THE SEASONS OF SCENT

In late March and April and plant them out in May, as soon as their real leaves appear, and pull them up at the general autumnal garden clearance. Upon the highly scented perpetual and picotee pinks or carnations (make your own choice of terms) you must depend for fragrance between the going of the May pinks and the coming of the Margarets; not that they of necessity cease blooming when their more easily perfected sisters begin; quite the contrary, for the necessity of lifting them in the winter gives them a spring set-back that they do not have in England, where they are the universal hardy pink, alike of the gardens of great estates and the brick-edged cottage border. These are the carnations of garden that filled you with such admiration, and also awoke the spirit of emulation. Lavinia Cortright was correct in associating them with the lavish bloom of the gardens of Hampton Court, for if anything could make me permanently unpatriotic (which is impossible), it would be the roses and picotee pinks of the dear old stupid (human middle-class, and cold bedroom-wise), but florally adorable mother country! The method by which you may possess yourself of these crowning flowers of the garden, for coronations is one of the words from which carnation is supposed but to be derived, is as follows:— Be sure of your seed. Not long ago it was necessary to import it direct, but not now. You may buy from the oldest of American seed houses fifty varieties of carnations and picotees, in separate packets, for three dollars, or twenty-five sorts for one dollar and seventy-five cents, or twelve (enough for a novice) for one dollar, the same being undoubtedly English or Holland grown, while a good English house asks five shillings, or a dollar and a quarter, for a single packet of mixed varieties! Moral—it is not necessary that "made in England" should be stamped upon flower seeds to prove them of English origin! If you can spare hotbed room, the seeds may be sown in April, like the early Margarets, and transplanted into some inconspicuous part of the vegetable garden, where the soil is deep and firm and there is a free circulation of air (not between tall peas and sweet corn), as for the first summer these pinks have no ornamental value, other than the pleasurable spectacle made by a healthy plant of any kind, by virtue of its future promise. Before frost or not later than the second week in October the pinks should be put in long, narrow boxes or pots sufficiently large to hold all the roots comfortably, but with little space to spare, watered, and partly shaded, until they have recovered themselves, when they should be set in the lightest part of the cold pit. During the winter months they should have only enough water to keep the earth from going to dust, and as much light and air as possible without absolutely freezing hard, after the manner of treating lemon verbenas, geraniums, and wall-flowers. By the middle of April they may be planted in the bed where they are to bloom, and all the further care they need will be judicious watering and the careful staking of the flower stalks if they are weak and the buds top-heavy,—and by the way, as to the staking of flowers in general, a word with you later on. In the greenhouse, pinks are liable to many ailments, and several of these follow them out-of-doors, three having given me some trouble, the most fatal being of a fungoid order, due usually to unhealthy root conditions or an excess of moisture. Rust is one of these, its Latin name being too long for the simple vocabulary of The Garden, You, and I. It first shows itself in a brown spot that seems to have worked out from the inner part of the leaf. Sometimes it can be conquered by snipping the infected leaves, but if it seizes an entire bed, the necessary evil of spraying with Bordeaux mixture must be resorted to, as in the case of fungusspotted hollyhocks. Thrip, the little transparent, whitish fly, will sometimes bother border carnations in the same way as it does roses. If the flowers are only in bud, I sprinkle them with my brass rose-atomizer and powder slightly with helebore. But if the flowers are open, sprinkling and shaking alone may be resorted to. For the several kinds of underground worms that trouble pinks, of which the wireworm is the chief, I have found a liberal use of unslaked lime and bone-dust in the preparation of the soil before planting the best preventive.

Other ailments have appeared only occasionally. Sometimes an apparently healthy, full-grown plant will suddenly wither away, or else swell up close to the ground and finally burst so that the sap leaks out and it dies like a punctured or girdled tree. The first trouble may come from the too close contact of fresh manure, which should be kept away from the main roots of carnations, as from contact with lily bulbs. As to the swelling called gout, there is no cure, so do not temporize. Pull up the plant at once and disinfect the spot with unslaked lime and sulphur. Thus, Mary Penrose, may you have either pinks in your garden or a garden of pinks, whichever way you may care to develop your idea. "A deal of trouble?" Y-e-s; but then only think of the flowers that crown the work, and you might spend an equal amount of time in pricking cloth with a steel splinter and embroidering something, in the often taken-in-vain name of decorative art, that in the end is only an elaborated rag—without even the bone and the hank of hair! Your chronicle of the Pink Family found me by myself in camp, dreaming away as vigorously as if it was a necessary and practical occupation. After all, are we sure that it is not, in a way, both of these? This season my dreams of night have been so long that they have lingered into the things of day and vice versa, and yet neither the one nor the other have whispered of idleness, but the endless hope of work. Bart's third instalment of vacation ends to-morrow, though we shall continue to sleep out of doors so long as good weather lasts; the remaining ten days we are saving until October, when the final transplanting of trees and shrubs is to be made; and in addition to those for the knoll we have marked some shapely dogwoods, hornbeams, and tulip trees for grouping in other parts of the home acres. There are also to be had for the digging good bushes of the early pink and clammy white azalea, mountain-laurel, several of the blueberry tribe, that have white flowers in summer and glorious crimson foliage in autumn, whiteflowered elder, button-bush, groundsel tree, witchhazel, bayberry, the shiningleaved sumach, the white meadow-sweet, and pink steeplebush, besides a number of cornels and viburnums suitable for shrubberies. As I glance over the list of what the river and quarry woods have yielded us, it is like reading from the catalogue of a general dealer in hardy plants, and yet I suppose hundreds of people have as much almost at their doors, if they did but know it. The commercial side of a matter of this kind is not the one upon which to dwell the most, except upon the principle of the old black woman who said, "Chillun, count yer marcies arter every spell o' pain!" and to-day, in assaying our mercies and the various advantages of our garden vacation, I computed that the trees, shrubs, ferns, herbaceous wild flowers, and vines (yes, we have included vines, of which I must tell you), if bought of the most reasonable of dealers, would have cost us at least three hundred dollars, without express or freight charges. The reason for my being by myself at this particular moment is that Bart, mounted on solemn Romeo, has taken the Infant, astride her diminutive pony, by a long leader, for a long-promised ride up the river road, the same being the finale of the celebration of his birthday, that began shortly after daylight. The Infant, in order to be early enough to give him the first of his thirty-three kisses, came the night before, and though she has camped out with us at intervals all summer, the novelty has not worn off. She has a happy family of pets that, without being caged or in any way coerced or confined, linger about the old barn, seem to watch for her coming, and expect their daily rations, even though they do not care to be handled. Punch and Judy, the gray squirrels of the dovecote, perch upon her shoulders and pry into the pockets of her overalls for nuts or kernels of corn, all the while keeping a bright eye upon Reddy, the setter pup, who, though he lies ever so sedately, nose between paws, they well know is not to be trusted. While as for birds, all the season we have had chipping-sparrows, catbirds, robins, and even a wood-thrush, leader of the twilight orchestra, all of whom the little witch has tempted in turn by a bark saucer spread with leaves and various grains and small fruits,

