SB

404.9

.G37x

6359

R279g

THE LIBRARY
BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY
PROVO, UTAH

2

6329

R2 19c

THE

GARDEN FLOWERS

OF

THE YEAR.

“For wonderful indeed are all His works,
Pleasant to know, and worthiest to be all
Had in remembrance always with delight.”

LONDON:

THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY:

Instituted 1799.

THE LIBRARY
BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY
PROVO, UTAH

PREFACE.

THE Author of the following pages, in treating of the Garden Flowers, has acted on the same principle as that adopted in the volume on Wild Flowers, which preceded it. In selecting a few from the thousands of flowers which have been introduced into Britain, those are chosen which are most commonly seen in the garden, rather than those which are of more choice culture. No instructions have been added as to the mode of rearing them, as many inexpensive and valuable treatises are already before the public, which are well calculated to aid the amateur gardener in his pursuit. A few simple things respecting cultivated flowers, somewhat of their history, their uses, and their relations to scriptural allusions, are here stated.

The writer has also sought, as occasion presented itself, to point the reader to the connexion existing between the kingdom of nature and the kingdom of heaven : since our knowledge would be but of little worth, though we could name every herb of the field, or rear every flower of the garden, or classify each tree of the forest, if we were ignorant of the living "Plant of Renown."

CONTENTS.

Page

JANUARY.

Rosemary—Old uses of this plant—Snowdrop—Snowflake—Cyclamen—Candy tuft—Early flowering Cress—Scented Colt's-foot—Winter Aconite 7

FEBRUARY.

Crocus—Mezereon—Pontic Daphne—Lace bark tree—Hepatica—Lilac Primrose—Japan Quince—Vernal Bulbocodium—Corydalis 12

MARCH.

Almond Tree—Coronilla—Garden Daffodils—Polyanthus—Anemone—Star of Bethlehem—Dog's Tooth Violet—Wallflower—Flowers on Carmel Tulip—Crown Imperial—Penstemon—Periwinkle—Violets—Clandestine Violet—Pansy—Iris—Bulbous Plants—Cardamine 19

APRIL.

Flowers of Fruit Trees—Apple—Ornamental Pear and Cherry—Perfumed Cherry—Hyacinth—Garden of Hyacinths—Grape Hyacinth—Feathered Hyacinth—Garden Daisies—Pyramidal Saxifrage—Round-leaved Saxifrage—Double Furze—Onosma—Dragon Flower—Dumb Cane—Horn Flower—Spiræa—Bridewort—Italian May—Bladder Nut—Auricula—Greek Valerian—Flowering Currant—Snowy-flowered Gooseberry—Berberry—Clustered Berberry—Venus's Looking Glass—Mesembryanthemum—Ice Plants—Lilac—Persian Lilac 37

MAY.

Laburnum—Red Valerian—Ancient Spikenard—Lobelia—Cardinal Flower—White Lobelia—Spider Wort—Bugloss—Pelargonium—Myrtle—Heliotrope—Marigold—Rainy Marigold—Mullcius—Mallow of Scripture—Mallow Paper—Mallow used as food by Ancients—Lavatera—Heaths—Andromeda—Climbing Cobæa—Tiger Flower—Box Edgings—Box Shrub of Scripture—Ænothéra—Evening Primrose—Various species of Clematis—Japan Corchorus—Bachelor's Button—Rue-leaved Ranunculus—Asphodel—Regard of Ancients for the Asphodel—Honesty—Perennial Adonis—Columbines—Pæony—Tree Pæony—Rhubarb—Honeysuckle—Trumpet Honeysuckle—Rhododendron—Garlic—Garlic prized by the Ancients—Syringa—Persicaria—Monkshood—Aconites—Rose Acacia—Locust Tree—True Acacia—Charles's Sceptre—Escholtzia 63

JUNE.

Rose of Scripture—Provence Rose—Musk Rose—French Rose—Damask Rose—China Rose—Bourbon Rose— Scarlet Lychnis—Catchfly—Fraxinella—Fuchsia—French Honeysuckle—Carnation Poppies—Minor Convolvulus— Major Convolvulus—Fitches of Scripture—Nasturtium— Canary Bird Flower—Calceolaria—Verbena—Lemon- scented Verbena—Lupin—Ancient uses of Lupin seed— Tree Lupin—Scented Scabions—Lily—Lily of Scripture— Martagon Lily—Lily of Australia—Stock—Campanula— Dane's Blood—Sweet Pea—Tangier Pea—White Jessa- mine—Yellow Jessamine—Jessamine of Mauritius— Night-flowering Jessamine—Monkey Flowers—Hop Mar- joram—Larkspurs—Gum Cistus—Blue Pimpernel—Flow- ering Raspberry—Potentilla—Spanish Broom—Esparto of Spaniards—Petunia—Prickly Poppy—Foxglove—Madeira Foxglove	105
---	-----

JULY.

Lavender—Phlox—Day Lily—Hibiscus—Various uses of Hibiscus—Bladder Ketmia—Gladiolus—Bladder Senna— Commelina—Sweet Basil—Hollyock—French Willow— Nemophila—Carnation—Pink—Tree Pink—Groundsel— Coreopsis—Salvia—Clary—Blessed Thistle—Purple and Yellow Sultans—Yucca—Zinnia—African Marigold— French Marigold—Globe—Balsam—Hop Grass—Ribbon Grass—Feather Grass—Tobacco Flower	136
---	-----

AUGUST.

Dahlia—Sun-flower—Sun-flower of Peruvians—Hydrangea —Blue Hydrangea—Everlasting flowers—Gnaphalium— Helichrysum—Xeranthemum—Globe Amaranth— Prince's Feather—Coxcomb—Strawberry Blite— Rudbeckia—Milfoil—Golden rod	159
---	-----

SEPTEMBER.

Oriental Arbutus—China Aster—Michaelmas Daisy— Autumn flowering Gentians—Yellow Gentian—Autumnal Crocus—Colchicum	171
---	-----

OCTOBER.

Chrysanthemum—Feverfew—Cotoneaster—Mignonette— Tree Mignonette	178
---	-----

NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER.

Monthly Rose—Winter Cherry—Anemones—Christmas Rose—Evergreens—Laurel—Portugal Laurel—Sweet Paw—Rhododendron—Evergreen Thorn	185
---	-----

JANUARY.

“Here spreads a range of level plots,
Of box-fringed beds, where lurking knots
Of buried flowers repose, to bring
Kind greeting to the early spring.”—BISHOP MANT.

VEGETATION makes little progress now, for the earth seems waiting for the breath of spring. The seeds lie dormant till some access of heat shall cause them to germinate, and the roots abide underground, till the coming thaw shall enable them to put forth their fibres, and to send their young green shoots into the light of the upper world.

Yet, even at this time of the year, the garden is not absolutely forsaken of leaves and blossoms, for God has given us winter flowers, and, like those cheering hopes of future joy, which spring up in the heart at the bidding of our heavenly Father, during the season of gloom, they smile even on darkest days, and give assurance of fulness and beauty, such as we should deem impossible if we looked only on the present appearances of earth and sky. The buds gradually increase in number, and grow larger on the branches of the trees. The evergreens, with their many dark green leaves, or with their lighter hue, like the laurel, reflect, on their shining surfaces, the noonday

sunbeams, and the laurustinus and the rosemary bring their flowers to form the winter nosegay.

There is a sweet fragrance in the rosemary. So thought our forefathers when they used it at table, and infused it in their ale. George Herbert considered it a good addition to cookery, for while he says that the country parson should be well skilled in the knowledge of plants, he recommends this and other herbs. "As for spices," says he, "the parson doth not only prefer this and other homebred things before them, but condemns them for vanities, and so shuts them out of his family, esteeming that there is no spice comparable for herbs, to rosemary, thyme, savory, and mint; and for seeds, to fennel and carraway seeds." The troubadours, too, prized the winter fragrance of the rosemary, and regarded both this flower and the violet as emblems of constancy. In many parts of Germany it is still grown in large pots, that small sprigs of it may be sold during winter and the commencement of spring, as it is used there for some religious ceremonies.

From the cottage maiden, who wore a wreath of this plant to the altar, to the royal bride of the king, the rosemary was once the customary ornament of the wedding ceremony; and in funerals it was often used. Its sprigs mingled in the coronal which bound the hair of Anne of Cleves, on the day when she became the wife of the tyrannic Henry; and it was intended

as an emblem of a happiness which she was not destined to enjoy, with that inconstant monarch.

The flowers of the rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*) are of a bluish lilac colour, and are on the shrub from this month until April. The plant has been from time immemorial common in the English garden, and grows wild in the south of Europe. It is found, too, on some parts of the dry deserts of Africa. Dr. Shaw saw the rosemary, and the dried stems of the myrtle, used by the Moors in Barbary, for heating ovens; and was reminded of the words of our Saviour respecting the flower of the field, which "to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven."

If the weather be mild during January, the snow-drop (*Galanthus nivalis*) droops its head over the earth. The Italians call it snow-bell. It is a wild flower in our land. The Russian snow-drop (*Galanthus plicatus*) is not found in our native fields, but is common on the lands of the Crimea. This species is smaller than the English snow-drop, and continues in blossom later in the year.

One or two of the various species of snow-flake, especially the spring kind, (*Leucojum vernum*), are also common now. They are pretty bulbous-rooted plants, natives of various parts of Europe, and abundant in Switzerland. This flower was formerly known as St. Agnes' flower.

With a blossom of a reddish purple colour,

the round-leaved cyclamen (*Cyclamen Coum*) often salutes the opening year. The name of this genus, taken from the Greek, and signifying circular, is expressive either of the leaves, or, more probably, of the numerous serpent-like coils, into which the fruitstalks entwine themselves. The bulbs of this and the other species of cyclamen are as large as a Guinea-fowl's-egg. They contain a great degree of acridity. In the north of Italy swine feed upon them, hence the name by which this plant is often called of sow-bread. It is not till the beautiful flowers of the cyclamen wither away, that the stalks assume the coiled form before alluded to; when, screwing themselves round, they inclose the rudiments of the fruit in the centre, and lying down among the foliage, remain in that position till it comes to maturity. This early cyclamen is very general in the south of Europe.

The Persian cyclamen, (*Cyclamen Persicum*), which blooms two months later, and is far less hardy than this, is a native of the isle of Cyprus, and was introduced into this country rather more than a century since. One rarer species, the ivy-leaved (*Cyclamen hederæfolium*), has a most fragrant odour, and sometimes enlivens the window among the white and lilac primroses, which are cherished in flower-pots at this season.

Large patches of the broad-leaved candy tuft (*Iberis semperflorens*) are now on the garden-plot, with clusters of pure white cross-

shaped blossoms. Most of the species were brought hither from Spain, and their Latin name, from its old appellation of Iberia, reminds us of their origin. All the species are common on the northern shores of the Mediterranean. Some of the later blooming kinds are abundant on the rocks of Gibraltar, and afford a relief to the eye, wearied with gazing on their barren surfaces. The early flowering cress (*Arabis albida*) is not unlike these plants, and blooms from this period till autumn. It is a native of Caucasus.

Winter is not the season for odours, and few breathe their sweetness in the frosty air; but there is one plant in flower, which is so powerfully fragrant as to fill a small garden with its perfume. This is the scented colt'sfoot, (*Tussilago fragrans*.) Its stem rises but a little height from the ground, and it has many and large leaves. If the growth be not restrained, it sends out so many young suckers from its root, that it will cover the garden and overrun the more delicate flowers. The blossoms are white, and their scent is like that of almonds. It is very abundant on some lands of Italy, and flowers in that lovely climate during the winter months.

The brightest flower of the winter garden, the very gem of January, till the crocus comes to rival it, is the winter aconite, (*Eranthis hyemalis*.) Its glossy yellow cups, growing near the earth, gave it its name, which, taken from the Greek, imports earth-flower. Its leaves

are much like those of the aconite or wolf'sbane. This flower belongs to the ranunculus tribe; and, like all plants of that order, it is very acrimonious and also poisonous. A person known to the writer, once thoughtlessly ate a small piece of this pretty blossom, and experienced so violent a burning sensation in his throat for some hours afterwards, as to be seriously alarmed. It is a frequent flower in the shady woods of Italy, and is found in wooded spots very generally in the midland countries of Europe; while a species very similar, but which has not yet found a place in our gardens, the Siberian *eranthis*, grows most plentifully in Siberia. The old writers called it yellow wolf'sbane, and winter wolf'sbane. Clare well describes this flower—

“ The winter aconite,
With buttercup-like flowers, that shut at night;
Its green leaf furling round its cup of gold,
Like tender maiden muffled from the cold.”

FEBRUARY.

“ A tale of spring around the distant haze
Seems muttering pleasures with the lengthened days;
Morn wakens, mottled oft with May-day stains,
And shower-drops hang the grassy sprouting plains;
Or on the naked thorn of brassy hue,
Drip glistening, like a summer stream of dew;
The woodman in his pathway, down the wood,
Crushes with hasty step full many a bud
Of early primrose; yet if timely spied,
Sheltered some old half-rotten stump beside,
The sight will cheer his solitary hour,
And urge his feet to strive and save the flower.”—CLARE.

NOTWITHSTANDING the usually dreary aspect of this month, yet still there are days on which

nature seems to tell a tale of spring. And cheering it is, at such brief intervals to welcome its approach, and to persuade ourselves that snow and rain and frost have left us, and that the early flowers will soon cluster about us. But again the clouds return after the rain; the white fleeces from heaven descend, as God "sendeth forth his snow like morsels," and we find we have yet to wait longer before the leaves shall cover the boughs, and the herbs, with all their myriads of blossoms, shall silently praise the hand of Him who made them.

But by the end of the month the snows are generally disappearing, and then we see how, under their covering, the young leaves and buds have found a shelter from the frosts. Many a green thing has been thriving beneath the snow. In the northern countries of Europe, the grass not only lives, but daily grows under it; and the Norway peasant, who longs that the verdant land shall yield him food for his cattle, scatters the ashes over the white surface, that the young blade may rise to the sunshine. And mercifully has the great Creator thus ordained it, for in those more rigorous climates the snow seldom leaves the earth till the sun of April has, in our warmer regions, smiled out upon the fields, and made them gay with many colours.

First and brightest of February flowers we must hail the crocus, standing forth in its deep bright raiment of "cloth of gold." Several

species of yellow crocus bloom now, but the kind especially termed the spring crocus (*Crocus vernus*) which often opens in January, has usually white flowers tinged with purple, or is striped with purple and gold, or with a delicate tinge of lilac, softening into pure white. This flower, which is a native of Switzerland and Italy, is called by the French *le safran printanier*. The true saffron crocus, however, blooms in autumn. The species which blooms earliest in the spring, is the Scotch crocus, (*Crocus biflorus*), striped with white and purple. The beautiful kinds of feathered crocus, are varieties altered more or less by cultivation, but all included under the names of party-coloured crocus, (*Crocus versicolor*.) This flower is a native of southern Europe, and very abundant on the hills of Greece. Rich saw both pink and yellow crocuses growing wild in Koordistan, all over the roads. Gardeners enumerate about a hundred kinds of the crocus. It was introduced into England about the time of Queen Elizabeth. Gerarde says of it, "That pleasant plant that bringeth forth yellow flowers, was sent unto me from Robinus of Paris."

Then the mezereon, (*Daphne mezereum*), though a shrub of our native woods, is rare enough to be planted in our gardens, because it flowers at this early season. The Pontic Daphne, too, (*Daphne Pontica*), with its dark evergreen shining leaves, and its wreath of green winter flowers, often finds a place there.

It is a native of Asia Minor, and is supposed to be one of the plants which, with the rhododendron, poisoned the honey of the bees, and caused the death of the soldiers, in the famous retreat of the "ten thousand" recorded by Xenophon.

It is remarkable that the nectar of some flowers should yield a honey poisonous to those who eat it, but quite innoxious to the bees; yet it is undoubtedly the case. Professor Lindley observes of the rhododendron, kalmia, and andromeda, that they have not only noxious leaves and branches, but that their very honey is poison, "as has been too fatally experienced by those who have fed on the produce of the hives of Trebizonde."

There are in our gardens two varieties of the common mezereon, one with red, the other with white flowers; and the twin-flowered spurge laurel, though a wild plant of Britain, is commonly cultivated. The sweet-scented mezereon (*Daphne odora*) is a pretty shrub, but needs the shelter of the greenhouse.

