

THE RETURN OF THE GIRL FEMININE

THE FAMILY HORTICULTURIST



BY MARTHA McCULLOCH-WILLIAMS.

IF ONLY love were always a root of wisdom, or even knowledge, the most part of house plants could not fail to thrive. For one woman who says of a plant, as the French woman did of a baby, "it furnishes," there are a dozen at least who potter with green things or growing ones because of pure love for them. Marjorie is an ideal horticulturist in an appreciative family, and her windows are at once the delight and despair of her friends, alike in summer or winter, wherefore it seems worth while to tell how she makes and keeps them so.

"Sunshine and soap and water, love and liquid manure—they are positive-ly all the witchcraft I have used," Marjorie said, laughing over a Boston fern she had cherished for five years. It is a royal plant, a wavy mass of lacey deep green fronds, filling all the corner between two sunny windows. Some of the fronds are five feet long, others of the stout up-standing ones are broader than the hand. They spring from matted roots crowding a ten-inch pot. The plant has been shifted yearly, and old crowns have broken out whenever they got so high above the roots that the new fronds from their tips lacked vigor.

Further, the fern has had water every day—enough to wet the pot thoroughly, but not to stand in the

saucer. It has been fertilized every week, and bathed, head and ears, every fortnight. For the bath, the pot is laid on its side in the tub after covering the earth-surface and the pot-edges with a clean cloth. The water is a little less than tepid, and the fronds are well washed in it with some good white soap. As soon as they are clean the pot is set upright, the soap-suds drained off, and the whole plant well showered with clear water. After it has drained, the cloth comes off and the pot is scrubbed clean. Dirty pots, Marjorie insists, smother roots as dust and grime smother leaves. She will not have jardinières, although she confesses herself strongly tempted by those made of openwork in wicker patterns that come in every color under the sun, and can be matched to the daintiest room. But the common bulging, glaring, staring atrocity has her worst word. Any self-respecting plant, she says, should refuse to thrive in one. This wholly upon aesthetic grounds, regardless of the fact that jardinières so often keep stagnant water and bad air about the roots, conditions almost certainly fatal.

Only a few plants love to have their feet continually wet. The new asparagus fern—asparagus sprengeri—is one of them. To have long, thick sprays of it, prodigal of blossom, and later of coral red berries, the pot should have a saucer generously deep, and the saucer should be filled with water every day, besides soaking the earth in the pot. It should also have frequent baths. All house plants, indeed, not too big for the tub are the better for them. The giants must

have, instead of the plunge, sponge baths—first with white soapsuds, then with clear water. Leaves are plant-lungs, and choke quickly indoors.

Marjorie has ferns galore—the new ostrich plume, both sorts of asparagus, a lace fern, fern balls, and a fern dish, green and flourishing all the year around. She lets alone the supremely lovely maidenhair fern, knowing it will not live outside a green house, except in a Wardian case, for which she does not care. The fern dish has the inner pot of red clay. Every morning the ferns are taken out, their roots sunk in a basin of water, their tops plentifully sprinkled, then the whole thing set to drain before it goes back in the dish. The dish sits through daylight where it gets moderate sunlight. Marjorie, indeed, scoffs at the prevalent notion that ferns fear the sun. They will live in the shade, she says. She also admits there are sorts, wild and tame, that sunlight scorches. But the most part of those in house culture love light, especially sunlight, and never do their best without it.

Marjorie's window boxes are sprinkled lavishly twice a day. If it is dry and dusty, the leaves are well shaken before the sprinkling. They over-run with bloom—geraniums, petunias, nasturtiums and so on. Many beautiful plants are barred by the fact that they infallibly fall prey to plant lice and root lice. As a preventive of root lice, Marjorie often scalds or bakes the earth before putting it in pots and boxes. If possible, she gets earth from an old hotbed—rich loam and rotted manure, about half and half. Failing that, she takes any which is handy, and enriches it with ammoniated bone meal, mixed well

through, or else with rotted sheep manure. A heaping teaspoonful of the bone meal or a tablespoonful of manure is enough for a six-inch pot of earth. Neither must be kept directly on the roots of plants. Liquid fertilizer likewise must be kept off roots, stems and leaves. Make a hole at one side, or a trench just inside the pot rim, pour in the fertilizer and let

it sink, then put back the earth, and water the pot well.