from strawberries to mulberries, for which she has had a daily hunt through the Opal Farm land the season through. Toward the English sparrow she positively declines to harden her heart, in spite of my having repeated the story of its encroachments and crimes. She listens and merely shakes her head, saying, "We 'vited them to come, didn't we, mother? When we 'vites people, we always feed 'em; 'sides, they're the only ones'll let me put them in my pocket," which is perfectly true, for having learned this warm abiding-place of much oats and cracked corn, they follow her in a flock, and a few confiding spirits allow themselves to be handled. At the birthday dinner party, arranged by the Infant, a number of these guests were present. We must have looked a motley crew, in whose company Old King Cole himself would have been embarrassed, for Bart wore a wreath of pink asters, while a gigantic sunflower made my head-dress, and the cake, made and garnished with red and white peppermints, an American and an Irish flag, by Anastasia, was mounted firmly upon a miscellaneous mass of flowers, with a superstructure of small yellow tomatoes, parsley, young carrots, and beets, the colour of these vegetables having caught the Infant's eye. The pony, Ginger, had a basket of second-crop clover flowers provided for him; Reddy some corned-beef hash, his favourite dish, coaxed from Anastasia; while for Punch, Judy, and as many of their children as would venture down from the rafters, the Infant had compounded a wonderful salad of mixed nuts and corn. As the Infant ordained that "the childrens shan't tum in 'til d'sert," we had the substantial part of our meal in peace; but the candles were no sooner blown out and the cake cut than Ginger left his clover to nibble the young carrots, the squirrels got into the nut dish bodily and began sorting over the nuts to find those they liked best, with such vigour that the others flew in our faces, and Reddy fell off the box upon which the Infant had balanced him with difficulty, nearly carrying the table-cloth with him, while at this moment, the feast becoming decidedly crumby, we were surrounded by the entire flock of English sparrows! Now this is not at all what I started to tell you; quite the contrary. Please forgive this domestic excursion into the land of maternal pride and happenings. What I meant to write of was my conviction, that came through sitting on the hay rafters and looking down upon the garden, that as a beautiful painting is improved by proper framing, so should the garden be enclosed at different points by frames, to focus the eye upon some central object. Though the greater part of the garden is as yet only planned and merely enough set out in each part to fix special boundaries, as in the case of the rose bed, I realize that as a whole it is too open and lacks perspective. You see it all at once; there are no breaks. No matter in what corner scarlet salvia and vermilion nasturtiums may be planted, they are sure to get in range with the pink verbenas and magenta phlox in a teeth-on-edge way. From other viewpoints the result is no better. Looking from the piazza that skirts two sides of the house, where we usually spend much time, three portions of the garden are in sight at once, and all on different planes, without proper separating frames; the rose garden is near at hand, the old borders leading to the sundial being at right angles with it. At the right, the lower end of the knoll and the gap with its bed of heliotrope are prominent, while between, at a third distance, is the proposed location of the white-birch screen, the old wall rockery, etc. The rockery and rose garden are in their proper relation, but the other portions should be given perspective by framing, and the result of my day-dreams is that this, according to nature, should be done by the grouping of shrubs and the drapery of vines. I now for the first time fully understand the uses of the pergola in landscape gardening, the open sides of which form a series of vine-draped frames. I had always before thought it a stiff and artificial sort of arrangement, as well as the tall clipped yews, laurel trees in tubs, and marble vases and columns that are parts of the usual framework of the more formal gardens. And while these things would be decidedly out of place in gardens of our class, and at best could only be indulged in via white-painted wooden imitations,

the woman who is her own gardener may exercise endless skill in bringing about equally good results with the rustic material at hand and by following wild nature, who, after all, is the first model. The silver maple by the lane gate. I think I hear Evan laughing at my preachment concerning his special art, but the comprehension of it has all come through looking at the natural landscape effects that have happened at Opal Farm owing to the fact that the hand of man has there been stayed these many years. On either side of the rough bars leading between our boundary wall and the meadow stands a dead cedar tree, from which the dry, moss-covered branches have been broken by the loads of hay that used to be gathered up at random and carted out this way. Wild birds doubtless used these branches as perches of vantage from which they might view the country, both during feeding excursions and in migration, and thus have sown the seed of their provender, for lo and behold, around the old trees have grown vines of wild grapes, with flowers that perfume the entire meadow in June. Here the woody, spiral-climbing waxwork holds aloft its clusters of berries that look like bunches of miniature lemons until on being ripe they open and show the coral fruit; Virginia creeper of the five-pointed fingers, clinging tendrils, glorious autumn colour, and spreading clusters of purple blackberries, and wild white clematis, the "traveller's joy" of moist roadside copses, all blending together and stretching out hands, until this season being undisturbed, they have clasped to form a natural arch of surpassing beauty. Having a great pile of cedar poles, in excess of the needs of all our other projects, my present problem is to place a series of simple arches constructed on this natural idea, that shall frame the different garden vistas from the best vantage-point. Rustic pillars, after the plan of Evan's that you sent me for the corners of the rose garden, will give the necessary formal touch, while groups of shrubs can be so placed as not only to screen colours that should not be seen in combination, but to make reasons for turns that would otherwise seem arbitrary. Aunt Lavinia has promised