

THE BIRTH OF THE OPAL.

The sunbeam loved the moonbeam, And followed her low and high, And the moonbeam fled and hid her head, She was so shy, so shy.

HOW TO GROW SWEET PEAS SUCCESSFULLY.

If we except the rose, the sweet pea is easily the most popular of all flowers. This is not to be wondered at when we consider their comparatively easy culture, delicious fragrance and the immense quantity of flowers which may be culled from quite a short row, while in favorable locations the vines will continue blooming for at least three months.

The late Henry Eckford of England may be called the father of the sweet pea, as previous to his making this beautiful and fragrant annual his life study there were only a few small flowered varieties then in cultivation. It was in 1870 that he started his life-work on the sweet pea, and the development since that date has been one of the wonders of the floral world.

It is said that some scientific botanists believe that certain races of plants have rare periods which may occur once in every few hundred years when they develop all sorts of eccentricities; and if this be so, the year 1901 marks one of these rare periods in the history of the sweet pea, as it was in the summer of that year that a new type of sweet pea was found in at least three gardens, one of these being in Northamptonshire, one in Somersetshire and the other in Cambridgeshire, England. All these evolutions or sports are said to have been found in that fine old pink grandiflora variety, Prima Donna. This new variety was of very large size, the standard and wings being beautifully waved and crimped, and thus the new and glorious Spencer race of sweet peas was born.

The first of this new type to be exhibited was the one found by Mr. Cole, gardener to Earl Spencer, Althorp Park, Northampton, and under the name of Countess Spencer, the color of the flower being a rich rose pink; and its appearance at the annual exhibition of the National Sweet Pea Society's show in London created great excitement and admiration among the enthusiasts. This new variety was offered to the public in 1904 and now Countess Spencer has many hundred offspring, embracing all colors previously found in this family and others of quite new shades. In fact, it might be said that only two colors still baffle the sweet pea hybridizer, these being a pure yellow and a rich full deep blue, such as is found in Salvia Patens.

Although the sweet pea was first introduced from Sicily about 1600, practically ninety per cent. of all the sweet pea seed used throughout the world is now grown in California, it being estimated that 2,000 acres are grown there every year. As one acre will, in an average season, produce from 600 to 1,000 pounds of seed, it will be at once apparent that this seed will eventually pass into the hands of thousands, nay millions of amateur and professional growers. I ought to state, however, that many of the finest Spencer varieties do not as a rule produce more than 200 to 300 pounds of seed to the acre. Although in this section the sweet pea vines reach a height of not more than four to five feet except in exceptional seasons and locations, in our Northern States and in Canada the plants, at the height of from ten to twelve feet, and there bloom from June until frost.

There is no royal road to success in growing the sweet pea. The amateur and small grower is quite as likely to make a success of his culture as the professional gardener, provided a few simple rules are followed. The ground must be thoroughly cultivated and deeply dug. It must also be well manured and the seed should be sown as early as possible. Of course, the ordinary cultivation as extended to the vegetable plot will give fair results, but for those who are anxious to have flowers the "best ever" and far surpassing those of their neighbors, some extra labor must necessarily be expended in preparing the soil. If it is intended to grow the peas in rows, a trench should be made at least two feet wide and two spadings deep. In removing the soil, throw the top layer on one side and the bottom or sub-soil on the other side of the trench. Loosen the bottom of the trench with a fork, or should it be too hard, take a pick, breaking it up well, and mix with it any old garden refuse or rough stable litter, on top of which put a two or three-inch layer of decayed stable or cow manure, then replace the bottom part of the soil, mixing this again with well-rotted manure and a little bone meal; then fill up with the top soil with which incorporate thoroughly rotted farm-yard manure, bone meal, and a little sulphate of potash. If this could be done in the late fall so much the better for the future well-being of the plants; failing which, of course it must be done in the spring, but should be allowed to settle for some days previous to planting. Unless the trench is thoroughly consolidated the soil will dry out very quickly, therefore tread it well before sowing the seed. When the trench is completed, apply a good dressing of freshly slaked lime, sufficient to give the ground the appearance of a cover of snow, raking or pointing it into the top two inches of soil. It should, however, be applied a few days previous to sowing or planting.