To make liquid manure, pour half a gallon of boiling water upon two heaping tablespoonfuls of sheep manure, or one of ammoniated bone meal, stir well, let it stand overnight, then apply in the proportion of a small cupful to a six-inch pot. Dig the undissolved residue in the earth

of the bigger pots, as those of rubber plants, palms and so on.

Fern balls should be well watered before getting the fertilizer. It will spread all through the wet mass by capillary attraction. Vigorous plants will take up and rejoice in twice as much fertilizer as sickly or stunted ones of the same size. Indeed, care must be taken not to over-fertilize a

sickly plant, on pain of having its last state worse than its first. Give the feeding stuff very moderately until growth is well established. This applies especially to bulbs and woody-stemmed things, such as fuchsias and lemon verbenas, also roses and camellias.

Marjorie has roses and camellias, also a Daphne and a Cape Jasmine. "Now that we have gone back to the fashions of our great-grandmothers, why not also their flowers?" she asks. All of these she keeps in a living-room, steam heated and fairly light. Flat, open saucers, filled daily with clean water, sit on top of the two radiators. The soil is kept moist enough for the plants, and equally grateful to human lungs. There are hinged brackets all up and down the two sunniest windows.

Whatever Marjorie wishes to force she puts on a high bracket, well knowing the temperature there to be ten to twenty degrees higher. But she is careful not to shift other than blooming plants too suddenly. The change might make them turn yellow and lose leaves. She pots a few bulbs every fall, putting hyacinths singly in four-inch pots, jonquils, irises, tulips, and so on, in clumps from three to six, in bigger ones.

First, the pots have an inch of corks at the bottom, then are half filled with earth which is at least half rotted manure. After it is well shaken down, the bulbs go in and are covered an inch over the crown. Then the pots are well watered and set where it is dark for a fortnight, and kept moist, but not wet, throughout that time. This is to encourage them in making roots, without a good supply of which the flowers will be stunted and crowded.

Next the pots are set in a cool room moderately lighted, and stay there till flower buds peep up among the leaves. Then they are taken, a few at a time, into the living-room, where sunshine and warmth bring them quickly into full flower. As the first flowers fully open, they take their place. Thus, from the same planting, Marjorie is able to show two months of steady bloom. By thus knowing what to do, and doing it regularly and in time, she has much pleasure and precious little trouble.

England Running Short of Colonists

ENGLAND is running short of pioneers of the kind that built up her great self-governing colonies. The Royal Colonial Institute, a society composed of distinguished empire builders, has been taking the question up. At a recent meeting the administrator of the Ladybrand district of the Orange River Colony said:

"All the colonies are calling on the mother country to furnish them with men for colonization and settlement. The suitability of the individual is particularly dwelt upon in their appeals. They want to welcome to their shores hard-headed men possessed of some capital and more common sense. They need small farmers who, inured to outdoor life, are adapted to the conditions in an undeveloped country.

"Last month I revisited the counties of Devon, Hereford and Norfolk after an absence of twenty years. All of them are agricultural and pastoral centers, and from what I saw and heard I should say that the supply of such men as are wanted in the colonies is pretty well exhausted.

"With the increasing area of our colonies and the lapse of the bucolic arts at home, there are not enough of them now to go round. In Devon and Hereford, a few men, a few boys, and not too many cattle occupied three, four or five farms bunched together.

"I saw wool stored away in the drawing-rooms of decaying mansions that in the old time had housed many a lusty squire or his well-to-do tenant farmers. It is not probable that this class of men, or men anything like them, will be found in the near future to supply the wants of the British colonies—at least, not in any considerable numbers."

Denslow and His Cat, "Bob the Fisherman"

NEXT Sunday W. W. Denslow will begin in this part of the paper a series of his inimitable children's picture stories.