Several kinds of daphne are used in the south of Europe to dye wool yellow; from other kinds cordage is made; and a soft paper is manufactured from the bark of a species common in Nipal. The inner bark of one kind, called the lace bark tree of Jamaica, (*Daphne lagetto*) is so beautifully formed into a network, that it is worn as lace. It has a white shining surface, like silk, and when taken carefully from the plant, the hand may be put

into it as in a stocking. Sir Thomas Lynch, who was governor of Jamaica in the time of Charles I., presented that monarch with a cravat made of this material. The shrub will not grow in the English garden.

The highly-poisonous berries of the mezereon are given in Sweden to kill wild animals. The women of Tahtary rub them on their cheeks, and by causing an irritation, produce the temporary effect of rouge. Some writers think that the scent of every species of daphne is deleterious, and that if kept in rooms it will cause head-ache and fainting.

The two varieties of hepatica are among the prettiest flowers of the winter months. Some are of a deep rose pink, others of a brilliant blue colour; and they bloom very brightly among their ivy-shaped leaves. This plant was once called noble liver-wort, and herb Trinity. The colour of the buds is very deep, but the outside tint of the petals of the blue variety is a pale grey. "The hepatica," says the author of the "Backwoods of Canada," "is the first flower of the Canadian spring; it gladdens us with its tints of azure, pink, and white, as early as April, soon after the snows have melted from the earth. The Canadians call it snow-flower, from its coming so soon after the snow disappears. We see its grey flowers in the open clearings, and the deep recesses of the forest: its leaves are also an enduring ornament through the open months of the year: you see them on every grassy

mound and mossy root. 'The shades of blue are very various and delicate, the white anthers forming a lovely contrast with the blue petals.'

The lilac double primroses are now very ornamental, as are also the red, white, and flesh-coloured varieties. All the primroses are valued for their early bloom, but our own wild sulphur-coloured kind is the prettiest of them all, though it is seen to more advantage blooming in the wood among the withered leaves than in the garden bed.

In some gardens the dark red flowers of the species of gladiolus called Watson's corn-flag, (*Gladiolus Watsonius*), are already in bloom. It is a native of the Cape of Good Hope. This tribe of plants is obtained almost solely from Southern Africa, and the large bulbous roots are a common food of the Hottentots.

The brightly-blushing flowers of the Japan quince (*Cydonia Japonica*) redden among the dark leaves of the bush on which they grow. This is a beautiful plant, with flowers of all tints, from the faintest pink to a rich deep scarlet colour. It is a favourite shrub of the Japanese, who are remarkable, not only for their general love of flowers, but for the attention which they have paid to the science of botany. The traveller Siedbold, who spent some time in this island, says that in no country out of Europe is botany so much regarded as there and in China. He enumerates ten Japanese books on the science, which have been printed and illustrated by coloured plates.

A very pretty little spring flower is not uncommon even in this month. The bulbocodium (*Bulbocodium vernum*) is like a small dark purple crocus. It is a native of Spain. Two or three species of the elegant corydalis bloom, too, as early as February. They are very similar to the fumitory. The bean-leaved species (*Corydalis fabacea*) has purple flowers, and is a native of Germany; and the solid-rooted kind, with its pink flowers, grows wild in British woods, but its size is increased by culture. The most common species is the glaucous corydalis: it is a North American, an annual, and may be sown so as to flower at almost any season of the year.

The list of February flowers is short indeed. A few more weeks and they will have increased tenfold, yet we shall scarcely value them more than we do these few and early blossoms, for these come, with the voices of the robin and the thrush, to whisper of brighter days in store for the lover of nature. These come to remind us that God's hand is yet working gradually, even as it did when the earth was first robed with verdure, and when each successive day witnessed the fresh and luxuriant growth of primeval vegetation.

MARCH.

"How many a thing that pretty is, delays
The wanderer's steps beneath the sun's soft rays.
Gay daffodils bend o'er the watery gleam,
Doubling their flickered image in the stream;
The woody nook, where bells of brightest blue
Have clothed the ground with heaven's ethereal hue;
The lane's high-sloping bank, where pale primrose,
With hundreds of its gentle kindred blows;
And speckled daisies, that on upland bare,
Their round eyes opening, scatter gladness there :
Man looks on nature with a grateful smile,
And thinks of nature's bounteous Lord the while."

JOANNA BAILLIE.

WHEN the fruit-trees are covered with flowers, when the peach on the wall puts forth its lilac blossoms, and the apricot's faint blush, and the dark red streaks on the apple-bloom, attract our notice, then we feel fully that spring has arrived. Not yet, however, can we mark these blooms. The sun must have greater power, and the winds be gentler, too, before these tokens of spring shall revisit the garden. Meantime the almond-tree becomes clad with its rose-like flowers, and its sweet fragrance is delightful in the open air. Like the blossoms of many other of our fruit-trees, its scent is far from innocent: a poison lurks, not only in the juices and leaves of the plant, but even in its odour; and, as it is with many of the attractive pleasures which open to the spring-time of life, a snare lies hid in its dangerous beauty.

Could we at this season visit the land "beloved for the fathers' sake," the beautiful Palestine, we should find the almond-blossom covering the trees in every part of the country,

on both sides of the Jordan. Even as we see it in our spring garden, the mind involuntarily adverts to the place and period when Aaron's rod "brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds;"* and when the bowls used in the Holy Temple were made in the shape of the almond; or where Joseph's brethren carried up into Egypt, as a present to Pharaoh, its sweet-flavoured kernels.† The early-coming flower is spoken of by their prophets as emblematic of haste, or of the head of age; to the ancient Hebrew it told of things of which we take little cognizance; yet still we may listen to its silent voice of remembrance, and be led by the almond-flower to thoughts of God.

The common almond-tree (*Amygdalus communis*) and the bitter almond, (*Amygdalus amara*,) especially the former, are the species chiefly cultivated in our gardens and shrubberies for the sake of their flowers. Their fruits need a warmer climate to bring them to maturity, but in France and Spain, as well as in the Mediterranean isles, these shrubs are planted for the kernels. We receive our sweet almond of commerce chiefly from Malaga; and the bitter from Magadore. These two species are so alike in their form and flowers, that they are distinguished chiefly by the flavour of their fruits; but the bitter almond contains the larger portion of hydrocyanic or prussic acid;

* Numbers xvii. 8. † Gen. xliii. 11.

and a distilled water made from it is as injurious as the laurel water.

The profuse flowering of the almond-tree was formerly considered as indicative of an abundant harvest. This is alluded to by Virgil—

“Mark well the flowering almond in the wood;
If odorous blooms the bearing branches load,
The glebe will answer to the sylvan reign,
Great heats will follow, and large crops of grain.
But if a wood of leaves o’ershade the tree,
Such, and so barren, will the harvest be;
In vain the hind shall vex the threshing floor,
For empty straw and chaff shall be thy store.”

In Egypt a paste made of almonds is used, through which to filter the water of the Nile, when muddy, at the time of the annual flood, and by this mode of filtration it is rendered sweet and pleasant, even to those who, but for some process of this kind, could not drink it. At the Cape of Good Hope the wood of the almond-tree is made into heels for shoes.

One or two pretty flowering shrubs, of the genus *coronilla*, are daily putting forth more blossoms. The nine-leaved species (*Coronilla valentina*) is a great ornament of the greenhouse, with its pretty yellow, butterfly-shaped flowers; and, like the seven-leaved species, (*Coronilla glauca*,) blooms both in winter and summer, though it flowers most freely in this and the following months. The latter plant has bluish green leaves, and its flowers are fragrant during day, though scentless at night. The most frequent of our garden kinds is the scorpion senna, (*Coronilla emerus*,) which

blooms in April, and is a native of most parts of the continent. A dye is obtained from this plant which is little inferior to indigo. The small tufted coronals of flowers gave to this genus of plants the name of coronilla.

The daffodil is now nodding to the breeze, and sending its strong scent on the air. The old writers called it Lent lily, chalice flower, and daffy-down-dilly. Our gardens have a great variety of this flower, as the Tradescant's daffodil, which is the handsomest kind; the nonsuch; the yellow incomparable, and many others. They are all in blossom during this month; some of them remain through April, and they all grow wild in the fields of southern Europe. Our old writers appear to have included under the general name of daffodil, the smaller jonquils, and indeed all the narcissus tribe. Some of those which we call narcissus are very pretty flowers of the early spring, but the jonquils are most fragrant; the latter were sometimes called, in former times, by the name of rush daffodil. The narcissus was much esteemed by the ancients, and is still greatly admired by the Asiatics, being found throughout Syria, as far as India. The common name of two of our species, Bazelman minor, and major, is evidently of Eastern origin. The polyanthus narcissus is much celebrated in the east, as is also the poets' narcissus. The former (*Narcissus tazetta*) derives its name from the Italian tazza, a cup; and is called in France *Le narcisse de Constantinople*. Its scent is plea-

sant, and it is used in China in some religious ceremonies, and its flowers are annually sent to various parts of that kingdom, from Canton, where it is cultivated for sale. The poets' narcissus, called in France *Janette des contours*, is a wild flower, too, in some parts of England.

“ And some faint odours o'er the vernal dew
Shall tempt the wanderings of the earliest bee
Hither, with music sweet as poetry,
To woo the flower whose verge is wiry gold.”

Thus Elliott describes the polyanthus, which, with its red, or claret-coloured, or lilac blooms, decks every cottage garden, and looks up, too, from the choicest flower border. The polyanthus much resembles the auricula, and is simply a variety of our common wild primrose. Thomson speaks of it as

“ The polyanthus of unnumber'd dyes.”

It differs from the primrose, not only in hue, but in flowering in clusters, instead of having each flower on a stalk. The leaves and roots of this and other species of primrose are sometimes grated and used as snuff, or taken internally as a medicine.

The bright flowers of the garden anemonies have a very gay and cheerful aspect, dazzling the eye by their brilliant scarlet, or pleasing it no less by their softer purple or lilac tints, fading into white. These flowers have been brought us from the east; and some of the fields of the Levant are, in early spring, quite radiant with their varied and beautiful tints. In the soft climate of Provence some most

lovely anemonies are scattered thickly over the lands. Our handsome garland, or poppy anemone, (*Anemone coronaria*) is the parent of the finest florists' flower, and comes from the hot and dry plains of Syria and Asia Minor. The flower is white, with a red ring round its centre. The star anemone (*Anemone stellata*) is purple ; and the kind called garden anemone (*Anemone hortensis*) is purple, with a white centre ; and all the numerous varieties which we have in our gardens spring from one of these three kinds. The anemone is another flower much prized in the eastern bouquet. D'Herbelot mentions a Persian work, a collection of moral essays, which was called, in the figurative language of that people, "The Garden of Anemonies." In former days this flower was believed to possess such magical virtues, that the sages of old times recommended every person to gather, in spring, the earliest anemone he saw, and keep it as a preservation from pestilence. For this purpose it was carefully wrapped in scarlet, till spring again brought the fresh anemone, to allure to hope, and often to lead on to disappointment. And well is it for us that our destiny in this life is not thus placed in our own keeping ; for man, blind man, should choose the evil sometimes when he sought the good ; and while he carefully shielded himself from sickness and every affliction, should perhaps put far from him the very means of moral improvement, the very trial which might be sent in mercy to

bear him from this world, and draw him to God.

One or two of the many species of the star of Bethlehem are already in flower, especially that handsome kind called by gardeners the great flowery star, (*Ornithogalum Arabicum*) which is a native of Egypt. The most frequent garden flower of the genus is that termed common star of Bethlehem, (*Ornithogalum umbellatum*), which flowers about a month later, and is found, though rarely, in the English meadow. It is called by the French, *La Belle d'onze heures*—Eleven o'clock Lady, as it opens at that hour and closes at five. Its white flowers grow but few in a cluster. A particular interest is attached to this plant, from its having been considered by Linnæus, and other writers, as the dove's dung of Scripture. That the roots of this and other species are cooked and eaten in many parts of the east, there can be no doubt; and this species is common throughout Palestine, and in the neighbourhood of Samaria. It is so generally used for food, that it would naturally have a high value in a time of scarcity, like that described in Scripture, when a small quantity was sold in Samaria for five pieces of silver.* This flower grows wild in Caucasus, Taurus, and Northern Africa; and it is expressly stated by Dioscorides, that its bulbs were sometimes cooked with bread, and were also

* 2 Kings vi, 25.

often eaten raw. They were, too, in former ages, the common food of the peasantry of Italy and Southern Europe. The French term the Star of Bethlehem *Epi de lait*, (milky blade.) The yellow kind is a pretty and common flower. One species of this plant, the officinal squill, (*Ornithogalum squilla*,) is the medicinal plant mentioned by the ancient Greeks, and one of the very few named by them which is used in modern times. It blooms in April and May : it has white blossoms, and is common in the Greek islands. Its root is of a great size, and is said by Loudon to be often as large as the human head, and shaped like a pear. The leaves—often a foot long—continue green all the winter, and die away in spring; after which rises the tall stem with its pyramid of white blossoms, that continue in flower two or three months.

That pretty little favourite flower, the dog's-tooth violet, is now opening in the garden border. Unlike the violet in all but its early appearance, it is a lovely little vernal bulb, with petals of deep lilac, reddish stem, and twin spotted leaves. The species now in flower is the common kind, (*Erythronium dens canis*.) Its drooping flowers are sometimes quite of a deep purple, but sometimes vary to white; and a species with yellow flowers, (*Erythronium Americanum*) is found in our gardens a month later. This latter flower requires skill and management with us, but in its native forests it is very luxuriant and beautiful. There its

pendant yellow blossom is described as "delicately dashed with crimson spots within, and marked with fine purple lines on the outer part of the petal;" while a variety of this species is of a pale crimson colour, without any spots or lines; and a second is of a deep glowing yellow, its anthers of a reddish orange colour, and thickly strewn with fine powder. These flowers grow freely in Canada, and cover large tracts of land, mingling their faint odour with that of the sweet wild roses which grow there, and with the fragrance of the flower called by the colonists the milk weed, which has the delicious perfume of a stock, and which, with a few other powerfully scented blossoms, compensate, in some measure, for the want of odours in the Canadian violets, which grow in profusion in their forests.

The dark brown or yellow wallflower (*Cheiranthus cheiri*) has been cultivated for many centuries in our gardens, and furnished many an allusion for the songs of the troubadours. The Alpine wallflower is generally thought handsomer than our common species, on account of its larger and more compact flowers, but it must yield to the former in sweetness of scent. This plant is a native of France and Spain. The wallflower grows wild on the old walls of many an eastern city, whose proud palaces are crumbling to dust. Lamartine marked its blossoms, too, on Carmel, whose "excellency" still remains, for it retains its beautiful vegetation to a greater degree than,

perhaps, any other mountain in Syria. Growing wild upon its heights, may yet be seen the bright blue hyacinth, the yellow jonquil, the varied anemone, and the golden cup of the poets' narcissus; while thyme and wallflower, and a variety of odoriferous herbs, yield to every pressure of the traveller's foot an exquisite perfume; and the luxuriant vine, trailing its broad leaves over its slopes, contributes, with the flowers and shrubs, to render it yet worthy of its Hebrew name of Carmel, which signifies, a country of vineyards and gardens. Its laurels are ever green; its olive-trees ever fruitful, from the rivulets which wander down its heights; while on its very summits grow the tall dark pines of the north, and the hardy oak of our climates.

The wallflower is prized highly by Asiatics, especially by the Persians. It will ever be a favourite flower with us, for the fragrance which it yields before the rose and other summer flowers yet please us with their odours. Its pungent leaves are very wholesome for cattle, and on this account it is often planted in pastures destined for their food. It bears the smoke of cities better than some other flowers, and is, therefore, frequently seen in the little plot of ground which in the large towns is devoted to the culture of flowers. The botanic name—taken from the Greek—signifies hand-flower, because it was gathered so often for nosegays; and as we see it in the pent-up garden, or the balcony which fronts the city

window, where smoke somewhat impairs its lustre, we are reminded of Elliott's lines :—

“ But mourning better days, the widow here
Still tries to make her little garden bloom,
For she was country born. No weeds appear
Where her poor pinks deplore their prison-tomb;
To them, alas, no second spring shall come!
And there in May the lilac gasps for breath;
And mint and thyme seem fain their woes to speak,
Like saddest portraits painted after death;
And spindling wallflowers in the choking reek
For life, for life lift up their branches weak.”

The magnificent tribe of tulips, so often the pride of the cottage garden, will now be coming forth, one after another, as the spring advances, but it will not be until May that the florist can exhibit them in all their varieties, and congratulate himself on their perfect forms and clear colours. One of the earliest blowing species, is that which is now found in many a cherished garden plot, and is called by gardeners Van Thol. (*Tulipa suaveolens*.) Its red and yellow streaked cup glows in the fields of southern Europe.