me any number of Chinese honeysuckle vines from the little nursery bed of rooted cuttings that is Martin Cortright's special province, for she writes me that they began with this before having seed beds for either hardy plants or annuals, as they wished to have hedges of flowering shrubs in lieu of fences, and some fine old bushes on the place furnished ample cuttings of the old-fashioned varieties, which they have supplemented. Aunt Lavinia also says that the purple Wisteria grows easily from the beanlike seed and blossoms in three years, and that she has a dozen of these two-year-old seedlings that she will send me as soon as I have place for them. Remembering your habit of giving every old tree a vine to comfort its old age, and in particular the silver maple by the lane gate of your garden, with its woodpecker hole and swinging garniture of Wisteria bloom, I have promised a similar cloak to a gnarled bird cherry that stands midway in the fence rockery, and yet another to an attenuated poplar, so stripped of branches as to be little more than a pole and still keeping a certain dignity. A curtain to the side porch. The honeysuckles I shall keep for panelling the piazza, they are such clean vines and easily controlled; while on the two-story portion under the guest-room windows some Virginia creepers can be added to make a curtain to the side porch. As for other vines, we have many resources. Festooned across the front stoop at Opal Farm is an old and gigantic vine of the scarlet-and-orange trumpet creeper, that has overrun the shed, climbed the side of the house, and followed round the rough edges of the eaves, while all through the grass of the front yard are seedling plants of the vine that, in spring, are blended with tufts of the white star of Bethlehem and yellow daffies. In the river woods, brush and swamp lots, near by, we have found and marked for our own the mountain fringe with its feathery foliage and white flowers shaded with purple pink, that suggest both the bleeding heart of gardens and the woodland Dutchman's breeches. It grows in great strings fourteen or fifteen feet in length and seems as trainable as smilax or the asparagus vine. Here are also woody trailers of moonseed, with its minute white flowers in the axils of leaves that might pass at first glance for one of the many varieties of wild grapes; the hyacinth bean, with its deliciously fragrant chocolate flowers tinged with violet,

that is so kind in covering the unsightly underbrush of damp places. And here, first, last, and always, come the wild grapes, showing so many types of leaf and fruit, from the early ripening summer grape of the high-climbing habit, having the most typical leaf and thin-skinned, purple berries, that have fathered so many cultivated varieties; the frost grape, with its coarsely-toothed, rather heartshaped, pointed leaf and small black berries, that are uneatable until after frost (and rather horrid even then); to the riverside grape of the glossy leaf, fragrant blossoms and fruit. One thing must be remembered concerning wild grapes: they should be planted, if in the open sunlight, where they will be conspicuous up to late summer only, as soon after this time the leaves begin to grow rusty, while those in moist and partly-shady places hold their own. I think this contrast was borne in upon me by watching a mass of grape-vines upon a tumble-down wall that we pass on our way to the river woods. In August the leaves began to brown and curl at the edges, while similar vines in the cool lane shade were still green and growing. So you see, Mrs. Evan, that, in addition to our other treasure-trove, we are prepared to start a free vinery as well, and as our lucky star seems to be both of morning and evening and hangs a long while in the sky, Meyer, Larry's successor, we find, has enough of a labourer's skill at post setting and a carpenter's eye and hand at making an angled arch (this isn't the right term, but you know what I mean), so that we have not had to pause in our improvements owing to Amos Opie's rheumatic illness. Not that I think the old man very ill, and I believe he could get about more if he wished, for when I went down to see him this morning, he seemed to have something on his mind, and with but little urging he told me his dilemma. Both The Man from Everywhere and Maria Maxwell have made him good offers for his farm, The Man's being the first! Now he had fully determined to sell to The Man, when Maria's kindness during his illness not only turned him in her favour, but gave him an attachment for the place, so that now he doesn't really wish to sell at all! It is this mental perturbation, in his very slow nature, that is, I believe, keeping him an invalid! What Maria wants of the farm neither Bart nor I can imagine. She has a little property, a few thousand dollars, enough probably to buy the farm and put it in livable repair, but this money we thought she was saving for the so-called rainy day (which is much more apt to be a very dry period) of spinsterhood! Of course she has some definite plan, but whether it is bees or boarders, jam or a kindergarten, we do not know, but we may be very sure that she is not jumping at random. Only I'm a little afraid, much as I should like her for a next-door neighbour, that, with her practical head, she would insist upon making hay of the lily meadow! "Straying away again from the horticultural to the domestic things," I hear you say. Yes; but now that the days are shortening a bit, it seems natural to think more about people again. If I only knew whether Maria means to give up her teaching this winter, I would ask her to stay with us and begin to train the Infant's mind in the way it should think, for my head and hands will be full and my heart overflowing, I imagine. Ah! this happy, blessed summer! Yes, I know that you know, though I have never told you. That's what it means to have real friends. But to the shrubs. Will you do me one more favour before even the suspicion of frost touches my enthusiasm, that I may have everything in order in my Garden Boke against a planting season when Time may again hold his remorseless sway. This list of eighteen or more shrubs is made from those I know and like, with selections from that Aunt Lavinia sent me. Is it comprehensive, think you? Of course we cannot go into novelties in this direction, any more than we may with the roses. There is the little pale pink, Daphne Mezereum, that flowers before its leaves come in April. I saw it at Aunt Lavinia's and Mrs. Marchant had a great circle of the bushes. Then Forsythias, with yellow flowers, the red and pink varieties of Japanese quince, double-flowering almond and plum, the white spireas (they all have strange new names in the catalogue),