The first of these will be "Three Little Kittens Who Lost Their Mittens," and Mr. Denslow's handling of that old story, which is ever new with the little ones, is most admirable, as it is hardly necessary to state.

Mr. Denslow is now in this country, preparing a new work which both he and his friends, to whom advance sheets have been shown, believe will prove to be the best he has ever turned out. Next winter he will spend in the Bermudas, where he owns a tiny island all by himself and where he has built a beautiful home.

And this reminds the writer of Denslow's cat, "Bob the Fisherman." Denslow tells the story on the authority of a workman whom he employed to work on the island while his house was being built. This workman looks like a pirate of the old school, according to all accounts, used to be a wrecker (he says so himself, but adds that he was of the good sort) and is a fisherman. The fish he catches are best taken in a sort of



cel pot, and the ex-wrecker baits the net with fish, and expects to find it full every morning.

One morning he found it empty, and the same was true the next morning, and the next, and the next, for so long a time that he decided to watch for the thief. The first morning the fisherman did not discover what he was after, so the next morning he began his watch an hour or two earlier. Perhaps fifteen minutes before he began to watch he saw the cat plunge boldly into the water, (a very unusual thing for a cat to do) and swim out to the pot, which he quickly despoiled of its fish.

The picture which accompanies this venacious tale was drawn by Denslow himself from descriptions furnished by the ex-wrecker. Anyone who doubts the accuracy of the story in any of its details, and happens to be in Bermuda next winter, may call on Mr. Denslow at his island home and see the cat for himself. Bob was first put on the little isl-

and while the house was being built, to catch rats, and he didn't mind stealing the ex-wrecker's fish till all the rats had been caught and he was hungry. Of course the ex-wrecker saw to it that the cat had plenty of meat to eat after his fish pilfering was discovered, and of course, he then reformed at once.

He is now a great pet in the Denslow household, and is famous all through the Bermudas as "Bob, the Fisherman."

Bravery of Soldiers in Battle. All the world is talking about and wondering over the bravery of the Japanese soldiers as shown by their reckless daring in the war with Russia. There is much praise also for the brave Russian soldiers, and both Japs and Russians deserve all the good words they get.

But the notion that the little brown men of Chrysanthemum land or the stolid peasant soldiers of the Czar's empire have more nerve and stamina, that they are showing greater heroism, more indifference to death than those fighting men from further west are capable of showing, is a mistake. Who is there who knows about the wild charge of Pickett and his men at Gettysburg can doubt that American soldiers have before now gone to their death with all the nerve the abandon, the recklessness that have characterized the charges made by the Japs at Port Arthur and Liao Yang.

There was another charge at Gettysburg in which the superb courage of which the American soldier is capable was magnificently developed. This charge is almost forgotten because it was made on the same day as Pickett's, and was not quite so spectacular. It was led by General Elmer B. Farnsworth on the rocky tree-covered slopes of Round Top, and was ordered by General Kilpatrick. It is only the truth of history that Farnsworth hesitated, though not primarily for himself. The only object of the charge, undeniably hopeless on the face of the situation, was to draw the enemy's fire, and Farnsworth balked. Looking at his splendid troops he answered when directed to advance:

"They are too good men to kill, General Kilpatrick."

"I will lead the charge if you are afraid," was Kilpatrick's answer, and instantly Farnsworth gave the orders to forward and charge.

It was only a pitifully short time before Farnsworth's command was all but annihilated. Completely surrounded by the Confederates, with only a handful of his men left, his horse shot from under him, Farnsworth jumped into the empty saddle of a fallen trooper and started to cut his way through a whole regiment of the enemy. On and on he went, felling his opponents in his progress, but taking as well in giving, until at last mortally wounded in five places General Farnsworth demonstrated on the slopes of Round Top that sort of bravery upon which is builded the foundation stones of all live and virile nations.

No one who understands his countrymen doubts that they are as brave to-day as they were in the sixties.