The French formerly called this flower *Tulipan*, which, as well as our own name, is derived from the Persian *Thoulyban*, the word used in Persia for the turban. The tulip was introduced into England about the year 1557, and was, for the next century, a source of considerable traffic in the Netherlands, as well as an object of gambling. Growers of tulips, during the Tulipomania, purchased the bulbs at enormous prices, and most remarkable speculations were carried on by merchants with the tulip-roots.

The flower is still much cultivated in Holland, from which country all the rest of Europe are supplied with bulbs. The varieties of tulip, and the names given to them by florists, are, like the different anemonies, nearly endless. The kind which is considered as the "king of florists' flowers," is the common tulip, (*Tulipa Gesneriana*,) which was named after Conrad Gesner, the celebrated Swiss botanist; and which has had more culture bestowed on it, than perhaps any other flower in the world, if we except such as are cultivated for the food or other useful substances their plants may furnish. Though this flower grows wild in the Levant and Syria, and is occasionally seen in the fields of Constantinople, yet the Turks have for many centuries cultivated it in gardens. It was brought to us from a garden of Turkey, by Busbequius, and was first described by Gesner in 1559. It appears, however, to have reached England two years earlier, for Gerarde, at that time, mentions the pains taken by one of his "loving friends, a curious searcher of simples and learned apothecary," who undertook, if possible, to find out the number of sorts; "but," adds the writer, "he had not done this after twenty years, not being able to attain to the end of his travail; for that each new year bringeth forth new plants of sundry colours, not before seen; all which to describe particularly, were to roll Sisyphus' stone, or to number the sands."

An anecdote which is recorded of an occur-

rence during the prevalence of the tulipomania, shows the value which was attached to their bulbs at that time. A merchant having given a herring to a sailor, who had delivered some goods, left him to his breakfast. The man seeing some tulip-roots lying near him, mistook them for onions, and ate a part of one of them with his fish. The narrator observes, that this single root was so valuable, that the sailor's meal cost the merchant more money than if he had entertained a prince.

The tulip is much admired in the east, and as it grows wild in Palestine, it is one of the flowers which have been considered as the "lilies of the field" of Scripture. The Turks, as well as the Persians, hold annually a feast of roses; and the former people have also a yearly festival of tulips, when the grand seignior exhibits a display of oriental magnificence.

And now the large drooping bells of the crown imperial (*Fritillaria imperialis*) hang in garlands under the coronal of leaves which surmounts the stem. It was formerly called Persian lily, as it is a native of Persia. Its sweet honey is said to be poisonous to bees. The light purple bells, too, of the early blooming Penstemon (*Penstemon campanulata*) are coming into flower. This species is a native of Mexico, and all the kinds of this plant have reached us from the various parts of America, where they are common flowers.

The bright blue flowers of the periwinkle

(*Vinca major*) have been open here and there all through the winter, but are much more abundant now, and during the summer months. They are the common ornaments of cottage gardens, and sometimes grow wild by streams or in woods. Hurdis describes them—

“ See where the sky-blue periwinkle climbs
E’en to the cottage eaves, and hides the wall
And dairy lattice, with a thousand eyes
Pentagonally formed, to mock the skill
Of proud geometer.”

This species is wild in all the countries of southern and middle Europe.

But some of our garden periwinkles are not blue. There is the Madagascar periwinkle, (*Vinca rosea*), of a beautiful pink colour; which, like our common species, blooms during the greater part of the year, and bears its twin flowers, and twines luxuriantly among the trees and bushes of Hindoostan. Then there are the silver-striped, gold-striped, white-flowered, and several others, some of their varieties produced by cultivation from our common blue species, and others introduced from India. The name of *vinca* is derived from *vinculum*, a bond. The French term the flower *pervenche*. Its old Anglo-Saxon name was *peruince*, and Chaucer calls it by another; thus, he says,

“ There sprange the violet al newe,
And fresh pewinke rich of hewe.”

It was supposed, in the olden times, to cure the cramp, and wreaths of its twigs were wound round the limbs for this purpose.

The violet, the lowly violet, belongs to the wild flowers, yet it is valued now in the garden, when lavender and other fragrant plants are yet waiting for sunshine to bring forth their scents. The dark blue double sweet violet, is merely a variety of our woodland flower, and the Russian and Neapolitan violets are a great addition to our garden bed. The Neapolitans

“ Now in sweet profusion spring,
Haunting the air.”

This is a winter flower, too, for it has been in blossom from October, and will still bloom on till May. Many of our garden violets are brought from the fields and woods of America, and are cultivated by our gardeners for the beauty of their flowers, as they are not fragrant. There is one species very common on the high mountains of Pennsylvania, with small chocolate flowers and hairy roundish leaves. The rich vegetable mould of some of these beech forests, is very favourable to its growth, and like our native violet, it seems to seek seclusion, rejoicing not alone in the quiet of the woods, but often blooming quite hidden among the dead leaves, which the high winds have scattered from the leafy boughs. This flower is on this account called the clandestine violet, (*Viola clandestina*.) It is a common remedy for wounds, among the dwellers in the forests, and is called “all heal.” The bruised plant is applied with great success for similar purposes in several parts of North America, and, like most of the violet tribe, its roots contain an

emetic property. Botanists have stated that a larger number of species of violets are found in North America, than in any other portion of the globe.

Besides the tufts of violets of various kinds which are found in our spring gardens, we might enumerate the large tribe of heartsease or pansy, which flower is, in fact, a violet, and is the *Viola tricolor* of the botanist. A few only of these flowers are found within the tropics. Many are from America, and several from Siberia. Some very pretty pansies grow on the cliffs of Northern Europe. Linnæus, in his work on the flowers of Lapland, says, "Here and there, among the rocks, small patches of vegetation were to be seen, full of a variety of herbaceous plants; among others, *Viola tricolor*, of which some of the flowers were white; others, with the upper petals blue and yellow, and the lateral and lower ones blue; while others, again, had a mixture of yellow in the side petals. All these were found within a foot of each other, sometimes on the same stalk."

The striped flowers of the Chalcedonian iris (*Iris Susiana*) now wave gaily over the borders. Its flowers are the largest and handsomest of this most beautiful genus, and it was called by the old writers, the Turkey flower de luce. The various species of iris are chiefly European. Several are from different parts of Asia, and a few from America. The pretty Persian iris, (*Iris Persica*), with its fragrant and bright-coloured

blossoms, is a native of the country which its name denotes. We have also some pretty Chinese species. The dark purple, almost black kind of iris, called snake's head, (*Iris tuberosa*,) is common in the Levant. The very lovely white species, the Florentine iris (*Iris Florentina*) is called by the French *la flambe blanche*. It grows wild in the south of Europe.

Milton describes these flowers, with their various colours, as

“ Iris all hues.”

Among the ancients an iris was the symbol of eloquence.

Some species of iris have large bulbous roots, and many of the African kinds are commonly eaten as food by the Hottentots. “ The *Iris edulis*,” says Thunberg when speaking of the Cape of Good Hope, “ a plant which grew here in great abundance, and decorated the fields with a variety of white and yellow and blue flowers, was brought in great quantities by the slaves. These bulbs were eaten either roasted and boiled, or stewed with milk, and appeared to me to be both palatable and nourishing.”

The Hottentots live not only upon this root, but on a great variety of bulbous-rooted plants, with the bright blossoms of which the desert is strewn. Bulbous plants are very generally found in spots, which, at some parts of the year, are dried up, and which would produce no vegetation were it not for some such provision as is contained in the bulb. “ Thus,”

says Professor Lindley, "in places like the hard dry Karroos of the Cape of Good Hope, where rain falls only for three months in the year; in the parched plains of Barbary, where the ground is rarely refreshed by showers, except in the winter; and on the most burning shores of tropical India, beyond the reach of the tide, and buried in sand, the temperature of which rises to 180° , bulbous-rooted plants are enabled to live and enliven such scenes with periodical beauty." The succulent stems and leaves of other plants of the sandy deserts afford a similar provision, by their power of absorbing and retaining the dews which water the desert; and shall we not say with the psalmist, "Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works!" The ignorant Hottentot knows not how to till his land, nor will its arid soil admit of culture. He cares not to provide beyond the morrow, yet is he cared for by the God who feeds the fowl of the air, and instructs the bird of the wilderness.

And now every day the garden-trees seem to produce more young buds, and the buds are expanding so fast, notwithstanding the easterly winds, and the blights which they bring with them, that there will be shade enough by the time when the sun shall drive us to seek it. The winds yet whistle shrilly through some half-clad branches, but Nature seems to be rejoicing, and to be gradually putting on her strength and beauty; and the green of the half-expanded

foliage, though exhibiting less variety than the hues of later seasons, has a beauty of its own—a beauty of youth and freshness. It seems like the untried feelings and hopes of the young life of human beings; and were we not certain that it should again bloom in another spring, we should sigh as we remembered that it must turn to the withered leaf, as surely as the early hope shall change to disappointment. But there are hopes which may grow brighter and brighter as seasons and years move onward; and bloom in freshness through a long eternity; and bring forth that joy which fadeth not away—hopes which shall be consummated in an eternal spring, for they are founded on those promises of God which are immutable.

APRIL.

“Is there a heart that beats and lives,
 To which no joy the spring-time gives?
 Alas, in that unfeeling heart
 No love nor kindness hath part;
 Or chilling want, or pining care,
 Must brood, or comfortless despair:
 Blest, who without profane alloy,
 Can revel in that blameless joy;
 More blest in every welcome hour
 If spring-time smile, or winter lower,
 Who round him scattered, hears and sees
 What still the excursive sense may please;
 Who round him finds, perchance unsought,
 Fresh matter for improving thought;
 And more, the more he looks abroad,
 Marks, owns, and loves, the present God.”—BISHOP MANT.

THE white and blushing blossoms of the fruit-trees render the April garden a grove of flowers.

Among the most abundant and the brightest in tint, are the apple-blossoms, which thicken and redden until by the close of the month their redness turns to paleness. The apple which they produce is among the most valuable of British fruits; and as the tree may be grown in any soil or climate, and will bear its bright blossoms and its ruddy store for many years, it is not surprising that it should be so generally cultivated. Though only twenty-two kinds of apple were known to the Romans, several hundred varieties are now reared in this land. The blossoms of none are more beautiful than those of the Siberian crab, (*Pyrus prunifolia*) which is now in flower, and the small cherry-like fruits of which, though harsh to the taste, are the most deeply coloured and ornamental of any of the species.

That this tree was cultivated by the ancient Britons in the earlier days of this country, there is little doubt. Our English name for the fruit seems to have been derived from the Saxon *aeppel*, while the cider made from its juice is a slight abbreviation of the name of *seider*, given by the early Britons to some beverage which they had in common use. In later days the apple juice has been used as a cosmetic, and the old physicians estimated its odour so highly that they often directed their patients to hold in their hand "a sweet apple," as a remedy in some of those alarming infections, which, like the plague, once preyed upon the inhabitants of this land.

The apple is familiar to us as a plant named in Scripture. Thus the prophet Joel, describing the mournful condition of the land of the patriarchs, when lying under the wrath of Jehovah, says, "The vine is dried up, and the fig-tree languisheth, the pomegranate-tree, the palm-tree also, and the apple-tree, even all the trees of the forest are withered, because joy is withered away from the sons of men." Some of our best commentators, however, are of opinion, that the word translated apple, ought rather to have been rendered citron, as the handsome appearance of this latter tree, both while in flower and fruit, seems particularly suited to the allusions of the inspired writers. The fruit, too, is highly valued, while the apple of Palestine is of an inferior quality.

Some very ornamental trees of the pear kind are now putting forth their blossoms, and are cultivated by our gardeners for their beautiful flowers. A species of pear (*Pyrus salvifolia*) with downy leaves, something like those of the sage, and with white flowers, is one of the prettiest kinds. Several of these plants have long silvery white leaves, others narrow silky leaves, like the willow; while one species (*Pyrus nivalis*) has round leaves, as white as its snowy flowers. These trees are beautiful in form, but their fruits are not fit for eating. The ornamental plum-trees, too, are numerous, with their white flowers; and the pretty flowering shrubs of the cherry-tree tribe, have a good effect in the garden or shrubbery. Several of

them have large double flowers. One kind of cherry, the perfumed cherry-tree, (*Cerasus Mahaleb*,) often found in gardens, has a sweet scent, like that of the clematis, which is perceptible at a considerable distance. Its hard round fruit is used for beads by Catholics, and the wood is scented by the French, and manufactured into various articles of furniture. The manufacture is carried on chiefly at the village of St. Lucie, near Commercy, and hence this wood is called by the French, *bois de St. Lucie*. With us the tree is planted for its profuse and fragrant flowers.

“Shade-loving hyacinth, thou comest again,
And thy rich odours seem to swell the flow
Of the lark’s song, the redbreast’s lovely strain,
And the stream’s tune.”

Thus sang Elliott to our woodland hyacinth, which now is blooming. Our garden hyacinths are much like the wild species, but are double, and have a variety of tints. Some are dark blue or pale azure, others are of pink, amethyst, white, or primrose colours. This flower is the eastern hyacinth, (*Hyacinthus Orientale*.) It has long shed its beauty on the in-doors’ room, from the water vase, and now flourishes freely in the open air. It has one advantage when grown in the water above its growth in the ground, inasmuch as we can there see the fibres from the root, which are almost as beautiful as the flower itself, while, in the garden, these are concealed from our view. A variety of names have been given by florists to these

favourite flowers. The species thought to have been earliest introduced into our gardens is that called the King of Great Britain. Like the tulip and narcissus, this flower has been much cultivated by the Dutch, and is still among them an article of commerce with other nations. They were the first European cultivators of the hyacinth, and raised it in their gardens as early as the commencement of the sixteenth century. About the latter end of that century, there were seven or eight varieties known in England, while Miller says that in his time—rather more than a hundred years ago—the Haarlem florists had above two thousand kinds. The passion for hyacinths which once existed in Holland, has, like many other popular follies, greatly subsided; but the beauty of the flower will ever make it valuable; and above four hundred kinds are annually brought into England, by seedsmen, from Holland. The garden hyacinth is a native of the Levant and of several parts of the east. It grows wild in abundance in some parts of Syria, flowering in February, and its roots and blossoms are much larger than those with us. It is said to be very beautiful on the lands lying by the coast of the Jordan, from the Dead Sea. Schubert, describing his course from this part of Syria, along the border of the Lake of Gennesaret, says, “Whoever desires views really extensive and beautiful, and lilies, tulips, hyacinths, and narcissuses, must in the spring season visit this district, where also

the garlic assumes a size and beauty which might render it worthy of becoming an ornamental plant in our gardens."

In Russia the hyacinth has been found wild, with bells of deep yellow. The roots of all species of hyacinth are more or less poisonous. This flower is much admired in the east, and some years since, the favourite apartment of the Sultan at Constantinople was called the chamber of the garden of hyacinths. Dr. E. D. Clarke contrived to gain admittance into this retired spot. He describes it as a small garden, neatly arranged in a number of oblong borders, edged with porcelain or Dutch tiles. Not a flower was to be seen in this cherished parterre, save the eastern hyacinth, and this waved its thousands of bells; but, by its monotony, the garden was rendered less pleasing than gardens in general, and had a dreary and unvaried aspect. One would have imagined that the powerful odours from a garden of hyacinths, borne upon the warm air of the south, would have rendered the neighbouring apartment neither healthful nor agreeable; yet here, gazing upon the flowers, the Sultan spent a great part of his time.

The starch hyacinth, called also grape hyacinth or grape flower, (*Muscari racemosum*), received its former name from Curtis, on account of its strong odour of starch, and the quantity of thick mucilage which exists in the plant. The old writers termed it tassel hyacinth, "because," says Parkinson, "the

whole stalk, with the flowers upon it, doth somewhat resemble a long purse tassel, and thereupon divers gentlewomen have so named it." It is in some parts of France called wild onion, on account of its ovate, bulbous root. The flowers are composed of a thick compact cluster of small purple or ash-coloured bells. The species called musk-grape hyacinth, is a handsomer flower than the starch kind. It has narrow leaves, more than a foot long, and grows wild in southern Europe. The feathered hyacinth (*Muscari comosum monstrosum*) is an exceedingly pretty border flower. It blows during April and May. Several kinds have an odour of musk, hence their Latin names from *muscus*. This substance is called misk by the Arabs. The flower is very general in the east, and one of the commonest in the Syrian field.

" In spite of nipping sheep and hungry cow,
The little daisy finds a place to blow."