the earliest being what mother used to call bridal-wreath (prunifolia), with its long wands covered with double flowers, like tiny white daisies, the St. Peter's wreath (Van Houttei) with the clustered flowers like small white wild roses, two pink species, Billardii and Anthony Waterer, beautiful if gathered before the flowers open, as the colour fades quickly, and a little dwarf bush, Fortune's white spirea, that I have seen at the florist's. Next the old-fashioned purple lilac, that seems to hold its own against all newcomers for garden use, the white tree lilac, the fragrant white mock orange or syringa (Coronarius), the Japanese barberry of yellow flowers and coral berries, the three deutzias, two being the tall crenata and scabra and the third the charming low-growing gracilis, the old-fashioned snowball or Guelder rose (viburnum opulus sterilis), the weigelias, rose-pink and white, the white summer-flowering hydrangea (paniculata grandiflora), and the brown-flowered, sweet-scented strawberry shrub (calycanthus floridus). "Truly a small slice from the loaf the catalogues offer," you say. Yes; but you must remember that our wild nursery has a long chain to add to these. In looking over the list of shrubs, it seems to me that the majority of them, like the early wild flowers, are white, but then it is almost as impossible to have too many white flowers as too many green leaves. I was prevented from finishing this until to-day, when I have a new domestic event to relate. Maria, no longer a music mistress, has leased the Opal Farm, it seems, and will remain with me this winter pending the repairing of the house, which Amos Opie himself is to superintend. I wish I could fathom the ins and outs of the matter, which are not at present clear, but probably I shall know in time. Meanwhile, I have Maria for a winter companion, and a mystery to solve and puzzle about; is not this truly feminine bliss? by the rays of light and sound waves upon the walls of the house at. The Man from Everywhere, keeping bachelor's hall in the eastern half of the farm home. Amos Opie, living in the western half of the house, the separating door being locked on his side. Maria Maxwell, who, upon hearing Opie is again ill, has dropped in to give him hot soup and medicine. Amos Opie was more than usually uncomfortable this particular September evening. It may have been either a rather sudden change in the weather or the fact that now that he was sufficiently well to get about the kitchen and sit in the well-house porch, of a sunny morning, Maria Maxwell had given up the habit of running over several times a day to give him his medicine and be sure that the kettle boiled and his tea was freshly drawn, instead of being what she called "stewed bitterness" that had stood on the leaves all day. Whichever it was, he felt wretched in body and mind, and began to think himself neglected and was consequently aggrieved. He hesitated a few minutes before he opened the door leading to The Man's part of the house, took a few steps into the square hall, and called "Mr. Blake" in a quavering voice; but no answer came, as the bachelor had not yet returned from the reservoir. Going back, he settled heavily into the rocking-chair and groaned,—it was not from real pain, simply he had relaxed his grip and was making himself miserable,—then he began to talk to himself. "She doesn't come in so often now he's come home, and he fights shy o' the place, thinkin' mebbe she's around, and they both wants to buy. He's offered me thirty-five hundred cash, and she's offered me thirty hundred cash, which is all the place's worth, for it'll take another ten hundred to straighten out the house, with new winder frames, floorin' 'nd plaster 'nd shingles, beams and sills all bein' sound,—when the truth is I don't wish ter sell nohow, yet can't afford to hold! I don't see light noway 'nd I'm feelin' another turn comin' when I was nigh ready ter git about agin to Miss'ss Penrose flower poles. O lordy! lordy! I wish I had some more o' that settling medicine Maria Maxwell brought me" (people very seldom spoke of that young woman except by her complete name). "If I had my wind, I'd yell over to her to come up! Yes, I vow I would!" David, the hound, who had been lying asleep before the stove, in which the fire had died away, got up, stretched himself, and, going to his master, after gazing in his face for several minutes,

licked his hands thoroughly and solemnly, in a way totally different from the careless and irresponsible licks of a joyous dog; then raising his head gave a long-drawn bay that finally broke from its melancholy music and degenerated into a howl. Amos must have dozed in his chair, for it seemed only a moment when a knock sounded on the side door and, without waiting for a reply, Maria Maxwell entered, a cape thrown about her shoulders, a lantern in one hand, and in the other a covered pitcher from which steam was curling. "I heard David howling and I went to our gate to look; I saw that there wasn't a light in the farm-house and so knew that something was the matter. No fire in the stove and the room quite chilly! Where is that neighbour of yours in the other half of the house? Couldn't he have brought you in a few sticks?" "He isn't ter hum just now," replied Amos, in tones that were unnecessarily feeble, while at the same time an idea entered his brain that almost made him chuckle; but the sound which was quenched in his throat only came to Maria as an uncomfortable struggle for breath that hastened her exit to the woodpile by the side fence for the material to revive the fire. In going round the house, her arms laden with logs, she bumped into the figure of The Man leading his bicycle across the grass, which deadened his footfall, as the lantern she carried blinded her to all objects not within its direct rays. "Maria Maxwell! Is Opie ill again? You must not carry such a heavy load!" he exclaimed all in one breath, as he very quickly transferred the logs to his own arms, and was making the fire in the open stove almost before she had regained the porch, so that when she had lighted a lamp and drawn the turkey-red curtains, the reflections of the flames began to dance on the wall and cheerfulness suddenly replaced gloom. Still Amos sat in an attitude of dejection. Thanking The Man for his aid, but taking no further notice of him, Maria began to heat the broth which was contained in the pitcher, asking Amos at the same time if he did not think that he would feel better in bed. "I dunno's place has much to do with it," he grumbled; "this can't go on no longer, it's doing for me, that it is!" Maria, thinking that he referred to bodily illness, hastened the preparations for bed, and The Man, feeling helpless as all men do when something active is being done in which they have no part, rose to go, and, with his hand on the latch of the porch door, said in a low voice: "If I might help you in any way, I should be very glad; I do not quite like leaving you alone with this old fellow,—you may need help in getting him to bed. Tell me frankly, would you like me to stay?" "Frankly I would rather you would not," said Maria, yet in so cordial a tone that no offence could be gathered from it in any way. So the door opened and closed again and Maria began the rather laborious task of coaxing the old man to bed. When once there, the medicine given, and the soup taken, which she could not but notice that he swallowed greedily, she seated herself before the fire, resolving that, if Amos did not feel better by nine o'clock, she would have Barney come over for the night, as of course she must return to be near the Infant. As she sat there she pictured for the hundredth time how she would invest her little capital and rearrange her life, if Amos consented to sell her the farm,—how best to restore the home without elaborating the care of it, and take one or two people to live with her who had been ill or needed rest in cheerful surroundings. Not always the same two, for that is paralyzing after a time when the freshness of energetic influence wears off; but her experience among her friends told her that in a city's social life there was an endless supply of overwrought nerves and bodies. The having a home was the motive, the guests the necessity. Then she closed her eyes again and saw the upper portion of the rich meadow land that had lain fallow so long turned into a flower farm wherein she would raise blossoms for a well-known city dealer who had, owing to his artistic skill, a market for his wares and decorative skill in all the cities of the eastern coast. She had consulted him and he approved her plan.