Values of Penna. Farm Land.

Improved farm land in Pennsylvania is worth on an average \$76 an acre and unimproved farm land is worth \$50 an acre according to statistics gathered by the Department of Agriculture.

The range of prices for improved farm land runs from \$278 an acre in Philadelphia county to \$26 an acre in Cameron county. For unimproved farm land Philadelphia county leads with an average of \$240 an acre and Cameron unimproved farm land is worth \$16 an acre.

In considering the variance in prices, the locality and general condition of the country are the two big features, as the value of land on the outskirts of the larger cities is greatly increased over that of the real farm centers in the interior part of the State. In many sections the timber and coal lands are not profitable for farming and the value of the land for agricultural purposes is greatly reduced.

For improved farm land Philadelphia's figures of \$278 an acre leads. Delaware county farm land, which is practically adjacent to the Quaker City is worth \$210 an acre. The price for improved farm land in Lancaster county is \$180 an acre. Lancaster county is sometimes called the "garden spot of the country," and it is claimed that it is the richest agricultural county in the United States.

For the unimproved land the low figures per acre in the State are: Cameron \$16, Fulton and Potter \$20, Clearfield, Elk, Forest and Wayne \$25, Susquehanna \$26, Sullivan \$27 and Monroe and Pike \$28.

The interior counties show low averages per acre for improved land as follows: Cameron \$26, Potter \$32, Pike \$33, Warren \$40, Wayne \$42, Clinton \$44, Forest and Susquehanna \$45, Luzerne and Monroe \$46.

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Boys who have read Treasure Island with delight may not know that Robert Louis Stevenson wrote it to please his step-son, Lloyd Osbourne, whom he described as "a schoolboy home for the holidays, and much in want of something craggy to break his mind upon." Mr. Osbourne recently told the way in which he happened to lean over my shoulder, and love his books, wrote this splendid story, which all of you must read, if you have not already done so.

"As most people know," says Mr. Osbourne, "Treasure Island was directly inspired by a small map I drew as a boy. When the map was finished, R. L. S. happened to lean over my shoulder, and added, tremendously to my delight, not a little to his own, the crosses for buried treasure and the deliciously romantic names now so well known. Then he said enthusiastically: 'I'll have to write a story all about it.' And I said: 'Yes, something really interesting—who happens to make strong, deep roots, by the little island Skeleton Island—and not like your other books.' And he said: 'O, no—nothing so stupid or tiresome, but full of pirates, and buried treasure, and the things everybody really likes.'"

These were not the exact words, but I can remember the gist of that conversation as though it were yesterday. Mr. Stevenson's eager, mantling, whimsical face. The next day I was electrified to have the first chapter read aloud to me—the first chapter of 'my' book. The others followed in almost daily succession. That the book was marketable or any other matter outside the family circle did not occur to R. L. S. until a considerable time afterwards. Yet this was the beginning of his success."

Treasure Island became so popular that Stevenson's other books began to sell, too, and it is interesting to know that a schoolboy had a part in his success as a writer.

Penn. Farms Own 22,698 Autos.

Pennsylvania farmers own over fourteen per cent. of the automobiles registered in the State during the past year. On the first of the year there were 22,698 automobiles in the hands of the farmers of the State, according to the estimates of the Bureau of Statistics of the Department of Agriculture.

The report shows that 95 per cent. of the farmers are car owners and this means that there is an automobile on one out of every ten farms. A year ago it was estimated that there were 15,000 automobiles in the hands of the farmers of the State.

In 1915 there were 159,984 automobiles registered in Pennsylvania and the farmers are shown to own 14.1 per cent. of that total. The rural residents undoubtedly led a fair margin all other classes as purchasers of cars during the year.

In ten out of sixty-seven counties the reports show that from fifteen to eighteen per cent. of the farmers own cars and in thirty-one counties ten per cent. or more of the farmers are shown as car owners. Lancaster county leads with over eighteen per cent. of the farmers owning an estimated total of 1842 cars. Chester county farmers own 1019 cars and Bucks county farmers 963 cars.

