their talk was low; it was none of my affair; but once I did hear a name mentioned, it sounded like an address—the Ruthven."

"There is such a hotel in town," Cronkite agreed.

"When I brought up Mr. Detmold's luncheon," Mrs. Hurlbert went on, as if with her knitting, "the master was alone, sleeping heavily. On the table was a decanter of port and glasses that had been used. There were cigar stumps and ashes, and this one I had never seen before, and it seemed so queer that I kept it."

She stepped deliberately to the closet, and brought to the detective a double headed wax lucifer.

"I see," Cronkite reflected after a little study. "You think that if I seek at the Ruthven a man who uses a double headed lucifer, I shall be able not only to find Mr. Detmold's mysterious guest, but also trace whence he came, and who he really is through his use of so odd an article."

"You mean that you think," corrected the housekeeper composedly. "It is for me simply to relate."

"True," agreed Cronkite. "The deduction is so obvious that I thought it must occur to you both. Now, is that all?"

"All except that. Not wishing to disturb Mr. Detmold, I placed the glasses unclean on the shelf; one, indeed, was half full."

"Later in the afternoon, alarmed at his not ringing for me, I returned to find him breathing even more stertorously. I sent for the doctor. We watched together until Mr. Detmold died, as we believed, without reviving."

and mention the name of the Ruthven; but there was nothing to drink; our talk was far too serious for that. It dealt mainly with you, madam; your past relations with Mr. Detmold and the way you had turned them to profit; your wild demands and wildest expectations."

"He warned me that directly you learned of the disposition of his property you would make trouble; and be placed in my hands proof of your criminality in cheating and forging which would cause any jury to disregard your testimony, had you the effrontery to appear before it. But he pledged me to remain passive and under my assumed name for three months so that you might have a full test, and if you during such period made no attempt to plunder or ruin me or my betrothed, Miss Brandon, then to give you a sufficient sum to make you comfortable for life."

"All this he did through no consideration or faith in you, but because of his own fault and because you had been a good mother to his son, Dr. Norr, for whom he had long since privately provided, sacrificing your maternal feelings, so that the doctor might never know the shame of his birth."

"Hush, for God's sake, hush!" cried the old housekeeper, the livid mask glowing with tender anxiety. "He is coming at this very hour, he might overhear, he would never hold up his head again!"

But even as she spoke Lyndon Norr, the ghost of himself, entered.

"It isn't that, mother," he gasped. "You have always been good to me. Bad as you may be, you are far better than I."

"But you kept encouraging me, don't you know, that as soon as Mr. Detmold died you could so arrange that Virginia would surely marry me. He was nothing but a tiresome old man to me, who might linger on for years."

"And so, and so, I took advantage of his fear of death—I never dreamed he was my father. Need I say more? Wretched parrot that I am!"

"Stop him! hold him!" screamed Mrs. Hurlbert, as Norr dashed desperately from the room. "He will get that poison. He said it was instant death!"

There was the sound of a fall; back came Cronkite from a vain pursuit.

"It was instant death, madam," he said somberly as he closed the door.

Texas Women in Business.

From the San Antonio Express. There are many women ranch owners and ranch managers in Texas and other parts of the Southwest. They have had marked success in the cattle raising business. This is particularly true of Mrs. Richard King, the multimillionaire stockman of Kingville, and Mrs. Adair, who owns and manages a ranch of nearly 1,500,000 acres in the Panhandle. Mrs. S. C. Hooker is a prominent railroad contractor in Texas. She took a large grading contract on the Kansas City, Mexico and Orient Railroad between Sweetwater, Tex., and Abou City, more than a year ago, and she came out so well with it that she has enlarged her outfit and is now at work on a large contract on the same road between Sweetwater and San Angelo. She not only finances the job but she supervises the grading work personally. She lives in the grading camp and spends most of her time on the stretches of grade, directing the work of the laborers and other employees. She started in with twenty mule teams, but her outfit has been greatly increased recently. It is said that she is not shrinking on the part of any employees. They must do their work well and put in full hours at it.