Clare writes thus of our field flower, and the garden daisies keep pace with it. Indeed all the double, and quilled, and hen and chicken daisies, which have, for centuries, ornamented the edges of flower beds, are merely varieties of the common daisy, (*Bellis perennis*.) The Germans have raised a great number of varieties of this flower, differing especially in all the shades of red and white; but the dark crimson daisy, so often clustering with the London pride around the cottage garden bed, is the most beautiful in hue. There is a

garden species called the annual daisy, (*Bellis annua*,) which is much like our British daisy, and which grows wild as commonly as that, in the fields of Italy, Spain, and France. The large white Portugal daisy (*Bellis sylvestris*) is the common ornament of the meadows in the land from which it derives its name.

Some of our most elegant spring border flowers are the saxifrages. They are chiefly Alpine plants, growing wild on rocky or stony places. One of the most common kinds is that which is in flower during this month, and sometimes as early as February. It is the thick leaved saxifrage, (*Saxifraga crassifolia*.) It has pale purple blossoms, and large showy foliage. During autumn the leaves of this plant wither, and the stem turns quite black, and forms fibres, which constitute the root of the plant which is, in the following spring, to enliven the garden. This flower is a native of Siberia, growing among the snows of that inclement clime, and blooming far up the hills of those dreary regions. The variety called the thick heart-leaved saxifrage bears larger blossoms. The London pride (*Saxifraga umbrosa*) is the hardiest and most common of the genus. It grows wild on some of our mountains. The French term it *Amourette*.

Nearly sixty species of saxifrage bloom in the English garden. Though mountain flowers, they will flourish on plain and valley; and many, like the London pride, will bloom amid the impure airs of the great metropolis. A

few are difficult to rear. They can bear the cold spring winds, for their native haunts are the high peaks of the mountains, and the Alps and Pyrenees are made beautiful by their blossoms, which open even on the limits of perpetual snow ; but our winter, with its frosts, injures them, for they have not at all times a thick covering of snow over their roots, and a wet season renders them still more sickly. On their ice-clad regions they bloom unhurt, and the snow gradually makes room for their blossoms to show themselves. Mrs. Sigourney has some lines addressed to mountain flowers well suited to them:—

“Man, who panting toils
O'er slippery steeps, or trembling treads the verge
Of yawning gulfs, o'er which the headlong plunge
Is to eternity, looks shuddering up,
And marks ye in your placid loveliness,
Fearless yet frail, and clasping his chill hands,
Blesses your pencilled beauty ! 'Mid the pomp
Of mountain summits rushing on the sky,
And chaining the rapt soul in breathless awe,
He bows and binds you drooping to his breast,
Inhales your spirit from the frost-winged gale,
And freer dreams of heaven.”

The pyramidal saxifrage (*Saxifraga cotyledon*) is by no means an uncommon garden flower, but its large handsome spikes of flowers do not open till June. They are white, spotted with rose colour, and grow on the Pyrenees. The saffron-coloured saxifrage (*Saxifraga mutata*) with its yellow flowers, requires shelter from the frost, and is among the least hardy of the tribe. It grows wild on the high lands of Switzerland and Italy.

One of the prettiest species is the round-leaved, (*Saxifraga rotundifolia*,) which blooms later in the summer, and is most abundant on the rocks and in the valleys of Piedmont; those valleys made deeply interesting, not only by natural scenery, but by the faith of many, who have in these seclusions died martyrs for the truths of the gospel. A flower allied to the saxifrages, and called golden saxifrage, grows there too, and is eaten by the Piedmontese.

The purple flowers of the opposite-leaved saxifrage, and the white-flowered granulated kind, often bearing double flowers, are very common in the garden during April. The former was much admired by Dr. Clarke in Norway. The most beautiful and scarce plants were, he says, here pendant among the cliffs: this species of saxifrage especially, and a kind of gentian peeping above the snow. The clustered Alpine, the starry, the larger mountain, and the opposite-leaved species, also grew in great beauty; and "nothing," he adds, "can be more elegant, than the hanging clusters of the last, like pendent pearls upon the rocks."

The bright flowers of the double furze (*Ulex Europæus*) are very fragrant now. It is merely a variety of our common moorland furze. It is not often that double flowers are found wild in this country, but this was discovered some years ago to be growing on some uncultivated moors of Devonshire, and has since been propagated by cutting in the nursery

ground. The larger kind, called Irish whin, is a very luxuriant plant for the garden or shrubbery. It has no spines, and is often eight feet high. It must be propagated by cuttings, as it has never been known to ripen its seeds. The wild furze is common on our English heaths, and Stephens saw it growing in great profusion in central America, on the ruins of some of those interesting ancient cities, on whose history books throw little light, yet whose origin and decay are deeply interesting to the philosopher.

In many gardens we now find in flower one or two species of arum, as the purple and Virginian arums. All kinds of this plant are sufficiently like our wild flower, called lords and ladies, to be recognised without difficulty as belonging to the same genus. They all have a central column, called by botanists a spadix, on which the flowers are found. The roots of all, like those of the wild arum, are pungent and acrid; but some of them are milder, and, as well as the leaves, are nutritive, when cooked. The celebrated yam of the isles of the southern ocean is the root of one of them. They are very abundant, and of various species in hot climates, and are used as common food by the natives of the West Indies. One species cultivated in our gardens, and growing wild in many parts of southern Europe, is the common dragon flower (*Arum dracunculus*) called by the French *la serpenteaire*. It is a remarkable plant, and

reminds one of a snake, by its leaves spotted with purple and brown. The flower has so strong an odour of carrion, that few persons can bear to approach it. Still more offensive is the odour from a species of arum which grows in ditches, about the Straits of Magellan. This plant has the appearance of an ulcer, and so powerful is its odour of decayed meat, that the flesh-fly deposits her eggs on its flowers.

Dr. Lindley, treating of the acidity which exists in the roots of the arum tribe, names one which has a singular and dangerous poison. This is the celebrated dumb cane of the West Indies and South America. This plant grows to the height of six feet. "It has," says this writer, "the property, when chewed, of swelling the tongue and destroying the power of speech." Dr. Hooker relates an account of a gardener, who incautiously bit a piece of the dumb cane, when his tongue swelled to such a degree that he could not move it. He became utterly incapable of speaking, and was confined to the house for some days, in the most excruciating torment.

More than a dozen species of arum have been introduced into the gardens of England, but they are, on account of their unpleasant odour, but little in general cultivated, and chiefly left to the gardens of those who value them as curiosities. One very lovely kind, however, is often found gracing the hall or parlour, and has a sweet fragrance. It is sometimes called the horn flower, (*Calla Ethiopica*.)

It has a large white flower, shaped like a leaf, and looking like an alabaster vase, while from the centre rises the bright golden column. Leaves of glossy surface and bright green colour, sometimes two feet in length, add to its beauty, and it is so like the wild arum that it will not be doubted as being of the same tribe. It is very common at the Cape of Good Hope, having a most magnificent appearance on any moist portion of that arid soil, and growing even in ditches.

Several species of arum afford medicines, and the roots of some kinds, when boiled in milk, are thought to have been very useful in consumption. The dumb cane yields a juice which gives a permanent dye to linen. Some of the newly-gathered leaves are used in Demerara as blisters. One kind, very abundant in the woods of North America, is called the Indian turnip, as the Indians eat its boiled root. This is the *arum atropurpureum*, which has handsome leaves tinged with blue, and which is a vegetable of great service to the European settlers in these vast forests. The soft, silky leaves of some species are used in some hot countries as plates and dishes.

One or two species of spiræa are now beginning to put forth their blossoms on the shrubs. The smooth-leaved spiræa (*Spiræa lævigata*) is one of the earliest, and is a native of Siberia. Its flowers are of a pale rose colour. The pretty flower, commonly called Italian May, (*Spiræa hypericifolia*), is a very well-known

species, with its large bunches of small white flowers, among its dark green leaves, and it is an under-shrub in the tall American forest, blooming with us in the month from which it has its familiar name. About the same time, too, we see the bridewort or queen's embroidery, with its spikes of pinkish lilac flowers, looking much like some piece of finely-wrought needle-work ; and a little later the Virginian Guelder rose, and the Californian species, with its loose clusters of feather-like white flowers, floating up and down to every summer breeze, may be seen decking the summer bed, delighting most in a moist soil, and flourishing to fullest perfection in the garden through which a stream meanders.

Nor is this genus destitute of those herbaceous plants, those lowlier flowers, which sometimes find room on beds which could not admit of the more spreading shrub. The meadow sweet (*Spiræa ulmaria*) is often brought from our wild fields into the garden ; the goat's beard, (*Spiræa aruncus*,) a Siberian species, is very ornamental with its white flowers in the month of June ; and the dropwort of our meads (*Spiræa filipendula*) is very pretty in the garden, when its blossoms have, by culture, been rendered double.

The bladder-nut (*Staphylea pinnata*) is a hardy plant of North America, now in bloom. Its flowers are white, and the brown seeds are enclosed in a large inflated capsule or bladder. The hard smooth nuts, bitter as they are, are

eaten in some countries, and in Catholic lands, are strung as necklaces and rosaries.

During this and next month we may see the flowers of the numerous varieties of auricula, (*Auricula primula*.) Most of them are kept in pots, but some common kinds are found in the garden, blooming beside the early hyacinth and other spring flowers. This flower has received great attention from florists, and innumerable varieties, differing both in blossoms and foliage from each other, have been the result of their pains. Several volumes have been written solely upon its culture, their authors recommending a great number of modes of treatment. The artisans of Lancashire have long been celebrated for the beauty of their auriculas, and Loudon observes, that it is no uncommon thing for a mechanic of that county, who earns from eighteen to thirty shillings per week, to give two guineas for a fresh variety, in order to raise seedlings from it. This flower was long known as the mountain or French cowslip. It deserves its former name, for it blooms above the snows of many alpine regions of Italy, Switzerland, and Germany. It is also found wild in the neighbourhood of Astracan. The old botanists termed it bear's ear (*Auricula ursi*) from the shape of its leaves, and gardeners have many fanciful names for the varieties they have raised. In its wild state the auricula is generally of a red or yellow, sometimes of a purple colour, and occasionally variegated, or scattered

over with a mealy powder. In the garden the darker kinds have usually more or less of this white powder on their blossoms, and sometimes, too, on their foliage, as Thomson describes them—

“ Auriculas enriched
With shining meal o’er all their velvet leaves.”

The expressed juice of the leaves of the auricula, was, in former days, a valued medicine; and Ray gravely says of it, that if mingled with the milk of a *red* cow, it will cure the most intense headache.

A pretty flower, called Greek valerian, (*Polemonium reptans*,) is already in bloom. It has light blue flowers, and is a native of America. A much more frequent kind is the species generally called Jacob’s ladder, (*Polemonium cæruleum*,) which blooms in almost every garden in the month following this. It has numerous blossoms, either of a light blue, or varying in all the shades of blue and bluish white, to a pure snow-white tint. This flower is in Staffordshire called charity; and the familiar name of Jacob’s ladder was probably suggested by the form of its leaves, which consist of a number of leaflets, opposite to each other, on the stem, and not unlike steps. This was sufficient to lead our forefathers to adopt it as an emblem of something scriptural, at a period when monks and friars were the chief cultivators of plants, and the great discoverers of their virtues. The ancient writers held in great repute a plant which they termed *polemonium*. The name is

taken from the Greek word signifying war, and Pliny relates, that it received this designation from its having been the cause of war between two kings, each of whom claimed the merit of having discovered some medicinal properties which it was supposed to possess. Great indeed must its virtues have been, if its good to mankind could have at all compensated for the ills brought on by war, and its attendant miseries; but if the plant we now call Greek valerian, is the same as that which occupied so much attention in ancient days, the discovery was indeed of little value, and its remedial effects of small power. It is not improbable, however, that the old name has descended, in this instance, to another flower than that to which it was originally given.

And now several of those ornamental plants of modern gardens, the flowering currant and gooseberry bushes, are hanging their abundant blossoms to the sunshine. These shrubs were unknown to us a century since, though now so many species are common. One of the most general of them all is now in blossom. This is the red-flowered black currant, (*Ribes sanguineum*.) Several varieties of this species are cultivated, distinguished chiefly by the colour of their blossoms. The dark-tinted variety is the prettiest. This plant was brought hither from California, where it grows wild, beneath the shade of the wood. It is found wild, too, most frequently, and in greatest luxuriance, in the neighbourhood of streams. Mrs.

Loudon observes, that "the colour of the flowers varies very much according to the soil on which the shrub is grown: the darkest and brightest hue has been observable in those plants which are grown on calcareous soils, and the palest and least brilliant are those grown on sandy soils." All the different species of flowering currant are hardy plants, and bloom early in the year.

Perhaps the most ornamental of all the common species of *ribes*, is the snowy-flowered gooseberry, (*Ribes niveum*,) with its hanging bells as white as the purest wax, and its dark purple fruits of the later season, which are very agreeable to the palate. Then there are other species, with red bells and long stamens, like the fuchsia; and others with pale green or gold-coloured blossoms; while one beautiful kind, the wax-leaved currant, (*Ribes cereum*,) has round leaves covered with a thin layer of a wax-like substance, and well deserves its distinctive name. The fruits of these flowering currant bushes are all wholesome, and some of them agreeable to the taste. They are purple, scarlet, or black in colour. Several of them, however, will not ripen in this country, and others have a harsh and crude flavour.

Many species of berberry are daily becoming gayer with their pretty yellow flowers, nor will they be less ornamental to the garden, when, in the autumnal season, their dark red pendulous fruits will glitter among the branches. Our common kind (*Berberis vulgaris*) is well known,

but it is in very ill repute with the farmer, as it is believed to be injurious to corn. How far this reproach is merited, is a question still much discussed by botanical writers. The injury is supposed to originate with an insect, which is very fond of the berberry tree, and very generally found upon it, and this is thought to cause a kind of powder, which, being scattered over the neighbouring cornfield, alights upon the wheat and barley, and produces a sort of fungus, rendering the plant unhealthy, and giving it the appearance of mildewed corn. Several naturalists of eminence have advocated this popular opinion. The flowers of the common species possess stamens of so irritable a nature, that Linnæus observed them all to tend towards the central column, or pistil, if touched ever so lightly by the bee; and their singular sensibility may be easily seen, by touching one of the stamens with a pin, when they all immediately curve and meet at the point. There is a great degree of acidity in the red fruits of this plant, and they are considered to afford a good medicine in cases of fever; while they hang untouched by the birds, which do not relish their sour flavour. These fruits are used for preserves, for garnishing dishes, and, enclosed in sugar, are prepared as comfits by confectioners. A great degree of the acidity is also found in the bluish green leaves of the berberry. The roots yield a yellow colour, which is much used in Poland for dying leather; and the astringent bark and stem are

valuable to our manufacturers in their colouring preparations. Sometimes the fruits of the common berberry are of a yellow colour, and occasionally they are purple in hue.

That pretty little border flower, the Venus's looking-glass, (*Campanula speculum*,) with its white or purple circular blossoms, is very common. From its shape, like that of the ancient mirror, this flower derived its familiar name; and as the astronomical sign of Venus (ϕ) was a figure of the old mirror, and the handle by which it was held, so the flower bears, too, the name of the fabled goddess. The root of this plant, like those of most other species of *campanula*, contains a milky juice. The flower grows very freely in the cornfields of southern Europe, and is very common in France and Italy, though on the former lands it is not usually quite so large as we see it in our gardens. A new species of Venus's looking-glass (*Campanula Lorei*) has lately been introduced into the English nursery grounds. The flower is called in France *la doucette*, and it was formerly known in this country as the corn-pink and corn-gilliflower.

Some of the more hardy kinds of that singular flower the fig-marigold, are, by the end of the month, glittering on the stone or rock-work of the garden, and are the heralds of the hundreds, which shall, as the season advances, put forth their starry flowers. This handsome tribe has been brought to us from the Cape of Good Hope, and with its singular beauty

and variety of colours, enlivens the dreary deserts of Africa. Their common name was given on account of their fruit, which is shaped like a fig, and which is eaten by the Hottentots ; while the marigold is a good type of the form of most of their blossoms. From the flowers opening chiefly at mid-day, and never expanding but to the sunshine, their botanic name is derived from the Greek words mid-day flower.