Edison Prophet at 69 Says. Thomas A. Edison celebrated the sixty-ninth anniversary of his birth by working hard in his laboratory, as he has done almost every day for many years. He talked with newspaper men for a few minutes and said the following things: "The war will last two years longer. The allies will win, because of their ability to get the things necessary to carry on the war properly."

The United States will not become involved in the conflict. The worst that can possibly happen will be the breaking off of diplomatic relations. "There should be a law against anyone under 21 years smoking cigarettes. Mr. Edison would prefer to see a boy with a revolver rather than a cigarette. "Women will vote, and there should be a national amendment to that effect. The instincts of women are good and they are bound to have their voice in government."

Put your ad. in the WATCHMAN.

POTASH MADE OF FELDSPAR

Discovery, It is Said, Will Enable America to Produce All the Amount Needed.

The European war has brought the United States face to face with the problem of supplying its own potash. Several new methods of providing a substitute for German fertilizers have been brought to the attention of the government. The most promising of these is that patented by a Canadian, which provides for the extracting of potash from ordinary feldspar. The feldspar is heated with limestone and iron oxide at a temperature of about 2,200 degrees Fahrenheit, which produces a partly fused mass that is easily decomposed by a weak acid. From this product the potash salts can be readily extracted for further purification.

Another method of obtaining potash will be tried out at a New Orleans distillery where molasses is used in large quantities. In the distilleries where molasses is fermented it is said that more than one hundred and six tons of potash is wasted daily, and it is this waste the New Orleans company is endeavoring to forestall. It is possible to make fertilizer from this otherwise worthless material at a price that will meet competition even after the war is over.

BRUSHED CAR OFF HIS EAR

So Declared Owner When He Was Describing His Escape After Collision.

In telling the details later, William A. Lucas said he brushed the car off his ear, but that was somewhat of an exaggeration. He was explaining an accident that occurred at Washington street and Vermont avenue, when the car in which he was riding with his wife and her sister, Mrs. Kate Holmes, all of 652 Towne avenue, was struck amidships by an unknown motorist in a powerful machine.

By bracing himself Mr. Lucas succeeded in raising the machine enough to escape. He was not seriously injured. Nor was his wife or sister-in-law. All are more than sixty years old.—Los Angeles Times.

Celebrities Cheap. Sam Gompertz is said to be going to build a new amusement place at Coney island, on the site of Dreamland, with everything free except ten cents admission. Probably that is why he was the largest bidder at the auction of the contents of the Eden Musee. He bought John Purroy Mitchell, William the S. O. Bill Sulzer, W. Jennings Bryan, Anna Held, Sarah Bernhardt and 12 other assorted famous people, all in a lump, for \$190, or \$10 apiece. He just missed getting 19 "makers of history" from Cleopatra to Roosevelt, which went on masse for \$230. Thomas A. Edison, clad in a check suit, was sold separately for \$10, and Colonel Goethals brought \$10. Both beat Governor Whitman, who was disposed of, "scenery and everything," for \$7. Some of the large prices of the day, paid for group figures, in which the auctioneer protested that the very wax at 25 cents a pound was worth more than the bid, were Admiral Fletcher bombarding Vera Cruz, five figures, \$25; General Funston entering Vera Cruz, eight figures, \$49; Lee's surrender at Appomattox, 14 figures, \$100; Pope Pius lying in state, four figures, \$40; "Horors of the Spanish Inquisition," \$50; Hans Schmidt, \$10; and the execution of the four gunmen, \$40.—New York Commercial.

The King and the Peasant. A lot of good space, time, ink and sympathy is being wasted on old King Peter of Serbia, in telling what a sad thing it is for him to be a king without a kingdom, of how he was lifted tenderly from his horse, of how he was taken to Italy and is to live in a palace in that country until the time comes when he may return to his own land. And while all this is being written the Serbian people, the peasants who have been tramping barefooted along frozen roads, whose homes have been destroyed and whose loved ones have, in many cases, been killed in battle, are forgotten.—Savannah News.

Buried by Lantern Light. By the light of lanterns the body of Annie M. Scott of Phoenixville was interred at Grove Methodist Episcopal cemetery, West Whiteland, after a trip of ten miles, which had consumed two days. By night the procession had reached Kimberton, five miles from the starting point, where the trip was abandoned and resumed in the morning, but it required until late the second evening to reach the cemetery, the road leading for the main part through fields because heavy snowdrifts closed the highways.—West Chester, Pa., Dispatch to Philadelphia Inquirer.