The meadow was so sheltered that it would easily have a two weeks' lead over the surrounding country, and the desirability of her crop should lie in its perfection rather than rarity. Single violets in frames, lilies-of-the-valley for Easter and spring weddings, sweet peas, in separate colours, peonies, Iris, Gladioli, asters, and Dahlias: three acres in all. Upon these was her hope built, for with a market waiting, what lay between her and success but work? Yes, work and the farm. Then came the vision of human companionship, such as her cousin Bartram and Mary Penrose shared. Could flowers and a home make up for it? After all, what is home? Her thoughts tangled and snapped abruptly, but of one thing she was sure. She could no longer endure teaching singing to assorted tone-deaf children, many of whom could no more keep on the key than a cow on the tight rope; and when she found a talented child and gave it appreciative attention, she was oftentimes officially accused of favouritism by some disgruntled parent with a political pull, for that was what contact with the public schools of a large city had taught her to expect. A log snapped—she looked at the clock. It was exactly nine! Going to the window, she pulled back the curtain; the old moon, that has a fashion of working northward at this time, was rising from a location wholly new to her. She looked at Amos; he was very still, evidently asleep, yet unnaturally so, for the regular breathing of unconsciousness was not there and the firelight shadows made him look pinched and strange. Suddenly she felt alone and panic stricken; she forgot the tests so well known to her of pulse taking, and all the countryside tales of strokes and seizures came back to her. She did not hesitate a moment; a man was in the same house and she felt entirely outside of the strength of her own will. Going to the separating door, she found it locked, on which side she could not be sure; but seeing a long key hanging by the clock she tried it, on general principles. It turned hard, and the lock finally yielded with a percussive snap. Stepping into the hall, she saw a light in the front of the house, toward which she hurried. The Man was seated by a table that was strewn with books, papers, and draughting instruments; he was not working, but in his turn gazing at the flames from a smouldering hearth fire, though his coat was off and the window open, for it was not cold but merely chilly. Hearing her step, he started, turned, and, as he saw her upon the threshold, made a grab for his coat and swung it into place. It is strange, this instinct in civilized man of not appearing coatless before a woman he respects. "Amos Opie is very ill, I'm afraid," she said gravely, without the least selfconsciousness or thought of intrusion. "Shall I go for the doctor?" said The Man, reaching for his hat and at the same time opening the long cupboard by the chimney, from which he took a leathercovered flask. "No, not yet; please come and look at him. Yes, I want you very much!" This in answer to a questioning look in his eyes. Standing together by the bed, they saw the old man's eyelids quiver and then open narrowly. The Man poured whiskey from his flask into a glass, added water, and held it to Amos's lips, where it was quickly and completely absorbed! Next he put a finger on Amos's pulse and after a minute closed his watch with a snap, but without comment. "You feel better now, Opie?" he questioned presently in a tone that, to the old man at least, was significant. "What gave you this turn? Is there anything on your mind? You might as well tell now, as you will have to sooner or later, and Miss Maxwell must go home presently. You'll have to put up with me for the rest of the night and a man isn't as cheerful a companion as a woman—is he, Amos?" "No, yer right there, and it's the idee o' loneliness that's upsettin' me! Come down ter facts, it's the offers I've had fer the farm—yourn and hern—and my wishin' ter favour both and yet not give it up myself, and the whole's too much fer me!" "Hers! Has Miss Maxwell made a bid for the farm? What do you want it for?" he said, turning quickly to Maria, who coloured and then replied quietly—"To live in! which is exactly what you said when I asked you a similar question a couple of months ago!"

"The p'int is," continued Amos, quickly growing more wide awake, and addressing the ceiling as a neutral and impartial listener, "that has offered me five hundred more than Maria Maxwell, and though I want ter favour her (in buyin', property goes to the highest bidder; it's only contract work that's fetched by the lowest, and I never did work by contract—it's too darned frettin'), I can't throw away good money, and neither of 'em yet knows that whichsomever of 'em buys it has got ter give me a life right ter live in the summer kitchen and fetch my drinkin' water from the well in the porch! A lone widder man's a sight helplesser 'n a widder, but yet he don't get no sympathy!" The Man from Everywhere began to laugh, and catching Maria's eye she joined him heartily. "How do you mean to manage?" he asked in a way that barred all thought of intrusion. "I'm going to have a flower farm and take in two invalids—no, not cranks or lunatics, but merely tired people," she added, a little catch coming in her voice. "Then you had better begin with me, for I'm precious tired of taking care of myself, and here is Amos also applying, so I do not see but what your establishment is already complete!" Then, as he saw by her face that the subject was not one for jest, he said, in his hearty way that Mary Penrose likes, "Why not let me buy the place, as mine was the first offer, put it in order, and then lease it to you for three years, with the privilege of buying if you find that your scheme succeeds? If the house is too small to allow two lone men a room each, I can add a lean-to to match Opie's summer kitchen, for you know sometimes a woman finds it comfortable to have a man in the house!" Maria did not answer at first, but was looking at the one uncurtained window, where the firelight again made opals of the panes. Then turning, she said, "I will think over your offer, if everything may be upon a strictly business basis. But how about Amos? He seems better, and I ought to be going. I do not know why I should have been so foolish, but for a moment he did not seem to breathe, and I thought it was a stroke." "I'm comin' too all in good time, now my mind's relieved," replied the old man, with a chuckle, "and I think I'll weather to-night fer the sake o' fixin' that deed termorrow, if you'll kindly give me jest a thimbleful more o' that old liquor o' yourn—I kin manage it fust rate without the water, thank 'ee!" The Man followed Maria to the door and out into the night. He did not ask her if he might go with her—he simply walked by her side for once unquestioned. Maria spoke first, and rather more quickly and nervously than usual: "I suppose you think that my scheme in wishing the farm is a madcap one, but I'm sure I could not see why you should wish to own it!" "Yes and no! I can well understand why you should desire a broader, freer life than your vocation allows, but—well, as for reading women's motives, I have given that up long since; it often leads to trouble though I have never lost my interest in them. "I think Amos Opie will revive, now that his mind is settled" (if it had been sufficiently light, Maria would have seen an expression upon The Man's face indicative of his belief that the recent attack of illness was not quite motiveless, even though he forgave the ruse). "In a few days, when the deeds are drawn, will you not, as my prospective tenant, come and look over the house by daylight and tell me what changes would best suit your purpose, so that I may make some plans? I imagine that Amos revived will be able to do much of the work himself with a good assistant. "When would you like the lease to begin? In May? It is a pity that you could not be here in the interval to overlook it all, for the pasture should be ploughed at once for next year's gardening." "May will be late; best put it at the first of March. As to overseeing, I shall not be far away. I'm thinking of accepting cousin Mary's offer to stay with her and teach the Infant and a couple of other children this winter, which may be well for superintending the work, as I suppose you are off again with the swallows, as usual."