The most common and hardy of all this large genus of flowers, is the great yellow-flowered kind, (*Mesembryanthemum pomeridianum*,) with its showy golden starry blossoms, opening in June. One of the hardy kinds is now in bloom. This is the long-horned fig marigold, (*Mesembryanthemum corniculatum*,) with flowers of pale yellow. All these plants require to be kept very dry, their succulent leaves deriving and retaining from our humid atmosphere, more than enough moisture to nourish them. Some of their leaves are most singular and even grotesque in form. They are described on the deserts of Africa as having the appearance of masses of spotted stones or shells. The colours of the flowers are not exceeded in brilliance by any tints of the vegetable kingdom; they are yellow, pink, scarlet, violet, amethyst, purple, and indeed of every tint of the rainbow.

Two kinds of fig-marigold, though requiring shelter during the greater part of the year, are very popular plants, and often deck the cottage window, beside the fuchsias and

geraniums, which preside there. These are those curious species, the ice plants, which even on the warm summer day, seem as if winter had condensed his icicles on their succulent stems and leaves. One of these, the ice plant (*Mesembryanthemum crystallinum*) is a biennial plant. The common frozen plant (*Mesembryanthemum glaciale*) is an annual. They have both white flowers, but it is for the beauty of the crystallization on their foliage, that they deserve culture. They were brought into our gardens from Greece.

The leaves of several species of this plant contain soda. One kind especially, the knot-flowered fig-marigold, which is a native of some of the dry plains of Egypt, is burned for the great quantity of potash to be found in its ashes. This plant, as well as another species, burned for the barilla or soda which they contain, are, by the Arabic writers, comprehended under the general name of *ghasool*, signifying the washer or washing herb, and they are common not only in the deserts of Arabia, but also in various parts of Syria. The ashes of this and a similar species, yielding alkaline substances, are supposed to be referred to in Scripture under the word translated "soap" in our version. "Though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap," said the prophet Jeremiah, "yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord God." For the evil heart of Israel had led him astray from God, so that he had become polluted in

the eyes of Jehovah, and no appliance of man's device could cleanse him, till he turned and submitted himself to God. As it is in our day, so it was then, man could not atone for past pollution or present sin, and the only means of purification and forgiveness was that which the Holy Scriptures reveal.

The roots of some of these flowers, especially one termed the edible fig marigold (*Mesembryanthemum edule*) are very valuable to the Hottentots, who often pull them up from their sandy soils. One species of this plant is abundant in the very different climate of the Canadian woods. When the soil is sandy it covers the earth like a thick mat, and when it encroaches on the spot which the colonist has appropriated for a garden, it is a most troublesome weed. It is a variety of the hour-blowing fig marigold, and sends forth a constant succession of yellow star-shaped flowers from among its thick green trailing stalks and its juicy foliage.

Kitto speaks of these flowers on the Arabian deserts as exceedingly numerous, and as exhibiting every playful variety in the form of the leaves. He says that "their aspect often presents a delightful contrast to the comfortless waste around, and the arid soil beneath them."

Not the less beautiful, because it is very common, is the lilac tree, (*Syringa vulgaris*), which graces alike the poor man's cottage door, and the highest cultured garden of his

rich neighbour. The old name of this plant was pipe-tree, and pipe-privet, by either of which it was known to the botanists of queen Elizabeth's days ; and it was called privet because it was usually grafted on stocks of that shrub, while its name of pipe originated with the Turks, as the stems were often used by them, for their long pipes. It is called in Barbary by the name of *sirinx*, and hence we have probably the name of *syringa*. This flower is a native of Persia and other parts of the east, as well as of Hungary and the shores of the Danube. The Turks, who, in addition to the love of flowers which they possess in common with all the people of the east, have an enthusiastic regard for a flowering tree, were the people from whom we first received this beautiful addition to our gardens. It was brought from the gardens of Constantinople, in the sixteenth century, by the ambassador Busbequius, and planted in the gardens of Vienna. Being a plant which will bear a considerable degree of smoke, it was soon a favourite in the London gardens ; nor is any shrub or tree more common than this, now, in the plots which lie around the dwellings in the suburban villages of our metropolis, where it flourishes exceedingly well. Even the courts and back yards of the crowded streets are often enlivened by its green leaves, though its purple clusters refuse to bud in an atmosphere so laden with fog and soot. It probably was introduced during the reign of Henry VIII.,

as when Cromwell caused an inventory to be made of the plants which grew in the garden of the palace of Nonsuch, there were enumerated "six lilackes, trees which have no fruit, but only a pleasant smell." Gerarde, in 1597, says of the white and blue lilacs, "I have them in my garden in great plenty." Our common English name is merely a corruption of that by which this shrub is usually called in its native Persia, where it is known as the *lilag*, which word signifies a flower. The French, too, term it *le lilas*. There are several common varieties of this species, as the blue lilac, (*Syringa v. cærulea*) and the purple lilac, (*Syringa v. violacea*) called the Scotch lilac; and as beautiful as either are the large thick clusters of the white lilac, now contrasting with the darker-coloured species, and which unfolds its fair flowers a week or two earlier than even its deeper-tinted companion. There are also two varieties with reddish purple flowers, called by the French gardeners, *le lilas de Marly*. Cowper had noticed its many hues.

"Various in array, now white
Now sanguine, and her beauteous head now set
With purple spikes pyramidal; as if
Studios of ornament, yet unresolved
Which hues she most approved, she chose them all."

Scarcely less frequent in our gardens, and easily distinguished from the common kind, is that species termed the Persian lilac, (*Syringa Persica*.) It is on the hills and plains of the lovely Persia still more general than is the larger kind. Its leaves are long and pointed,

while those of the common lilac are broad and heart-shaped. Its clusters of flowers are less compact, but blow loosely about in the southerly winds of April, diffusing an odour, delicious in the outer air, but which would render the atmosphere of an apartment faint and sickly. In Persia its delicate lilac flowers are much admired ; and it often mingles with the rose, the narcissus, and the jonquil, in those bouquets which are sent by eastern letters as expressions of sentiment.

The Persian lilac was, long after its introduction into Europe, termed Persian jessamine, and the Italians called it German jessamine. This plant is sometimes grown in pots, and made to flower at Christmas, but by this process it quite loses its fragrance.

There are, in our garden, two or three varieties of the Persian, besides some other species of lilac. The Chinese lilac, with purple flowers, is, as its name implies, a plant growing wild in the celestial empire : while another species is found wild on the mountains about Pekin ; and a third smiles in beauty in Kumaon, near the lofty mountains of the Himalaya. These will, probably, some day grace our English gardens, as they seem likely to bear our climate.

MAY.

"All the flowers that gild the spring,
Hither their still music bring;
If Heaven bless them, thankful, they
Smell more sweet, and look more gay.

"Though their voices gentle be,
Streams have too their melody;
Night and day they warbling run,
Never pause, but still sing on.

"Wake, for shame, my sluggish heart,
Wake and gladly sing thy part;
Learn of birds, and streams, and flowers,
How to use thy nobler powers."—HICKES.

How wonderful appears the change which a few weeks have now made on the face of Nature, if we compare this month, and its aspects and productions, with the comparatively bare and gloomy appearance of the garden during February and March! How has the Almighty's word been working as surely in bringing forth the bright verdure and radiant flowers from their wintry darkness, as it did when he framed this beautifully organized world out of chaos. In the northern countries of Europe, where the change is greater and more rapid, the effect is less pleasing than in the gradual transition of our winter to spring. Laing, speaking of this in Norway, says, the snow is painfully bright to the eyes under "the sunshine. When it melts, vegetation bursts forth at once; but the patchy, unpicturesque appearance of the country, with a knob of a rock here, and a corner of a field there, appearing through the white covering, deprives us of the pleasing impressions of an English spring. The rapid advance of vegetation is

more astonishing than pleasing. It is not agreeable to step thus, all at once, from dead winter to living summer, and to lose the charm and interest of the gradual revival of all that has leaf or wing."

In many tropical countries the change from the winter to the early season is little marked, for when the trees are evergreen, and the flowers always bright, there is less variety in the aspect of the season. The gradual coming of leaves and flowers in our climate, and their no less gradual decline, is to the year what the morning and evening twilight are to the day. We should never estimate the shortness of life were it not for the changing aspects of things around us; and whether this change be sudden or slow, whether the flowers go and come in a few hours, or a few weeks, yet as we mark these beautiful objects to which the Scripture has compared our mortal lives, we should adopt the words of David: "Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, that I may know how frail I am."

May is universally hailed by the poets, as the loveliest month of the year, and its coming seems to revive in some the freshness of life, and to make them feel young again. Many sweet and familiar flowers now spring up day by day on the garden bed; and some very beautiful shrubs are dressed in their garlands of blossoms. The scarlet hawthorn blushes like the rose; and it is merely a variety of our wilding May. The dark lilac still contends with

the snowy balls of the guelder rose ; and on the low boughs of the Judas tree (*Cercis Siliquastrum*) the beautiful pink flowers are clustering in abundance. Its large showy leaves are eaten on the continent in salads, as are also those of the Canadian species, by the settlers in the woods. The flowers have a slight and agreeable acidity, and are in France fried in batter and eaten ; while the wood, finely veined with black and green, takes so good a polish, as to be well adapted for the cabinet maker, and the young branches are used for dyeing wool.

Not less beautiful than either of the preceding flowers are the golden clusters which now hang down from the laburnum, (*Cytisus laburnum*.) This plant, which grows very abundantly on the Swiss mountains, is called by the French *Cytise des Alpes*. The wood of the laburnum is so very valuable, that it has been a matter of surprise that the tree should not have been cultivated for its timber. Even though growing to a comparatively small size in our country, it is very useful for many purposes. The Romans thought this wood next in value to ebony, and though this is not so hard as that wood, yet, from its durability, furniture made of it is stronger than that manufactured of mahogany. The blossoms of the laburnum are very fragrant, and their hue gave to it the common country name of golden chain. Many persons are affected with head-ache by their odour, and the seeds have

a powerful influence on the human constitution. Happily they have not the pleasant flavour which might render them attractive to children ; yet the writer of these pages once saw two little ones rendered very ill by having eaten laburnum seeds, and it required the prompt use of medical remedies to prevent more lasting effects on the constitution.

Another species of the laburnum, commonly called in our country the pigeon pea, produces seeds which are much eaten by the negroes and poor people of the West Indies, while they are often given to horses and other cattle, which thrive exceedingly well on them. In the island of Martinico they are served at table as a dish for the rich, who prefer them even to the green peas of our country. Both our wild and cultured broom plants are by many writers considered as species of the *cytissus*. The Scotch laburnum (*Cytissus alpinus*) has larger leaves and flowers than the common kind. It is frequent in our gardens, and blossoms a month later than that. The Italians name it after this month, as we do our hawthorn ; for with them it blooms in May.

A very common flower, to be found indeed in almost every garden, is the red spur flower, or red valerian, commonly termed Pretty Betty. It has long been known to botanists as *Valeriana rubra*, but is now called *Centranthus rubra*. It varies in all shades of red, from crimson to palest pink, and is sometimes of a

pinkish or yellowish white. Its large clusters of blossoms are composed of a great number of small flowers, and they are to be seen through all the summer months, as late as September. It blooms on the heights of Mount Vesuvius, and enlivens the ashy soil of the barren spot by its cheerful tint. It has been seen too by the British traveller in northern Africa, and awakened reminiscences of the garden plots of his native land. The scent of this species, as well as that of some other kinds, is very fragrant.

Another species called the Celtic nard, or nard valerian, (*Valeriana Celtica*,) has a root far more odorous than this, and which is stronger when the plant is growing on its native Alps than in the moister soil of our garden ground. It is a native of France, Italy, and Switzerland. Its roots, which are black, are imported from the mountains of Austria into Egypt, whence it has been carried both into Africa and Asia. It is valued by the orientals as a sweet-smelling drug, and much used, especially in Egypt, for perfuming the baths in which the people of that country spend so much of their time. There seems much reason to believe that the spikenard of the ancients, as well as the fragrant root called by the modern Hindoos nard or Jatamansi, is the root of a plant of the Valerian family, and thus this plant is by some writers considered to be the spikenard of Scripture, which Solomon describes as "sending forth a pleasant smell," and which was one of

the sweet essences with which Mary anointed the dead body of our Lord and Redeemer.

The root of our common wild valerian (*Valeriana officinalis*) possesses very great medicinal power, and its odour is very strong, but disagreeable. It is cultivated in Derbyshire for medicinal purposes, but the root is preferable in its wild state to that under cultivation.

Some very pretty species of lobelia are in blossom in May; several of this genus are among the handsomest of our garden flowers. Some are lowly-looking, simple blossoms, scarcely peeping from above their leaves; others are tall and showy. A few of them are blue; but the greater number are of a bright scarlet or pink colour, while some among their number are of a full yellow. One of the most common, and also of the most striking beauty, is that called the cardinal flower, (*Lobelia cardinalis*), with its long slender leaves, and spike of blossoms, so bright in hue as to have reminded the originator of its name, of the scarlet cloth of Rome; while its shape is not altogether dissimilar to the hat of the Romish ecclesiastic. It is a native of Virginia, and was described by Parkinson, in his "Garden of Flowers," where he calls it a "brave plant." The species brought from Mexico, the fulgent lobelia, (*Lobelia fulgens*), and that brilliant flower called the splendid or shiny lobelia, (*Lobelia splendens*), with a tint outrivalling that of the brightest poppy, and its foliage marked with purple spots, is another Mexican species, and

these are the handsomest of the tribe to be found in our gardens.

Almost all the lobelias are natives of tropical climates, many of them being the wild flowers of the West Indian islands. Several of them have been brought from the Cape of Good Hope, and others grow in the warmer regions of South America. A few of their number require to be kept in the greenhouse.

A milky fluid, in greater or less quantity, exists in every individual of this species of plant, and it is of so acrid a quality that the whole tribe may be considered as of a dangerous nature. One species, (*Lobelia tupa*), a native of Chile, yields a virulent poison; and one of the most powerful medicines used in North America, is the juice of the inflated lobelia, which, unless given only in small doses, proves fatal. So deleterious is the beautiful white lobelia, (*Lobelia longiflora*), that when taken internally it causes death; while if the hand which has touched it, be unguardedly placed on the eye, it produces a violent inflammation. This flower grows wild on moist places, and by stream sides in the West Indies. Like the common reed of our native land, (*Arundo phragmitis*), its presence is, most probably, indicative of an unhealthy atmosphere, as the moist spots in the West Indies are always unfavourable to health. It adds much, however, to the beauty of the lands where it flourishes, and delights the lover of flowers by its beauty, but it also renders the pasture very dangerous to horses, which are

sometimes allured by the verdure around it, to graze upon these plants, and soon fall victims to its powerful poison. This is so often the case, that the Spanish Americans give it a name significant of its destructive effect on those animals. Our beautiful cardinal flower contains a dangerous poison. One species of lobelia is smoked by the negroes, and termed Indian tobacco.

A very common border flower now, is the spider wort, (*Tradescantia Virginica*,) which, as its name implies, is a native of North America, and very general in several parts of that country. It is there often called by the name of the "life of man;" because, like that, though beautiful it is brief, for it soon withers. Its botanic name stands as a record of John Tradescant, gardener to Charles I., who introduced several plants into England, and this among others; and whose museum of curiosities is celebrated as the earliest collection of that kind, made in our land. It is now in the Ashmolean museum of the University of Oxford.

We have several garden species of spider wort. None are found wild either in Europe or Northern Asia, but several are brought from the East Indies and Ceylon, and others from America. Some of them have rose-coloured blossoms, but they chiefly vary in all the shades of blue. They are not a very handsome tribe of flowers, and our common species is as ornamental as any, its dark blue petals and yellow anthers showing to advantage among its glossy green leaves.

During May, and the following months, the different species of viper's bugloss exhibit their handsome purple, violet-coloured, or pale blue flowers. None are more beautiful than our wild kind, (*Echium vulgare*,) but many are very ornamental. The red viper's bugloss, which, however, is not yet in flower, is a showy plant, though the stems and leaves are rough with bristly hairs. It grows on the steppes of Russia, for those vast regions approaching the Black Sea, though dreary from the absence of trees, are enlivened with a variety of flowers, of which this is among the most conspicuous. Dr. Clarke says he saw it here, and it was in other parts of Russia more common. It grows chiefly among corn. The women of the Don use it in painting their cheeks, the root, while fresh, yielding a bright vermilion tint. Gmelin recommends its transplantation and the application of its colouring properties to objects of more importance. The reddish brown substance contained in this plant, is now much used by dyers; and one species of the viper's bugloss, which has been naturalized in Brazil, is used, like our wild borage, to give coolness to liquids in which its leaves are steeped. Some species were used by the Romans for dyeing.

We have more than twenty species of bugloss in gardens. Blue is the prevailing colour of their flowers, but some which have reached us from the Cape of Good Hope, the Canary and Madeira islands, have red or white blossoms.