Good and Faithful Servant. Sir S. Ponsoby-Fane is dead at an age of ninety-one years. The span of his years becomes apparent when you appreciate that he was an attaché of the British legation at Washington in 1846-47. That was when James K. Polk was president, James Buchanan secretary of state and the Mexican war was on.—Cincinnati Times-Star.

"SWAT RABBIT," NEW SLOGAN

They're Vermin, Not Game, English Timber Owners Are Now Being Told.

To encourage the growing of more timber in England by organizing all resources of labor, a committee has been appointed by the government under the chairmanship of Francis Acland, the London Chronicle states. Lord Selborne, minister for agriculture, drew attention to this step at an exhibition of English timber organized by the English Forestry association at the Surveyors' institution, Westchester.

He said that the committee was appealing to land owners and land agents to let them see their woods and make proposals for the purchase of timber. The committee appealed to the owners to give what help they possibly could in the felling, conversion and hauling of the timber. If an English landowner would consider that rabbits are not game but vermin, as they certainly are, and go in for the cultivation of timber, it would be to his great benefit, the committee said.

The war has created a big demand for timber, boards and scantling, especially the kind used in the erection of huts. During the last twelve months more pit wood has found its way to the English coal field than has been the case for the last twenty years. Some of the men present said that while they would do all that was possible to give aid to the government in this direction, they were disinclined to feather the nests of the timber dealers.

ANXIOUS ABOUT HIS HEALTH

Guest at St. Louis Hotel, Not Satisfied Made a Somewhat Humorous Request.

Fred Thompson, night clerk at the Laclede hotel, St. Louis, is asking his friends to believe this one: "About eight o'clock the other night," Thompson says, "a tall, rangy ruralite entered the lobby of the hotel and approached the desk. After I had fixed him up with a room he asked me if I would take care of some money for him. I told him I would be glad to put it in the safe. He fished down in his trousers pocket and produced a \$2 bill.

"Just put that away," he said, "I am going out for a little while and I don't want to take any chances with these city slickers." "I kept my face straight and assured him it would be safe on his return. He started to leave and then turned around and asked me how late we kept open. "Oh, I'll be here when you get back," I told him. "Well, I don't know," he replied, "I calculate I'll be pretty late. Most ten o'clock, likely." "I assured him I would be on deck, but he did not seem satisfied. After pondering a few moments he asked: "Could I see Mr. Laclede?" "That had me going for a few minutes, but when I recovered I told him Mr. Laclede had gone to bed."

Pierre Laclede, the founder of St. Louis, for whom the hotel was named, died in 1778. Jap Statesman of Prominence. Governor Hattori of Hyogo prefecture, who was among those awarded honors at the coronation of the emperor of Japan, has held his post since 1900, a unique distinction among his gubernatorial confreres. The happy relations which he enjoys with all official and private classes in Hyogo prefecture have caused him to repeatedly decline offers of promotion, by which he might have held a seat in the cabinet and exercised diplomatic abilities in higher and more stormy spheres. He was born in 1851 and is a graduate of an American college, Rutgers, from which he received the degree in the '70s of bachelor of commerce. He was nominated a member of the house of peers in 1903.

Signs of Paratyphoid. Paratyphoid has recently come to the front as a disease. Among the allied troops in France there have been more than 1,200 cases, with a case mortality of 1.5 per cent. The London Lancet says it is not always possible to distinguish it from typhoid, but in general it is a milder disease with shorter duration and often appears as a sudden onset with shivering, abdominal pain and aching limbs, without abdominal distension and when there is an eruption this is of large and palpable spots. Abnormally slow heart action is characteristic. The mosquito is suspected as the means of transmission from patient to patient, but this is still in doubt.

Much Beef Goes to Waste. Although various estimates place the number of cattle in Paraguay all the way from one to four million head, the cattle industry, with untold possibilities, is scarcely out of the stage when the animals are slaughtered for their hides alone. While all the world is clamoring for meat, cattle in Paraguay sell for but little more than what their skins will bring. Inexperienced. "We are getting up a symposium on the subject 'Is Marriage a Failure?'" we remarked to the celebrated actress whom we had been sent to interview, "and we would like to hear 'our views on the matter.'" "Dear me!" she exclaimed. "How can you expect me to throw any light on such a question? Why, I have been married only five or six times."