"Oh, no, you forget the reservoir and the tunnelling of Three Brothers for the aqueduct to Bridgeton!" "Then let it be March first!" said Maria, after hesitating a moment, during which she stood looking back at Opal Farm lying at peace in the moonlight; "only, in making the improvements, please do them as if for any one else, and remember that it is to be a strictly business affair!" "And why should you think that I would deal otherwise by you?" The Man said quickly, stepping close, where he could see the expression of her face. Maria, feeling herself cornered, did not answer immediately, and half turned her face away,—only for a moment, however. Facing him, she said, "Because men of your stamp are always good to women,—always doing them kindnesses both big and little (ask Mary Penrose),—and sometimes kindness hurts!" "Well, then, the lease and all pertaining to it shall be strictly in the line of business until you yourself ask for a modification,—but be careful, I may be a hard landlord!" Then, dropping his guard, he said suddenly, "Why is it that you and I—man and woman—temperamentally alike, both interested in the same things, and of an age to know what in life is worth while, should stand so aloof? Is there no more human basis upon which I can persuade you to come to Opal Farm when it is mine? Give me a month, three months,—lessen the distance you always keep between us, and give me leave to convince you! Why will you insist upon deliberately keeping up a barrier raised in the beginning when I was too stupidly at home in your cousin's house to see that I might embarrass you? Frankly, do you dislike me?" Maria began two different sentences, stumbled, and stopped short; then drawing herself up and looking The Man straight in the face, she said, "I have kept a barrier between us, and deliberately, as you say, but—" here she faltered—"it was because I found you too interesting; the barrier was to protect my own peace of mind more than to rebuff you." "Then I may try to convince you that my plan is best?" "Yes," said Maria, with a glint of her mischievous smile, "if you have plenty of time to spare." "And you will give me no more encouragement than this? No good wish or omen?" "Yes," said Maria again, "I wish that you may succeed—" here she slipped her hand in the belt of her gown and drew out a little chamois bag attached to her watch, "and for an omen, here is the opal you gave me—you give it a happy interpretation and one is very apt to lose an unset stone, you know!" But as neither walls nor leaves have tongues, Mary Penrose never learned the real ins and outs of this matter. Michaelmas. The birthdays of our commuters are not far apart. This being Evan's festival, we have eaten the annual goose in his honour, together with several highly indigestible old-country dishes of Martha Corkle's construction, for she comes down from the cottage to preside over this annual feast. Now the boys have challenged Evan to a "golf walk" over the Bluffs and back again, the rough-and-ready course extending that distance, and I, being "o'er weel dined," have curled up in the garden-overlook window of my room to write to you. It has been a good gardener's year, and I am sorry that the fall anemones and the blooming of the earliest chrysanthemums insist upon telling me that it is nearly over,—that is, as far as the reign of complete garden colour is concerned. And amid our vagrant summer wanderings among gardens of high or low degree, no one point has been so recurrent or interesting as the distribution of colour, and especially the dominance of white flowers in any landscape or garden in which they appear. In your last letter you speak of the preponderance of white among the flowering shrubs as well as the early blossoms of spring. That this is the case is one of the strong points in the decorative value of shrubs, and in listing seeds for the hardy or summer beds or sorting the bushes for the rosary, great care should be taken to have a liberal sprinkling of white, for the white in the flower kingdom is what the diamond is in the mineral world, necessary as a setting for all other colours, as well as for its own intrinsic worth. Look at a well-cut sapphire of flawless tint. It is beautiful surely, but in some way its depth of colour needs illumination.

Surround it with evenly matched diamonds and at once life enters into it. Fill a tall jar with spires of larkspur of the purest blue known to garden flowers. Unless the sun shines fully on them they seem to swallow light; mingle with them some stalks of white foxgloves, Canterbury bells, or surround them with Madonna lilies, a fringe of spirea, or the slender Deutzia gracilis, more frequently seen in florists' windows than in the garden, and a new meaning is given the blue flower; the black shadows disappear from its depth and sky reflections replace them. The blue-fringed gentian, growing deep among the dark grasses of low meadows, may be passed over without enthusiasm as a dull purplish flower by one to whom its possibilities are unknown; but come upon it backgrounded by Michaelmas daisies or standing alone in a meadow thick strewn with the white stars of grass of Parnassus or wands of crystal ladies' tresses, and all at once it becomes,— "Blue, blue, as if the sky let fall A flower from its cerulean wall!" The same white setting enhances the brighter colours, though in a less degree than blue, which is, next to magenta, one of the most difficult colours to place in the garden. In view of this fact it is not strange that it is a comparatively unusual hue in the flower world and a very rare one among our neighbourly eastern birds, the only three that wear it conspicuously being the bluebird, indigo bird, and the bluejay. It is this useful quality as a setting that gives value to many white flowers lacking intrinsic beauty, like sweet alyssum, candy-tuft, the yarrows, and the double feverfew. In buying seeds of flowers in mixed varieties, such as asters, verbenas, Sweet-William, pansies, or any flower in short that has a white variety, it is always safe to buy a single packet of the latter, because I have often noticed that the usual mixtures, for some reason, are generally shy not only of the white but often of the very lightest tints as well. In selecting asters the average woman gardener may not be prepared to buy the eight or ten different types that please her fancy in as many separate colours; a mixture of each must suffice, but a packet of white of each type should be added if the best results are to be achieved. The same applies to sweet peas when planted in mixture; at least six ounces of either pure white or very light, and therefore quasi-neutral tints harmonizing with all darker colours, should be added. For it is in the lighter tints of this flower that its butterfly characteristics are developed. Keats had not the heavy deep-hued or striped varieties in mind when he wrote of "... Sweet Peas on tiptoe for a flight, With wings of gentle flush: o'er delicate white, And taper fingers catching at all things To bind them all about with tiny rings." If you examine carefully the "flats" of pansies growing from mixed seed and sold in the market-places or at local florists', you will notice that in eight out of ten the majority of plants are of the darker colours. There are white varieties of almost every garden flower that blooms between the last frost of spring and winter ice. The snowdrop of course is white and the tiny little single English violet of brief though unsurpassing fragrance; we have white crocuses, white hyacinths, narcissus, lilies-of-the-valley, Iris, white rock phlox, or moss-pink, Madonna and Japan lilies, gladiolus, white campanulas of many species, besides the well-known Canterbury bells, white hollyhocks, larkspurs, sweet Sultan, poppies, phloxes, and white annual as well as hardy chrysanthemums. Almost all the bedding plants, like the geranium, begonia, ageratum, lobelia, etc., have white species. There are white pinks of all types, white roses, and wherever crimson rambler is seen Madame Plantier should be his bride; white stocks, hollyhocks, verbenas, zinnias, Japanese anemones, Arabis or rock cress, and white fraxinella; white Lupins, nicotiana, evening primroses, pentstemons, portulaca, primulas, vincas, and even a whitish nasturtium, though its flamecoloured partner salvia declines to have her ardour so modified. Among vines we have the white wisteria, several white clematis, the moonflower, and other Ipomeas, many climbing and trailing roses, the English polygonum, the star cucumber, etc., so that there is no lack of this harmonizing and modifying colour (that is not a colour after all) if we will but use it intelligently. Aside from the setting of flower to flower, white has another and wider function. As applied to the broader landscape it is not only a maker of perspective, but it often indicates a picture and fairly pulls it from obscurity, giving the same lifelike roundness that the single white dot lends in portraiture to the correctly tinted but still lifeless eye.