The geraniums, or, as they are more properly called, the pelargoniums, flower throughout the summer. We have about six hundred distinct species, but most of them are grown either in the greenhouse or in the in-doors apartment. We received the plant from the Cape of Good Hope, where their handsome flowers are in great profusion ; but new varieties are every year raised from seed in England. The myrtle, too (*Myrtus communis*) is opening its fragrant white blossoms. It has several varieties, of which one of the best is the Roman myrtle. This shrub grows wild in the south of France and Spain, in Italy and Greece, and in northern Africa ; while in many parts of Syria it is very abundant, as we might infer from the numerous allusions made to it in the sacred writings. All travellers in the east notice its luxuriance. On the hills which lie about Jerusalem, forming its natural protection, and which were to suggest to the Hebrew the remembrance that God was thus round about his saints, the white myrtle spray is seen in profusion, amid its dark green boughs. Banks of rivers, hill sides, wide plains, and valleys among mountains, are all rendered sweet by its odour. Mrs. Piozzi admired the beauty of this shrub too, near Pisa in Italy, where, she says, the mountains are mountains of marble, and the bushes on them bushes of myrtle, as large as the hawthorn. In Devonshire the myrtle thrives well in the open air : Carrington thus notices it :—

“ And there in liveliest green attired,
Smiling like hope, and cheering the glad eye,
The meek, unsheltered myrtle sweetly blooms.”

The poet adds, that several houses in Marychurch, and indeed in almost every village on the southern coast of Devon, are profusely bespread with it.

By the middle of the month, the Peruvian heliotrope (*Heliotropium Peruvianum*) shows its delicate lilac flowers, and perfumes the air with its scent—a scent so powerful, that it is scarcely to be borne in a room. It resembles that of new-made hay, or of cooked fruit. It was termed by the Latins, *verrucaria*, because its expressed juice, mingled with salt, was used to cure warts. We have other species of heliotrope, but this and the species termed European (*Heliotropium Europæum*) are the most general, and the latter is more hardy than the Peruvian. Its flowers are paler, and it is a native of southern Europe. The ancients named these plants from the sun and “to turn,” and the old writers assert, that the blossoms always follow the sun. The heliotropes require protection during winter.

Our common marigold (*Calendula officinalis*) is indeed so common, that we almost regard it as a weed in the border, and the gardener eradicates many of the young plants, which have arisen from the readily dispersed seeds of the last summer. Some of the double varieties of the common marigold are very handsome flowers, and so also are the deep orange coloured blossoms of the starry marigold (*Calen-*

dula stellata.) The common species grows wild in fields and vineyards in Italy, and pretty generally in cultivated lands throughout the countries at the south of Europe. It is called by the French, *souci du jardin*, and by the Germans *goldblume*. It is still mingled by cottagers with soup and broth, but was once much more generally used for that purpose. The idea that it tended to "comfort the heart and spirits," recommended it not only as a medicine, but induced good housewives to dry its yellow petals as a store for winter. Its properties are sudorific, and it was deemed a preventive to infection. A distilled water, a conserve, and a kind of vinegar, are still obtained from its blossoms, but its young leaves are not now eaten as they formerly were for salads.

Our old poets call this flower *golde* and *mary budde*, as well as *marigold*. This last name it received from the absurd and popular tradition that the virgin Mary wore the flower in her bosom.

Elliott alludes to the use which the cottagers make of the marigold.

"There is a flower, the housewife knows it well."

And thus describes its closing during wet weather:—

"It hoards no dew-drops, like the cups of May,
But rich as sunset, when the rain is o'er,
Spreads flaming petals from a burning core;
Which, if morri weep, their sorrowing buds upfold
To wake and brighten when bright noon is near."

This closing of the flower during the rain, as well as its habit of folding up its petals early in the afternoon, while it does not open them till after nine in the morning, was remarked not only by Linnæus, but had rendered the flower a theme of various comparisons to the older poets. Thus Herrick, alluding to the approach of evening, says:—

“No marigolds yet closed are,
No shadows yet appear;
Nor doth the early shepherd’s star
Shine like a spangle here.”

The marigolds received their name on account of their flowering during the calends of each month. The common marigold, indeed, is in bloom in every season, except when snow covers the ground, and is often among the brightest flowers of the garden in December and January.

The Cape marigolds are natives of that part of Africa after which they are named. The small Cape marigold, (*Calendula pluvialis*), which is the commonest of them, was called the rainy marigold, by Linnæus, because it is always closed, not only during rain, but under a cloudy sky. The rays of this flower are white inside, and of a dark purple on the outer surface. It blooms from June till August.

The French term the marigold *souci*, (care,) but in the reign of Henry VIII. it was called souvenir, and ladies wore wreaths of these flowers, intermixed with the pansy, whose name,

derived from the French word *pensee*, (thought,) was also indicative of remembrance.

And now in this pleasant month we see the different mallows assume their tints of deep red or purple, pink or white, and more rarely, of yellow or orange. They are beautiful flowers, and all possess more or less the mucilaginous property which renders some so useful in medicine. They are of easy culture, and some so hardy as to grow on any soil, in any situation. Several of the most handsome species are brought from the Cape of Good Hope, and the fields of southern Europe have supplied us with others.

The Egyptians, Chinese, and Syrians, are said by travellers to use some kinds of mallow as food. Thus Biddulph, an old writer quoted by Dr. Royle, says, "We saw many poor people collecting mallows and three-leaved grass, and asked them what they did with it, and they answered that it was all their food, and that they boiled it and did eat it." The leaves of the common mallow of our road-sides, (*Malva sylvestris*,) a plant which is found wild from Europe to the north of India, is still used in Hindostan for food. It is well known that at the table of the ancient Romans, some kinds of mallow were served up as vegetables. Notwithstanding, however, that mallows have been, and still are eaten, in many parts of the east, yet, for various reasons, most of those writers who are best acquainted with oriental botany, have arrived at the conclusion, that the plant

named in Scripture, and which is rendered mallow in our version, is not referable to one of the mallow tribe. The patriarch, when describing the former straits and necessities of some, who now when sorrow had fallen on him, prided themselves on their worldly prosperity, says, They "cut up mallows by the bushes."* Authors have arrived at various conclusions as to the plant intended. The Scripture word *malluach*, is thought to denote a saltish plant, and several herbs whose ashes contain soda, have been adduced by writers. The learned Bochart is of opinion that a shrubby species of orache, or atriplex, is intended; another suggests that it may be a species of fig-marigold; while a third considers it to be the Jews' mallow, (*Corchorus olitorius*), which is planted in great quantity in the neighbourhood of Aleppo for food, and of which the Jews boil the leaves to eat with their meat. It is well for us that we do not live in those times when such discussions would render us liable to ecclesiastical censure, and that we need not fear such blame as St. Augustine denounced upon a bishop of his times, who having, as he considered, wrongly translated the name of a plant mentioned by the apostle John, was declared to be "a falsifier of the Holy Scripture." Still it is most important that we rightly discern the correct rendering of the inspired word.

Many of our common garden mallows

* Job xxx. 4.

produce, in autumn, very beautiful specimens of skeleton leaves and calyxes, the green parts having withered away, and left bare the bundles of vessels which form the framework. Of the macerated fibres of some of these plants, a cloth and stuff have been made, superior even to those made of flax. This is the case especially with the ivy-leaved mallow, (*Malva mauritiana*,) whose pink flowers are sometimes found in English gardens, and were brought from the south of Europe. The curled mallow (*Malva crispa*) of Syria, and the Peruvian mallow, (*Malva Peruviana*,) both of which are cultivated in England, have been used for the same purpose. The former species was once planted in kitchen gardens for food. It affords remarkably strong fibres, which have been manufactured, not only into thread for spinning, but also into cordage for vessels. The French chemist, De Lisle, gave great attention to the mallows, and recommended that the fibres of various kinds should be used instead of rags in making paper. So interested was he in this project, that he had a volume printed on paper made wholly of the fibre of the mallow, and presented it to "L'Académie des Sciences." But the members of the academy, while they admired the skill and science of the experiment, did not consider the mallow paper as likely to be generally useful.

These plants, boiled as food, were formerly considered so wholesome, that Horace commends them for their salutary properties. They were

eaten by the Romans and Greeks with lettuce, and "were used," says Baxter, "to decorate the graves of our ancestors." "So indispensable," adds this writer, "were they deemed to each domicile of the living, that as a matter of ill omen, the poet exclaims:—

‘Alas when mallows in the garden die!’”

This planting the grave with flowers was alluded to not only by profane writers, but may also be inferred from the Scripture. Job spoke of the clods of the valley which should be sweet about him. This beautiful practice, of high antiquity, is supposed to have originated in the belief of the resurrection of the body, a doctrine, which, if not so plainly taught in the Old as in the New Testament, yet is in various passages plainly indicated in the former part of the volume. "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out her dead."* This was the promise uttered by the evangelical Isaiah; and the Rev. Samuel Burder thinks that the custom of decking the grave with flowers, was likely to have its origin from this passage; or, if practised earlier, suggests that this custom might have been present to the mind of the prophet, when, directed by the Holy Spirit, he thus taught the consoling doctrine, that in the flesh we shall see God.

* Isa. xxvi. 19.

The plants termed lavatera, are very similar to the mallows in general appearance. There are some showy annual species common in gardens, and the shrubby kinds are very ornamental. The species which is most generally cultivated is the sea-side lavatera, (*Lavatera maritima*), which is a native of Spain and the south of France, and will bear the open air of this country if slightly guarded from frost. The tree-mallow (*Lavatera arborea*) has a magnificent appearance when covered with its large purple rose-coloured flowers.

The beautiful delicate flowers of the large number of exotic heaths are, during this and the next month, unfolding their bells on their brittle stems, and the greenhouse is quite gay with their flowers. They are, with few exceptions, natives of the Cape of Good Hope, where they grow chiefly on the tops and sides of mountains, and in the crevices of rocks. This genus of flowers is quite of modern introduction into this country. Miller, in 1768, enumerates but five species. They are now very numerous. "Till the latter end of last century," says Loudon, "this genus consisted of three or four humble British shrubs, and the heath of Spain, (*Erica Mediterranea*), a slow-growing tree; but when the Cape of Good Hope fell into the hands of the British, collectors were sent out, and soon brought to light some hundreds of species. It may serve as an easily recollected date, to say, that all of them were sent home during the reign of George III. Some of the

heaths are very fragrant, and our common British heaths are, as well as the exotics, very beautiful flowers.

‘ Sometimes with bells like amethysts, and then
Paler and shaded like the maiden’s cheek
With gradual blushes ;—other while, as white
As rime that hangs upon the frozen spray.’

These bear the bleakest winds of the moorlands, and all heaths, growing as they do, when wild, on open lands, require so much air and light, that, as has been said of them, ‘ it may be taken as a proverb, that heaths like to feel the wind between every leaf.’ ”

The andromedas, some of which blossom in this month, are very similar to the heaths, and are very ornamental little plants, or low evergreen shrubs, chiefly natives of North America. Several of them grow wild in Lapland. The moss-like species, (*Andromeda hypnoides*), which has the appearance of a beautiful moss, spreads over immense tracts of ground on the higher regions of Lapland, adorning them with its red blossoms, which, with many other lovely blooms, thicken their surfaces, and are included by the Laplanders under the general name of ren-blomster, or reindeer flowers, as that animal feeds on the pasturage where they grow. The marsh species (*Andromeda polifolia*) is a native of some parts of Great Britain, and is the most common in the garden. Linnæus found it in Sweden, and names it as decorating the marshy grounds during summer, in the most agreeable manner. The flowers he describes as of a

bright red colour before expansion, and when full grown of a flesh colour. Scarcely any painter's art can, he says, so happily imitate the beauty of a fine complexion. This great botanist portrays in a very interesting manner, in his "*Flora Lapponica*," his discovery of another species, (*Andromeda tetragona*) which he found on the celebrated mountain Wallivari, in the district of Lulea. "Whilst I was walking quickly along, facing the cold wind, at midnight, if I may call it night, when the sun was shining without setting at all, still anxiously inquiring of my interpreter how near I was to a Lapland dwelling, which I had for two hours been expecting, though I knew not its precise situation, casting my eager eyes around me in all directions, I perceived as it were the shadow of this plant, but did not stop to examine it, taking it for the empetrum, (*Crow-berry*.)" But after going a few steps farther, an idea of its being something I was unacquainted with, came across my mind, and I turned back, when I should have again taken it for the empetrum, had not its greater height caused me to consider it with more attention. I know not what it is that so deceives the sight on our Alps, during night, as to render objects far less distinct than in the middle of the day, though the sun shines equally bright. The sun being near the horizon, spreads its rays in such a horizontal direction, that a hat can scarcely protect our eyes; besides, the shadows of plants are so infinitely extended, and so confounded with each other, from the

tremulous agitation caused by the blustering winds, that objects, very different in themselves, are scarcely to be distinguished from each other." Linnæus describes the flower as shaped like a lily of the valley, but with five sharper divisions. Barren and dreary as are some lands in the north of Europe, yet many beautiful flowers are found on their hills, or in their dark pine forests. Linnæus speaks with rapture of the verdure and flowers of his native land, and Olaus Rudbeck was so well satisfied with its beauty, that, instead of thinking that the garden of Eden lay amid the palm-trees, and the roses and jessamines of eastern lands, he discovered that one part of Sweden had certainly been the scene of the original Paradise.

And now the large dark purple bells of the climbing cobæa (*Cobæa scandens*) hang over the trellis of the arbour, and its foliage helps to cover the garden wall. The Mexicans, among whom this handsome plant grows wild, call it by a Spanish word, signifying the violet-bearing ivy. It received its botanic name from Bernardes Cobo, a Spanish Jesuit and naturalist of the seventeenth century. It is very remarkable for its rapid growth. Even in the open air this is very striking; while in a conservatory, it has been known to increase in length, two hundred feet in the course of a summer. This was long the only species cultivated in Great Britain; but in 1840, the seeds of two others were sent to England from Mexico, by

one of the collectors of plants for the London Horticultural Society.

And now if the border be tolerably well sheltered from the north and east winds, the splendid tiger flower (*Tigridia Pavonia*) will spread its handsome petals to the sunshine. Its colours, so like the skin of a tiger, originated its name, and this plant with its variety, (*Tigridia Pleona*), and the *Tigridia conchiflora*, are among the most magnificent flowers of this month. They are all natives of Mexico, and if the bulbs are kept dry, they may remain in the ground all the winter. Their tints are red and orange, and their flowers very abundant, but also very frail, lasting but a few hours. The edging to the garden plots, which are composed of thrift, are now very gay with the pink tufts of blossom.

The box too has now its green flowers, so often said to be poisonous to the bee which sucks their nectar, and it is a far better plant for the garden border than either thrift, Virginian stock, or any other substituted for it. In addition to its being an evergreen, it is very hardy, and when once a good edging is made, it will last for many years, needing little attention from the gardener, except the annual midsummer clipping. If we wander through the deserted gardens of some ancient castle or mansion, whether in England or almost any other part of Europe, where the flowers of the olden time waved their petals to the summer wind, we find some of their hardiest successors, as

the wall-flower, the pansy, and the columbine. And there too we see the wide box edgings, planted by hands which have long since mingled in the dust, and their borders perhaps, though they are not in such trim order, are as healthy and as verdant as they were a century ago, when the dwarf box was extolled for "bordering up a knot," and was considered "a marvellous fine ornament to a flower garden." The species used by gardeners for this purpose is the dwarf box, (*Buxus sempervirens nana*,) being merely a variety of the hardy box tree of our native woods, which too seems to have been in the gardens of England from the earliest period. It was formerly cut, especially by the Romans, into those various figures in which the gardeners of the olden times so much delighted. Few of them apparently would have agreed with Lord Bacon: "I, for my part," says he, "do not like images cut out in juniper or other garden stuffe; they be for children." Modern taste, justly preferring the graceful wildness of nature, rejects the custom of clipping trees into the shapes of birds or animals, or of cones and pyramids, yet the old yew or box, which still retains its place on the terrace of the ancient dwelling, has a charm of its own, whispering to the heart of other days, and leading the mind to dwell on England in the olden years, and to muse on the changes of things and feelings, which time is ever making, as he marches onwards to mingle into eternity.