SMALL MAN WINS HIS SPURS

Trenches Make Him a Better Fighter Than the Larger Soldier, It is Now Said.

A "Bantam Corps" now is organizing in British Columbia. It may not be easy to explain why, but the fact is that energy and pugnacity seem to become intensified as the physical bulk diminishes in all animals, including man. The capacity for enduring physical hardships generally diminishes as the size and weight increase, so that the idea of a "Bantam Corps" is one of the most practical and valuable of the suggestions offered in connection with recruiting.

Among the many cherished but now fossil delusions of militarism that have been for centuries regarded as axiomatic this one of coupling power of endurance with size of frame is the most obstructive of progress. Hundreds of thousands of eager recruits have been rejected because they were a trifle below the prescribed dimensions, or for slight defects of eyesight or teeth. Trench fighting has revolutionized the prevailing ideas about war in this as in other respects. A small man may endure the strain of trench work better than a large man, may be a better sniper, is a less expensive target for the enemy's bullets and is likely to be less expensive to maintain. In the old style of fighting, which was largely a matter of charging on foot or on horseback, weight might tell in favor of the heavier man, but there is comparatively little of that sort of fighting now.

HEAT WON'T HELP MATURITY

Result of Columbia Professor's Studies Conflicts With Former Views.

Children do not reach maturity in tropical climates more quickly than in temperate climates. This remarkable conclusion, which runs contrary to a widely held belief, has been reached by Prof. Franz Boas, professor of anthropology at Columbia university. Professor Boas, fresh from participation in a scientific survey of Porto Rico, has just made his report to the New York Academy of Sciences, which undertook the investigation. "The first of our anthropological inquiries had for its object the study of conditions of growth of the body in a tropical environment," Professor Boas says. "It is generally assumed that heat has the effect of accelerating the physiological development so that in warm climates children reach maturity earlier than in temperate zones. Our inquiries do not substantiate this view. The material has not yet been collated, but from the general character of the data I venture to say that they will be of the greatest importance for practical measures relating to the hygiene of childhood and for the management of schools."

Leprosy in Boston. A case of leprosy was discovered in Boston a few days ago. This makes two cases within five weeks. The latest victim is a sailor, about seventy-two years old. He was born in the United States and has followed the sea for many years, having visited Asiatic ports, where he evidently contracted the disease. It is said that his present illness began about ten years ago, but that he never before applied for treatment in Boston. When he appeared at one of the local hospitals the case was recognized and was reported to the health department. The other case of leprosy, that of a dishwasher, was not diagnosed for seven months, though the man was under treatment much of the time at the same hospital.

Marks on Aeroplanes. The distinguishing marks of the aeroplanes of the fighting powers are as follows: France, Belgium and Serbia—the device of a blue center ring with white and red rings outside. Great Britain—a dark red ring; the device of a red center with a blue outer ring, similar to the French, is also used. The Russian mark consists of three horizontal bands of white, blue and red. The central powers, Germany and Austria, use a black "Iron Cross" painted on a white ground as a device, while Turkey uses a crescent and star upon a red ground.

Granted Two Days to Marry. Furloughs from the front are fixed by the generalissimo at six complete days, but the heads of corps may give two days extra to soldiers who have been the object of citation entitling them to wear the cross of war and to those who can produce a certificate from a mayor stating that they are about to get married.—European Edition New York Herald.

Tries to Pin Up Heart. Frank Gati, thirty-eight years old, of 406 East Fiftieth street, tried to kill himself in the erysipelas ward of Bellevue hospital by sticking a safety pin through his heart. He was prevented from carrying out his intention by a nurse, but he grimly told the doctors that he would succeed, next time. He is charged with attempted suicide.—New York Evening Sun.

Usual Result. "Good heavens! Another riot call!" "Yes." "What's happened now?" "Nothing out of the ordinary. A crowd of pacifists have been holding a 'get-together' meeting."