Take for instance a wide field without groups of trees to divide and let it be covered only with grass, no matter how green and luxuriant, and there is a monotonous flatness, that disappears the moment the field is blooming with daisies or snowy wild asters. Follow the meandering line of a brook through April meadows. Where does the eye pause with the greatest sense of pleasure and restfulness? On the gold of the marsh marigolds edging the water? or on the silver-white plumes of shad-bush that wave and beckon across the marshes, as they stray from moist ground toward the light woods? Could any gay colour whatsoever compete with the snow of May apple orchards?—the fact that the snow is often rose tinged only serving to accentuate the contrasting white. In the landscape all light tints that at a distance have the value of white are equally to the purpose, and can be used for hedges, boundaries, or what may be called punctuation points. German or English Iris and peonies are two very useful plants for this purpose, flowering in May and June and for the rest of the season holding their substantial, well-set-up foliage. These two plants, if they receive even ordinary good treatment, may also be relied upon for masses of uniform bloom held well above the leaves; and while pure white peonies are a trifle monotonous and glaring unless blended with the blush, rose, salmon, and cream tints, there are any number of white iris both tall and dwarf with either self-toned flowers, or pencilled, feathered, or bordered with a variety of delicate tints, and others equally valuable of pale shades of lilac or yellow, the recurved falls being of a different tint. Thus does Nature paint her pictures and give us hints to follow, and yet a certain art phase proclaims Nature's colour combinations crude and rudimentary forsooth! An Iris Hedge. AN IRIS HEDGE. Nature is never crude except through an unsuccessful human attempt to reproduce the uncopyable. Give one of these critics all the colour combinations of the evening sky and let him manipulate them with wires and what a scorched omelet he would make of the most simple and natural sunset! While Nature does not locate the different colours on the palette to please the eye of man, but to carry out the various steps in the great plan of perpetuation, yet on that score it is all done with a sense of colour value, else why are the blossoms of deep woods, as well as the night-blooming flowers that must lure the moth and insect seekers through the gloom, white or light-coloured? In speaking of white or pale flowers there is one low shrub with evergreen leaves and bluish-white flowers that I saw blooming in masses for the first time not far from Boston in early May. There was a slight hollow where the sun lay, that was well protected from the wind. This sloped gently upward toward some birches that margined a pond. The birches themselves were as yet but in tassel, the nearby grass was green in spots only, and yet here in the midst of the chill, reluctant promise of early spring was firmness of leaf and clustered flowers of almost hothouse texture and fragrance. Not a single spray or a dozen, but hundreds of them, covered the bushes. This shrub is Daphne cneorum, a sturdier evergreen cousin of Daphne mezereum, that brave-hearted shrub that often by the south wall of my garden hangs its little pink flower clusters upon bare twigs as early as the tenth of March. Put it on your list of desirables, for aside from any other situation it will do admirably to edge laurels or rhododendrons and so bring early colour of the rosy family hue to brighten their dark glossy leaves, for the sight and the scent thereof made me resolve to cover a certain nook with it, where the sun lodges first every spring. I am planting mine this autumn, which is necessary with things of such early spring vitality. Another garden point akin to colour value in that it makes or mars has, I may say, run itself into my vision quite sharply and painfully this summer, and many a time have I rubbed my eyes and looked again in wonder that such things could be. This is the spoiling of a well-thought-out garden by the obtrusive staking of its plants. Of course there are many tall and bushy flowers—hollyhocks, golden glow, cosmos—that have not sufficient strength of stem to stand alone when the weight of soaking rain is added to their flowers and the wind comes whirling to challenge them to a dizzy dance, which they cannot refuse, and it inevitably turns their heavy heads and leaves them prone.