The box grows wild, not only in England,

but almost throughout Europe. It attains a great height in Switzerland, and is abundant in France. It is found too in America, and many parts of Asia, growing wild on Mount Caucasus, and extending even to the Himalayan mountains. On the slopes of the lofty Lebanon its green stiff leaves exhibit themselves, when the sun has melted the snow from its boughs. The names of various places in our own land remind us, that it was even much more general and abundant than it now is. Boxley in Kent, Boxwell in Gloucestershire, and Boxhill in Surrey, were all named from the quantity of this plant which was formerly found in the neighbourhoods. The ancients used its wood for musical instruments, and Virgil mentions that it was often inlaid with ivory. It is still of great value to the turner and engraver on wood.

The box is often alluded to in Scripture. In the beautiful description given by the prophet Isaiah, of the glory of the latter days of the church of God—a glory yet remaining to be looked and longed for, we find the inspired writer declaring in the powerful imagery of holy writ, that “the glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious.”* The prophet also enumerates it among the myrtle and other trees which are to flourish in the waste places of the wilderness,

* Isaiah lx. 13.

in those happy days, when "the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." It is well known now to the Arabs.

May and the three following months, are the season at which the different species of the evening primrose tribe make their appearance. Only the yellow and white kinds truly deserve the familiar name, but these seem to give welcome to a cloudy day, or to the evening twilight, by opening just at the period when other flowers are closing. The common evening primrose (*Oenothera biennis*) expands its pale yellow flowers at about six o'clock in the evening. It was termed by Parkinson the primrose of Virginia, and is now often called evening star. Its roots are eaten in the same way as olives, and make wine more agreeable, thereby adding drunkenness to thirst. In many countries the plant is cultivated for these roots, which are boiled and eaten at table. The great flowered species (*Oenothera grandiflora*) is delightfully fragrant. It was introduced into England from America, by Dr. John Fothergill, and has also pale yellow blossoms.

The evening primroses are annual, biennial, or perennial plants, and there is a great variety of them in common culture. The purple flowered kinds, still called by gardeners *œnothera*, are by botanists now termed *godetia*: some of them are showy tall plants, the handsomest of which are the annuals, introduced from California. Their colours are most brilliant when grown in a poor soil.

And now the garden bower is covered not only with numerous sprays of green leaves, but odours from the sweet-scented clematis invite us to linger near it, though as yet the sun is scarcely so warm as to make the shade valuable. The commonest and most fragrant garden species, is that called the sweet-scented virgin's bower, (*Clematis flammula*,) which is very similar in the appearance of its flowers to the wild traveller's joy of our woods. This plant is remarkably acrid in its nature, and indeed some portion of acridity exists in every species of the genus. Millar says of this, that if a leaf be gathered on a hot day, and after being bruised, be put to the nostrils, it has the scent of a flame, and will produce in the person who smells it the sensation of having been scorched. The bruised leaves applied to the skin, will also raise a blister on its surface. The large-flowered species, (*Clematis florida*,) with white flowers, is commonly admired; and the more hardy *clematis azurea*, with beautiful violet blue flowers, though well fitted to bear the open air, is still often found ornamenting the conservatory. Some of the common species are of a dark dull purple; others bright blue, or white; while the evergreen virgin's bower, (*Clematis cirrhosa*,) which is a native of Spain, has green flowers, which bloom very early in the year, and a few have yellow blossoms. The common Japan corchorus, (*Kerria Japonica*,) which is still very generally called by gardeners corchorus Japonicus, is a good

flower, either for the shrubbery or garden, because it is seldom quite out of bloom ; but if the winter be mild, has here and there a flower on its branches, even to the season least favourable to vegetable beauty. Its yellow stars are now in great profusion on the weak straggling branches which reach over the sunny wall. They are composed of rays, and round, like dandelions or marigolds, but of a darker and less brilliant colour, and the long notched and deeply-veined pale green leaves, grow thinly over the weak boughs. This plant is sometimes upright, being merely fastened to a stick ; but it is much better adapted for covering the garden or house wall. It grows wild in Japan, and was named after Ker the botanical collector, who, some years since, introduced into our gardens several plants from China.

Some very pretty flowers of the *ranunculus* genus are blooming on the border. There is the common bachelor's button, (*Ranunculus acris flore pleno*,) with its double yellow flowers, which are to be seen in every garden, and which is merely a variety, rendered double by cultivation, of our wild flower, the acrid crowfoot of the meadows. There are also the pretty double blossoms of the white-flowered bachelor's button, (*Ranunculus aconitifolius*,) a long-standing ornament of the British parterre, but which in its native haunts, the high mountains of Switzerland, rears its snowy flowers, and varies the monotonous tints of ice and snow with its dark green leaves. This flower

is often called Fair Maid of France, and it has been said it was so named by our gardeners, because the French emigrants who were in this country during the revolution were very fond of the plant.

Some of the tall and showy asphodels are conspicuous flowers in May and June. This flower is commonly called king's spear or king's rod ; the French term it, *verge de Jacob*, or *baton royal*. The most ornamental species are the yellow asphodel, (*Asphodelus luteus*), which grows wild in the fields of Sicily, and now blossoms in our gardens; and the upright asphodel, (*Asphodelus albus*), also blooming now with its spike of white flowers, and which is also common in the south of Europe. St. Pierre quotes a touching inscription from an ancient tomb, around which the hand of affection had planted the favourite flowers: "Without, I am surrounded with mallow and asphodel; within, I am but a corpse:" and the corpse to the ancients, was but the name of a decayed and withered remains of what was once lovely, and not, as with us, the seed of the more glorious resurrection body which is sown in hope.

The yellow flower of the perennial adonis (*Adonis vernalis*) deserves a place in any garden. It begins to bloom as early as March, and is still bright. It is a wild flower in many parts of the continent of Europe, and especially abundant on the countries on the shores of the Mediterranean, and it is of very easy culture. The dark crimson flowers of the flos adonis, or

pheasant's eye (*Adonis autumnalis*) are equally hardy. This last species is generally known in France by the name of *goutte de sang*, and is the flower fabled by ancient poets to have sprung from the blood of Adonis, which, according to their legends, had a wonderful faculty of giving a red tinge to natural objects, and was said to have coloured the river of Lebanon, called Adonis, whose waters are red from the soil over which it flows.

Common as the humblest flower of our garden ground, is the columbine, (*Aquilegia vulgaris*,) which sometimes grows also in our native woods, and wears its hues of blue or pink, or purple or white, at this pleasant season. In the wild state it is generally blue, and is called by country people, blue starry. Our fathers fancied that the lion was fond of it, and hence its old name of *herba leonis*. The double-flowered variety is almost as general as the single flower. The prettiest of the garden species is the Alpine columbine, which also nods its head to the winds as they rush through the valleys of the high Swiss mountains. It has blue flowers tipped with yellowish green, and is, probably, but a variety of the common columbine.

A syrup is sometimes made for children of the flowers of the columbine, but it has been denounced by Linnaeus as highly dangerous; and he even asserts it to have proved fatal to children. This plant was called culverwort by old writers.

The pæony is now bursting forth into conspicuous beauty, with its red rose-like flowers. The double red variety of the common pæony (*Pæonia officinalis*) is that most frequently cultivated; but the double white and the delicate blush-coloured, are by no means rare, and one variety, the rose-scented, is sweetly fragrant. The common species grows wild in China and Siberia, as well as in various parts of Europe, and is said to be very beautiful on Mount Ida. The handsome flower called the Chinese tree-pæony, (*Pæonia moutan*,) the flowers of which expand during this month, and are, in the different varieties, of various tints, is sufficiently hardy to bear the open air of our winters. The most beautiful variety of the flower is the single poppy-flowered tree-pæony, which has large white petals with a dark purple mark at the base. From its coming out of the ground so early in the year, this plant is liable to be injured by frosts, and, therefore, requires to be planted in a sheltered part of the garden, where it is not much exposed to the morning sun. The tree-pæony is a cherished flower in China, and is said to have been cultivated in the Chinese gardens for fourteen hundred years. It is believed to have been brought originally from some of the mountains of that empire. A few years since it was so choice a flower in this country, that the price of a plant was six guineas; but it is now to be procured at a small expense.

The more slender species of pæony (*Pæonia*

edulis,) is much used by the Mongolian Tartars as food. These people boil the roots in their broth, and grind the seeds to a powder, which they mix with their tea.

And now, if we wander through green lanes white with hawthorn clusters, we find them fragrant with the odours of the honeysuckle. In the garden also,

“The creeping honeysuckle weaves
Its yellow horns and verdant leaves.”

Our common kind (*Caprifolium Peryclimenum*) is also called woodbine; and this is one of its oldest English names. Milton calls it too by our common name:—

“I sate me down to watch upon a bank
With ivy canopied, and interwoven
And flaunting honeysuckle.”

But besides that our lovely wilding flower is often cherished in the garden, we have here several other species. One of the most general is the Italian honeysuckle, (*Caprifolium Italicum*,) which throws its long branches luxuriantly over the hedges of southern Europe, and a variety of which, called by gardeners the red honeysuckle, is very beautiful.

Another very handsome and common garden species is the trumpet honeysuckle, (*Caprifolium sempervirens*,) which, though it equals, or perhaps exceeds in beauty, any other of the common kinds, yet wants their fragrance. This elegant shrub is a native of North America, and flowers very freely with us from this month until August. The sweet and

pretty plant called Chinese honeysuckle, and the gold and silver honeysuckles, are much more tender. They are natives of China, and are among the many flowers on which the Japanese bestow so much regard. The bark of most of the species is very astringent, and that of one kind is used in China for dyeing black.

The French term the honeysuckle *maire sauvage*. Its old English names were suckling and caprifoly; and with the Germans this climber is so great a favourite, that they have bestowed upon it at least a dozen familiar names. *Caprifolium* is a poetic word used for it by old botanists, because the leaf, or rather stem, climbs over the high places where the goat fears not to tread. It must be confessed that this origin is rather remote; but the word *chevre feuille*, (goat leaf,) by which the peasantry of France often call the plant, has the same origin.

And now those handsome plants the rose bay or rhododendrons, come into blossom, and deck both garden and shrubbery with their handsome flowers and hard evergreen leaves. Numerous kinds blossom during this and the coming month, but by far the greater number are varieties of the common species, (*Rhododendron Ponticum*,) which is found wild on the coasts of the Black Sea, from the range of Caucasus through Armenia and Georgia to the western parts of Persia. This species grows in moist woods, but not on high mountains, and

is said to be that which, by the nectar in its flowers, poisoned the honey of Asia Minor, though some writers ascribe this rather to a species of azalea. Another hardy species, the *Catawba rhododendron*, is very abundant in America. Some species of rose bay are described to be as abundant as the furze of our native island, growing in clumps on the grassy plain or hill, and, with their purple flowers, gladdening many a dreary and lonely place. Then we have several very pretty dwarf species, hardly more than a foot high. Two of these, the rusty-leaved rose bay, (*Rhododendron ferrugineum*,) and the hairy kind, (*Rhododendron hirsutum*,) with rose-coloured flowers, abound on the high mountains of Switzerland; and Dr. Gilly records the beauty of the rhododendrons in the interesting valleys of Piedmont. In Dauphiné they are very luxuriant and beautiful; and near the lofty summits of the magnificent Alps, they bloom in profusion, and are the highest woody plants of these regions, terminating all vegetation but that of lowliest herbs and mosses. To them the mountain herdsman is often indebted for his only fuel, and their branches crackle on the hearth of the solitary *châlet*. The lofty trees gradually diminish or dwindle near the heights of the mountains. They will grow in the valleys below, but cannot bear the snow-storm and bleak hurricanes, which leave these plants uninjured. And on the hills of some of these Alps, the lonely Piedmontese, as he gathers

them for his fire, or sits by its light, ponders on the days when his fathers were rolled over the craggy heights, to join the "noble army of martyrs," because their enlightened spirits forbade them to join in idol worship. The white hares of the mountains, whose coats were given them of the snowy colour to help them to elude the pursuer, often feed on the hard bark of these plants, when the severe weather has covered up the green things of lower growth, but the leaves and branches are thought to be poisonous to animals in general.

Though a large number of the rhododendrons are American plants, in the warm regions of Asia they are also often found in great beauty, with crimson, purple, white, or rose-coloured flowers. The Daurian species (*Rhododendron Dauricum*) is almost peculiar to the subalpine tracts of eastern Asia, and is common in the pine woods. One of the most beautiful plants in the British conservatory is the Nepaul species, (*Rhododendron arboreum*), which is sometimes twenty feet high, with large bunches of flowers, of a dark crimson or scarlet hue, and the blossoms are so full of liquid honey, that when the tree is shaken, it falls down in showers. This species has large leaves, with glossy under surface, as white as silver, and has a variety with white wax-like flowers. The name of rhododendron, taken from the Greek, signifies rose and tree; and the French term it *la rosage*.

And now, when the clouds seem literally "to

drop fatness," and the "little hills and pastures to rejoice on every side," how sweet are the odours from the flower-bed, on which the gentle pattering of the rain-drops has just been heard! Now it comes breathing from the hawthorn, or the lilac, or more powerfully from the honeysuckle, or the clustering flowers or the syringa, (*Philadelphus coronarius*.) This plant is often called mock orange, not only from its blossoms, so similar to the orange-flower which the English bride selects as the fitting ornament to the wedding attire, but because its odour, though far more powerful, resembles that of this blossom. The leaves have both the scent and flavour of the cucumber. Cowper admired its flowers among others of this month.

"Laburnum rich,
In streaming gold, syringa, ivory pure."

This plant is of easy culture and very general, but its native place of growth is unknown. It has been found in Italy, apparently wild, in some uncultured lands, but not so far from the villa, with its luxuriant garden, as to enable the botanist to pronounce it indigenous to the soil. A different species has been discovered on the Himalayan mountains, growing at the height of six or seven hundred feet, and it is thought very probable that our common syringa may exist still farther to the north-west, and that it may be one of those plants which, some centuries since, were introduced from Persia, into the gardens of Italy and the other countries of southern Europe.

We have several other species in the garden, resembling the common kind both in scent and appearance. They are chiefly North American shrubs. Those called the myrtle-leaved and sweet syringa, are both natives of the thickets of New Zealand. The young shoots of one of them were made into a tea by the sailors of Captain Cook's crew, and the infusion taken as a remedy for some of those complaints engendered by long voyages. It was, while fresh, very pleasant to the taste. The dwarf variety of the mock orange has been found in Carolina.

The garden persicaria (*Polygonum orientale*) is a common flower, with its spike of dark red blooms. From its bearing so well the smoke of cities, it is often called London persicaria. It was brought originally from the garden of the monks of Mount Ararat, where it is cultivated, not only as an ornament to the parterre, but also for its medicinal properties. One or two species of this plant are sown in china for dyeing cloth of a beautiful blue or green colour. Another species yields a yellow dye, and one of the strongest astringents of the vegetable kingdom is yielded by some plants of this genus. The roots of several kinds are eaten in Lapland and Tartary; and about the neighbourhood of Manchester the young leaves and shoots of one wild species, termed patience dock, are boiled and eaten as food.

The dark blue flowers of the common monkshood (*Aconitum napellus*) ought not to be welcomed in the garden, as persons unacquainted

with their properties frequently bind them up with the nosegay, and their scent is very deleterious. Linnæus says that the leaves are fatal to many animals, and mentions the case of their poison, recorded in the Stockholm Acts, in which a surgeon, little acquainted with the nature of plants, prescribed the use of this as a medicine to a patient. The invalid refused to take it, and the medical adviser, in order to convince his patient of the safety of the remedy, took them himself, and fell a victim to his experiment. Orfila states that the juice of the leaves occasions death in a very short time; and the root of the plant is still more powerful; while instances are on record, in which long fainting fits have been the result of merely smelling the flower. It would be well if this poisonous plant were quite banished from the garden, but gardeners should certainly be careful not to throw it with other refuse, from the ground into the public road, as the lives of children are often thus endangered. This flower was formerly called purple helmet flower. The English name of wolfsbane is given to some of the genus. They grow on the lofty pastures of the Swiss mountains, as well as on many other mountainous regions of Europe and North America. The roots, when pounded, are mixed with food, to form a bait for wolves and other animals. The yellow monkshood (*Aconitum anthora*) is a more ornamental flower than the purple kind, and a very pretty species; the hairy wolfsbane (*Aconitum barbatum*), with pale

yellow flowers, a native of Siberia, is a frequent flower of the garden border.