Ray Stannard Baker's Labor Adventures

RAY STANNARD BAKER spent years in first-hand observation and experience of labor difficulties as a newspaper reporter before he began to write on the subject for the magazines. Many hazardous adventures fell to his lot during this work. In 1894 he was sent by a Chicago newspaper to report the great coal and coke strike in Western Pennsylvania.

His appearance on the scene of this trouble was dramatic. Arriving at one of the strike centers north of Uniontown, he found the place in the hands of a mob.

One unfortunate "scab" had just been stoned to death and rioting was still in progress. As Baker walked along the street towards the scene of the latest excitement, he suddenly found himself the target for stones hurled by some women on a nearby bluff.

A little further on he was halted by a group of Hungarian miners in an ugly, drunken mood. None of them could understand a word of English, and his protests were in vain. He was searched and all his possessions taken. When his reporter's star was found, that was taken as conclusive evidence that he was a hated deputy sheriff. They threatened to brain him with their bludgeons on the spot, but he had the presence of mind to recall the name of their leader, whom he knew. So he vigorously protested and shouted "Davis," the leader's name, until he convinced them that it would be best to take him to Davis.

He was escorted to the leader, who was addressing a large gathering of miners. Davis recognized him, rescued him from the Huns, and recovered his property for him. Among those who accompanied "General" Jacob Coxey and his tattered march from Massillon, Ohio, to Washington in the spring of 1894 was Mr. Baker, who then obtained much first-hand material for future studies of labor and sociology.

From March until May, throughout the march, Mr. Baker traveled with these soldiers of peace and studied the singular social phenomena they presented.

While with the Coxeyites, Mr. Baker made a special study of individual cases and cultivated the personal acquaintance of many of the marchers. He persuaded one of the odd characters to keep a diary of the trip in order to get the point of view of the real participants, and this remarkable diary he still preserves. When Washington and rest and food were finally reached he had accumulated a rare lot of impressions and experiences.

Where He Balked.

"I don't care nothin' about the tariff or that there gold and silver question," said the deacon, "nor do I concern myself with the question of the down-trodden but dirty Philip-pines. But ding em!" shrieked he, "if them there trusts ain't stopped blamed quick they'll be goin' into horse swappin' next, and where will the cause of simple and honest agriculture be then, hey?"

Men Who Have "Made Good" in Spite of Blindness

THE most remarkable blind man the present writer ever knew was Johnson M. Mundy, who used to live at Tarrytown on the banks of the Hudson.

Mr. Mundy was a sculptor by profession during all the later years of his life. Before that he was a painter, not an artist of renown, but one who could earn a very comfortable income painting portraits and teaching an art class. At 50 his sight, which had been growing dim for some time, failed him almost altogether. In two or three years he could barely distinguish light from darkness, and he was at last inclined to be melancholy. One day he asked for clay and began kneading it and modelling it with his fingers. The result was a beautiful child's head, and after that his melancholy disappeared.

His most remarkable piece of sculptural work was a statuette of Washington Irving, which he modeled when 58 years of age. If showed the creator of "Rip Van Winkle" in a characteristic pose, slightly idealized, but surprisingly like and lifelike. Mr. Mundy designed and executed the soldiers' monument at Tarrytown.

There have been many blind chess players, but blind card players are rare. One of them lives on West Eleventh street in New York, or did until recently. It is easy to understand how a blind man can distinguish chess-men by the touch; so how he could tell playing cards apart if the figures on them were raised, but this man, who was known to the writer simply as "Jim," claimed that his sense of touch was so delicate that he could feel the diamonds, hearts, spades and clubs on the cards. This may seem impossible to the reader, but may be understood by any one who, with his eyes shut, will take the trouble to feel carefully of any smoothly surfaced paper which has passed through a printing press. After a little practice you can easily tell the printed from the unprinted surface.

"Jim" used to be greatly delighted with the result when some skeptical, new acquaintance, suspecting that his cards were specially prepared, would insist on bringing a fresh pack to play with. "Jim" got along quite well with cards that he had never before handled as he did with those he had been using for weeks. Euchre was his favorite, but he played whist and other games very well indeed. His memory was excellent. Of course, his partners and his opponents had to call their cards as they played them out.