Daphne Cneorum. Besides these there are the lower, slender, but top-heavy lilies, gladioli, carnations, and the like, that must not be allowed to soil their pretty faces in the mud. A little thinking must be done and stakes suitable to the height and girth of each plant chosen. If the purse allows, green-painted stakes of sizes varying from eighteen inches for carnations to six feet for Dahlias are the most convenient; but lacking these, the natural bamboos, that may be bought in bundles by the hundred, in canes of eight feet or more, and afterward cut in lengths to suit, are very useful, being light, tough, and inconspicuous. In supporting a plant, remember that the object is as nearly as possible to supplement its natural stem. Therefore cut the stake a little shorter than the top of the foliage and drive it firmly at the back of the plant, fastening the main stem to the stake by loosely woven florist's string. If, on the other hand, the plant to be supported is a maze of side branches, like the cosmos, or individual bushes blended so as to form a hedge, a row of stout poles, also a little lower than the bushes, should be set firmly behind them, the twine being woven carefully in and out among the larger branches, and then tightened carefully, so that the whole plant is gradually drawn back and yet the binding string is concealed. If it is possible to locate cosmos, hollyhocks, and Dahlias (especially Dahlias) in the same place for several successive years, a flanking trellis fence of light posts, with a single top and bottom rail and poultry wire of a three inch mesh between, will be found a good investment. Against this the plants may be tethered in several places, and thus not only separate branches can be supported naturally, but individual flowers as well, in the case of the large exhibition Dahlias. A Terrible Example! Practicable as is the proper carrying out of the matter, in a score of otherwise admirable gardens we have seen the results of weeks and months of preparation either throttled and bound martyrlike to a stake or twisted and tethered, until the natural, habit of growth was wholly changed. In some cases the plants were so meshed in twine and choked that it seemed as if a spiteful fairy had woven a "cat's cradle" over them or that they had followed out the old proverb and, having been given enough rope, literally hanged themselves. In other gardens green stakes were set at intervals (I noticed it in the case of gladioli and carnations especially) and strings carried from one stake to the other, leaving each plant in the centre of a twine square, like chessmen imprisoned on the board. But the most terrible example of all was where either the owner or the gardener, for they were not one and the same, had purchased a quantity of half- inch pine strips at a lumber yard and proceeded to scatter them about his beds at random, regardless of height or suitability, very much as if some neighbouring Fourth of July celebration had showered the place with rocket sticks. If your young German has time in the intervals of tree-planting and trellismaking, get him to trim some of the cedars of a diameter of two or three inches and stack them away for Dahlia poles. Next season you will become a victim of these gorgeous velvet flowers, I foresee, especially as I have fully a barrel of the "potatoes" of some very handsome varieties to bestow upon you. Make the most of Meyer, for he will probably grow melancholy as soon as cool weather sets in and he thinks of winter evenings and a sweetheart he has left in the fatherland! We have had several Germans and they all had lieber schatz, for jealousy or the scorn of whom they had left home, were for the same reason loath to stay away from it, and at the same time, owing to contending emotions, were unable to work so that they might return. Are you not thinking about returning to your indoor bed and board again? With warm weather I fly out of the door as a second nature, but with a smart promise of frost I turn about again and everything—furniture, pictures, books, and the dear people themselves—seems refreshingly new and wholly lovable! If you are thinking of making out a book list of your needs as an answer to your mother's or your "in-law's" query, "What do you want for Christmas?" write at the beginning—Bailey's Cyclopædia of American Horticulture, in red ink.

Lavinia and Martin Cortright gave it to us last Christmas, the clearly printed first edition on substantial paper in four thick volumes, mind you, and it is the referee and court of appeals of the Garden, You, and I in general and myself in particular. Not only will it tell you everything that you wish or ought to know, but do it completely and truthfully. In short it is the perfect antidote to Garden Goozle! Nearly a month of pen silence on my part, during which I have felt many times as if I must go from one to another of our chosen trees in the river woods and shake the leaves down so that the transplanting might proceed forthwith, lest the early winter that Amos Opie predicts both by a goose bone and certain symptoms of his own shall overtake us. Be this as it may, the leaves thus far prefer their airy quarters to huddling upon the damp ground. However, there is another reason for haste more urgent than the fear of frost— the melancholy vein that you predicted we should find in Meyer is fast developing, and as we wish to have him leave us in a perfectly natural way, we think it best that his stay shall not be prolonged. At first he seemed not only absorbed by his work and to enjoy the garden and especially the river woods, but the trees and water rushing by. A week ago a change came over him; he became morose and silent, and yesterday when I was admiring, half aloud, the reflection of a beautiful scarlet oak mirrored in the still backwater of the river, he paused in the kneeling position in which he was loosening the grasp of a white flowering dogwood, and first throwing out his arms and then beating his chest with them, exclaimed —"Other good have trees and water than for the eye to see; they can surely hang and drown the man the heart of whom holds much sorrow, and that man is I!" Of course I knew that it was something a little out of the ordinary state of affairs that had sent a man of his capability to tramp about as a vagrant sort of labourer, but I had no previous idea that melancholy had taken such a grip upon him. Much do I prefer Larry, with periods of hilarity ending in peaceful "shlape." Certain peoples have their peculiar racial characteristics, but after all, love of an occasional drink seems a more natural proposition than a tendency to suicide, while as to the relative value of the labour itself, that is always an individual not a racial matter. I too am feeling the domestic lure of cooler weather. All the day I wish to be in the open, but when the earlier twilight closes in, the house, with its lamps, hearth fires, and voices, weaves a new spell about me, though having once opened wide the door of outdoors it can never be closed. Do you remember the Masque of Pandora, and the mysterious chest? "Pandora Hast thou never Lifted the lid? Epimetheus The oracle forbids. Safely concealed there from all mortal eyes Forever sleeps the secret of the Gods. Seek not to know what they have hidden from thee Till they themselves reveal it." Bart was reading it aloud to me last night. Prose read aloud always frets me, because one's mind travels so much faster than the spoken words and arrives at the conclusion, even if not always the right one, long before the printed climax is reached; but with good poetry it is different—the thoughts are so crystallized that the sound of a melodious voice liberates them more swiftly. Verily Pandora's Chest has been opened this season here in the garden; the gods were evidently not unwilling and turned the lock for me, though perhaps I have thrown back the cover too rashly, for out has flown, instead of dire disaster, ambition in a flock of winged ideals, hopes, and wishes masquerading cleverly as necessities, that will keep me alert in trying to overtake and capture them all my life long. Last night, once again comfortably settled in the den, we took inventory of the season's doings, and unlike most ventures, find there is nothing to write upon the nether page that records loss. Of the money set aside for the improvement of the knoll half yet remains, allowing for the finishing of the tree transplanting. Into this remainder we are preparing to tuck the filling for the rose bed, a goodly store of lily bulbs, some flowering shrubs, an openwork wire fence to be a vinecovered screen betwixt us and the road, instead of the broken rattling pickets, a new harness for Romeo to wear when he returns home, as a thank offering for his comfortable services (really the bridle of the old one is quite scratched to bits upon the various trees and rough fence rails to which he has been tethered), and last of all, what do you think? Three guesses may be easily wasted without hitting the mark, for instead of, as we expected, tearing down the old barn, our summer camp, we are going to remodel it to be a permanent outdoor shelter.