William E. Cramer, owner and editor of the "Evening Wisconsin," published in Milwaukee, for many years, was not only stone blind, but almost totally deaf, long before he gave up active life. In 1887, when he celebrated the fortieth anniversary of his ownership of his paper, it was said of him that he "worked as hard and wrote as much as any editor in Milwaukee." He kept closer office hours probably. He could not read the news

daily, of course; printing for the blind is not far enough advanced yet to make raised letter newspapers practicable, but he kept posted by engaging a "reading secretary," who, with the aid of an auriphone, could make him hear. He dictated the editorials and other articles which he contributed to his paper.

Lewis B. Carl of Brooklyn, though blind from childhood, is one of the most famous men in the world among those who know a lot about the more difficult branches of mathematics, for he has written two remarkable works on calculus and has acted as instructor to more than one of the eminent mathematicians of the present time.

Mr. Carl is a graduate of Columbia, where he was a classmate of Seth Low, whom he pressed hard for first place at graduation. Carl was a fine classical student and hoped he would be able to fill a chair in Greek at some one of the colleges, but this ambition could not be fulfilled. His memory is something phenomenal, as a matter of course, but he has now forgotten nearly all he once knew about Latin and Greek.

Piano tuning is an employment much sought after by the blind, and often they become experts at it. Armin Schotte, a blind tuner, who lives in the borough of the Bronx, New York, tuned a piano for Paderewski a few years ago so satisfactorily to the great artist that no other tuner is now allowed to touch his piano when he is in the American metropolis.

Dr. Newell Perry is another blind mathematician of note. He was born with good eyes, but received injuries in the face when only eight years old by running against a barb-wire fence. Blood poisoning set in and he lost his sight completely.

He began to study mathematics seriously when only 12, was graduated with high honors from the University of California at 19, became a Fellow of that institution, earned enough money coaching students to take a post-graduate course in mathematics at the University of Chicago, repeated the procedure there, and then went to Munich, Germany. There his brilliant attainments won unusual repute for him and there he acquired the degree of Ph. D. Last year he coached fifty students of Columbia College in New York. He says he would like to see again, but fears that restored sight might retard his mental progress. Dr. Perry is now 30.

Laundry work and mattress, broom and brush making are among the favorite employments of the blind. It is an interesting fact that blind laundry women do not burn the fabrics they work upon nearly as often as do those who can see.

William Allen White Wants the New York County Printing

William Allen White of the Emporia "Gazette" and "What's the Matter With Kansas?" has been often impudently to accept positions on the editorial staffs of the magazines in New York. But Mr. White has steadily stuck to his theory of the comparative desirability of remaining "a big toad in a small puddle."

"Now, I might move to New York," he comments, with the true country printer's instinct, "if I could only get the city and county printing."

Sonnichsen in Macedonia. New York friends of Albert Sonnichsen, author of "Deep Sea Vagabonds," have received letters from him showing that he has reached Macedonia, for which troubled section of the Turkish Empire he departed some time ago. Mr. Sonnichsen became personally interested in the Macedonian cause through having been sent as a correspondent to interview the members of the Macedonian committee in New York. He is not in Macedonia to promote their ideas of revolution, however, but to investigate the situation and write a book.

The Pay of the Jap Soldier. The Japanese soldier needs to have his heart in his work, for his pay is a mere bagatelle even as wages go in the East. An enlisted man draws two cents a day, a corporal six cents, a sergeant ten cents, a "first sergeant" twenty cents, and an "extra service sergeant"—the highest non-commissioned officer—thirty cents. Promotion to the commissioned ranks is practically impossible.

The Tailor's Waterloo. "No, sir," said the tailor, breathing hard, "no new suit till you pay for the one you've got on." "Very well," said he coldly. "We shall sleep in this one, pull up one suspender higher than the other, wrinkle our shoulders, and then beg all our friends to go to you and show them what a fine fit you give us." "We had him there."

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