The aconites are regarded as a highly poisonous tribe of plants, but no other species, not even the purple monkshood, can be compared for its virulence to an Indian kind, (*Aconitum ferox*.) The root of this is the celebrated substance called *bikh*, or *bish*, and is a poison of the most deadly nature. The great yellow aconite, (*Aconitum lycoctonum*), which grows wild on the Alps, and is very common in Lapland, is said by Linnæus to be boiled and eaten as greens in that country, but it cannot be recommended. It grows in some districts of Lapland, he tells us in his "Flora Lapponica," as commonly as heath or ling. It is called by the Laplanders *giske*, and not being eaten by any kind of cattle, it thrives luxuriantly, and increases in proportion as other herbs are devoured. The wife of a clergyman of Lulea, on whose accuracy the great botanist says he could place the greatest dependence, assured him that at a post-house where she dined, she saw great quantities of this aconite collected and brought to table cooked as greens. As she knew the plant to be used as a poison to flies, she expressed some surprise that it should be eaten. The maid-servant of the house, however, laughed at her fears, and told her it was too good to be slighted.

Many very pretty species of stellaria, some of them much like our common stitchwort, adorn the garden beds at this season, and by

their profusion of starry white flowers cover the stones of the rockwork.

The rose acacia (*Robinia hispida rosea*) is now profusely flowering, and its long blushing wreaths of flowers droop from among its light sprays of leaves, rendering it a truly graceful shrub. By persons unacquainted with flowers, it is commonly called pink laburnum, as its blossoms are formed like those of that tree. Its roots require much room, so that it is an inconvenient plant for a small plot, but no large garden should be without its beauty. It is a native of Carolina.

Several other beautiful species of the plant called acacia are to be found in the garden, while the locust-tree, or false acacia, (*Robinia pseudacacia*,) is very general, and lends its shadow to the lawn, or hangs its pendent blossoms in the shrubbery. Some of the Jesuit missionaries gave to this plant its name of locust-tree, from the mistaken idea that its seeds were alluded to in Scripture, where the forerunner of the Messiah is described as eating locusts and wild honey. Its flowers are generally either white or tinged with pink and purple, but it is one of those trees which remain the longest in spring, waiting to be clothed with the verdant foliage; and this, as well as the very brittle nature of its branches, which snap and break away in the high winds of spring, is a great disadvantage to its beauty. With us it is more commonly a low than a very high tree, but in the North American woods its

branches reach the height of a hundred feet. It grows well in the neighbourhood of London, and is, with the lilac and the laburnum, among the commonest flowering trees in the gardens of the villages around the metropolis. It is one of the first trees which reached us from the American forests, and it has always been valued there for its hard and durable wood. Cattle are very fond of the young shoots, and some botanists have recommended the culture of the plant for forage. Their nutriment is owing to a saccharine principle, which exists also in the roots. With us its flowers are ornamental, and very pleasing by their fragrance, while the natives of St. Domingo make from them a distilled liquor, said to have a very agreeable flavour.

The false acacia has so long been termed acacia, that it is often confounded with the true plants of that name, which, however, are very different in appearance. These latter flowers are called in Australia by the general name of wattles. More than three hundred kinds have been introduced into England, but few species remain in culture. The greater number of these are natives of New Holland; they are nearly all evergreens, and their flowers are little yellow balls or tufts, like down. The gum arabic of commerce is derived from the *acacia vera*, a plant found in every part of Africa. In our country they nearly all require to be treated as greenhouse plants, and several are commonly planted in pots and kept in rooms.

The author of "The Picture of Australia" remarks, that the acacias in all their varieties are very elegant, and says that "they are among the few plants in the Australian forest which an European would be disposed to consider ornamental. There are more than one hundred species scattered over Australia, and of these a considerable number belong to the leafless kind. Their flowers are very beautiful, and the leafless variety is probably not found in any other part of the world."

Some pretty species of the flower called lousewort, are now opening in gardens, but they mostly require considerable care in their culture. Their leaves are cut into fine segments like those of our wild kinds; and their flowers are chiefly pink or purple, but sometimes yellow. When the white, red, and yellow colours mingle in their blossoms, they are said by Loudon to give to the flower the tints of flames of fire. They generally grow on very elevated situations, and are found more than a thousand toises above the level of the sea. Notwithstanding their acridity the mountain goats browse on them in the pastures where they are plentiful. One species of this plant will not grow in the English garden, though some pains have been taken to raise it from seeds sent from the north of Europe to the botanic garden of Cambridge. It was a flower which much interested Linnæus and other Swedish botanists. This is the flower called Charles's sceptre, (*Pedicularis sceptrum Carolinum*,) a name given to it by

Rudbeck, in 1697, in honour of Charles XII. of Sweden. This monarch having visited Tornea to observe the appearance of the solstitial sun above the horizon at midnight, was so struck with the beauty of the plant, that he carried it about in his hand. Its large golden flowers, with ruby lips, are described as rising in tiers one above another, to the height of four or five feet from the ground. It is abundant in Norway, and found in Lapland, though less luxuriant in the latter country.

By the latter end of this month one of the gayest of our garden flowers, the *escholtzia*, is expanding its large yellow or orange-coloured upright bells. It was, at its first introduction into this country, termed Californian poppy. This flower is, among several others, included by gardeners in the name of Californian annuals, and they were brought from California, on the north-west coast of America. Many of them were sent home by the indefatigable botanical collector, Douglas, who was sent out by the Horticultural Society of London, and who, in the enthusiastic pursuit of his object, lost his life by falling into a bull pit. The *escholtzia* has pale sea-green leaves, covered with a fine bloom; and the flowers are very brilliant, though destitute of fragrance. When the blossom opens, the calyx, or flower cup, instead of gradually unfolding at the summit, like the calyxes of flowers in general, separates at its base from the flower, and comes off in the form of an extinguisher. This is one of the most

hardy of the Californian annuals; for though these flowers bear the open air of our winters well, yet they are generally liable to be injured by the heat of our summers; and if by any accident their roots become exposed to the sun, they will often die in the course of a few hours.

JUNE.

“The shining pansy, trimmed with golden lace;
 The tall topped lark-heels, feathered thick with flowers;
 The woodbine, climbing o’er the door in bowers;
 The London tufts of many a mottled hue;
 The pale pink pea, and monkshood darkly blue;
 The white and purple gillyflowers, that stay
 Lingering in blossom summer half away;
 The single blood walls, of a luscious smell,
 Old-fashioned flowers which housewives love so well;
 The columbines, stone blue, or deep night brown,
 Their honey-comb like blossoms hanging down;
 Each cottage garden’s fond adopted child,
 Though heaths still claim them, where they yet grow wild;
 With marjoram knots, sweet briar, and ribbon grass,
 And lavender, the choice of every lass.”—CLARE.

If from among the many flowers which deck the June garden, we were bid to select one which should seem its peculiar ornament, the mind would involuntarily recur to the rose.

“The roses laden with the breath of June,”
 are now found both in the hedgerow of the lane, and in the lowliest and richest garden. They are ever favourite flowers, nor were they less so in the olden time.

Many hundred years have passed since the rose was first the theme of praise, and time, with his many changes, has not deprived the queen of

flowers of her pre-eminence. In the east generally, and in Persia especially, it points the moral of the sage, and inspires the song of the minstrel. Not only did Hafiz and Khusroo sing of its beauty and odour, and tell how the nightingale, "the bird of a thousand songs," utters her plaintive lament when it is gathered, but even to the present day, the Persian song would seem incomplete did it make no reference to "the garden of Gul in its bloom."

It would be vain, in so small a volume as the present, to attempt to enumerate the various roses under culture in our country. More than a hundred distinct species are known, and about two thousand varieties are said to be the objects of care to the British gardener. The rose, in some one or other of its species, is a wild flower in almost every country of the northern hemisphere of the globe; from Sweden to northern Africa; from Kamschatka to Bengal; and from Hudson's Bay to the lofty mountains of Mexico: but neither South America nor Australia can boast the rose-bush, either on mountain height, or in deepest valley. In the countries at the north of Europe, the flower, in its wild state, is single, like our wilding rose; but in Italy, Spain, and Greece, it is often double.

The two species of rose which were earliest cultivated in the British garden, appear to be the cabbage or Provence rose, and the musk rose. The former (*Rosa centifolia*,) is well known by its numerous petals, closely folded

over each other, like the leaves of a cabbage. Every cottage plot can show a bush of this sweetest of roses. It was long thought to be a native of France, but this seems doubtful. In some low woods on the eastern parts of Caucasus, it is certainly wild, and its odour perfumes the air. Dr. Clarke speaks of its fragrance and profusion in the isle of Rhodes. Upwards of seventy kinds of this rose only, are under culture, and our pretty moss roses, which blush so beautifully from under their verdant mossy veil, are varieties of the Provence rose. It is remarkable of these flowers, that, when removed to the milder atmosphere of southern Europe, they lose the mossy covering, which seems so suited, in our climate, to preserve the delicate young bud from the morning or evening chills. The cabbage rose is planted both in England and France for the sake of its petals, which are gathered, when fully blown, for making rose water, and also for the conserve of roses sold by the druggist.

The musk rose (*Rosa moschata*) is found wild in the north of Africa, and the warmer portions of Spain. It blooms in autumn, and its musky odour is most powerful in the evening. Its large bunches of flowers would weigh down the slender branches, were they not supported. The kinds of musk rose are not numerous, as there are not above a dozen sorts. This flower is thought to be the rose represented by the Persian poet as the delight of the nightingale of the east, whose songs, sweet

though they are to oriental ears, are described by English travellers as far inferior to those of our bird of night.

The French rose (*Rosa Gallica*) is also a common flower in our gardens. It has large open flat flowers, on stiff stalks. It grows wild in some parts of France, and at Geneva ; and is found in Austria and Piedmont. This rose is easily scattered by the winds, and forms a great contrast to the compact, closely-folded cabbage rose. Though wild in France, it is cultivated at the little town of Provins, and also at Fontenay aux Roses, near Paris, for the conserve made of its petals. The York and Lancaster, with its flowers variegated with red and white, is one of the varieties of the French rose. It delighted our forefathers, by blooming at a season when they deemed it an auspicious token that the civil wars should cease, and the union of the two emblematic roses, in the persons of Henry VII. and Elizabeth of York, should bring peace and happiness to the long distracted nation. It is said that the significant colours of red and white, were never, till this period, seen united in the symbolic flower of England, and great crowds went from the city to witness this natural prodigy.

The damask rose too, (*Rosa Damascena*), is common with us, and if it is not a native of the neighbourhood of Damascus, yet it was planted many centuries since in that ancient city, whose name it bears; and now, both in its red and white varieties, it still decks the gar-

dens there. It appears to be, certainly, wild in some parts of Syria. The Parisians are very fond of this flower, and it is one which is most commonly sold in their flower markets. The French, indeed, prize the roses generally, and it is an old custom in some villages of France, to present, on a certain day in every year, a rose to the cottage maiden who is thought, by her conduct, to have merited the esteem of her neighbours, and who for the following year is termed *la rosière*.

Then, too, we have the numerous varieties of the delicate China, or monthly rose, (*Rosa indica*,) which sometimes half cover the cottage wall, or grace the bush of the town garden. But the dim air of the city is not good for roses, and even these look pale and sickly if compared to the country flowers, while our yellow roses will not thrive at all near the smoke of a crowded neighbourhood. The most beautiful of this family of roses are the tea-scented, or noisette roses. The China rose grows wild about Canton, in China.

The dark velvet petals of the Bourbon rose (*Rosa Bourboniana*) render it much admired, and its fragrance is remarkably sweet. We have, too, some pretty roses, with their tiny buds and little sprays of leaves, called the *roses de Meaux*, and these are a variety of the cabbage rose. There are, besides, the white Scotch roses, and the maiden's blush roses, and the yellow double and single roses, and that lovely kind of briar rose, called by the Italians, *Rosa*

Perla, which blooms all Europe over, and which awakened feelings of deep emotion in Rich, when he saw it flowering wild in Koordistan, just as it did in the hedges whence he had gathered it near his home. But we must pause in the list of the sweetest of flowers, and leave unnoticed many others, familiar to those who, like Eve, tend the plants, as Milton describes our first mother as doing in earth's fairest garden.

“ Veiled in a cloud of fragrance, where she stood
Half spied, so thick the roses blushing round
About her glowed ; oft stooping to support
Each flower of tender stalk, whose head, though gay,
Carnation, purple, azure, or specked with gold,
Hung drooping, unsustained.”

The rose is much cultivated both in Egypt and Syria. It is in many parts of the Holy Land found wild in abundance, yet it is not so general as to render it an object of so frequent reference as the myrtle, the palm, and the olive, which are far more widely distributed in that country. There exists, however, a tradition that the name of Syria is a corruption of Suristan, the land of roses, which it was once called, from the profusion of a species of rose termed Suri, that grew in some part of the land.

Very beautiful yellow roses have been found flourishing among the ruins of Baalbec, on the hills which lie on the road from Joppa to Jerusalem, are still gay with the white or pink rose. In the desert of St. John, the gardens of the little village of that name abound with

these flowers, and the bushes are described as "forming small forests in the gardens." Burckhardt found roses in plenty among the ruins of Bozra, beyond the river Jordan.

There seems little doubt that the isle of Rhodes derived its name from *Rhodos*, the Greek word for this flower, on account of its lovely roses. Dr. Clarke speaks with delight of the fragrant atmosphere of this island, and says that, in addition to the odours of the rose, every gale is scented with citron and orange trees, and that numberless aromatic herbs exhale at the same time such profuse fragrance, that the whole atmosphere seems to be impregnated with its spicy perfume. The pagan writers said of this island, that Jupiter poured on it a golden shower.

And now, when the sun shines brightly, the eye is absolutely dazzled as it gazes on the glowing flowers of the scarlet lychnis, (*Lychnis chalconica*.) Pliny observes that this flower was in his time called *flammea*, from its colour so like to the flame of fire. He speaks of its having been brought from Asia. It appears to have been introduced hither from the Russian gardens, in the year 1596, and it is generally thought to have been sent into Europe from Asia, during the period of the crusades. The large clusters of this brilliant flower, growing on a stem often three feet high, render it a valuable addition to the garden. It blooms also for three or four months. The white and double-flowered varieties are equally handsome,

and are much cultivated in Holland, but are not so frequent in our gardens as the common scarlet kind.

Two other very beautiful species of *lychnis* are not rare. The red flowers of the Chinese *lychnis* (*Lychnis coronata*) are much valued in China and Japan ; and the splendid *lychnis* (*Lychnis fulgens*) is a native of Siberia. Both plants are well worth the care which the gardener must bestow on them during the frost.

Several smaller kinds of border flowers, as the ragged robin, the pink bachelor's button, and others, are species of *lychnis* ; and the flowers termed catchfly are very nearly allied to them. Of these we have a great number in the garden, and several grow wild in our fields. As Dr. Clarke observes, the weeds of one country are the flowers of another ; "accordingly," says he, in his account of Sweden, "we found the common poppy and the night-flowering catchfly cultivated with great care, as ornaments of the little garden of the inn where we rested."

More than seventy kinds of catchfly are in British gardens, and they are all more or less covered with a glutinous substance, which, having a sweet taste, is attractive to insects, and prevents their escape from the flower. The old writers called the plant limewoort. Lobels catchfly (*Silene armeria*) is common in most gardens, and the clammy species, *Silene viscosa*, well deserves its name.

The flowers of the two species of *fraxinella*

shoot up on tall branches, and the leaves, so like those of the young sapling of the ash tree, are very elegant. From this resemblance the flower is termed *fraxinella*, or little ash. The red species (*Dictamnus fraxinella*) has pale pink flowers, marked with purple. These plants have a number of small brownish red glands on the flower stalks, which exude a viscid juice of a resinous nature. When slightly rubbed, a pleasant odour is diffused, like that of lemon-peel; and if the plant be wounded, the fragrance is much more powerful. The resin from the glands renders the plant very clammy to the touch, and it is also inflammable. It is well known that this plant may be lighted up by the flame of a candle, but it is generally thought that the light can be seen only during darkness. On a fine summer evening in June, before even the twilight had commenced, the writer of these pages once tried the experiment. On holding the light at about half an inch from the flower, the vapour which it emitted took fire, and a beautiful blue flame ran over every part of the plant, which was about three feet high. It occupied about half a minute in its progress, and the strong balsamic odour which at that time arose from the plant, was almost overpowering, and perfumed the air of the garden for some distance. This same *fraxinella* bloomed for days and even weeks after, and its pink flowers and feathered foliage seemed as fresh as before the flame had passed over them. Both the red and the white species (*Dictamnus*

albus) are natives of Germany. The root is used in medicine, and contains a powerful opiate. They are hardy perennial plants, and will thrive in almost any situation, or on any soil.

Sixty years since, the lovely tribe of fuchsias were unknown in Great Britain, and now they hang their crimson bells in our gardens, or bloom among the flowers which deck the window-sill, smiling even in the dim atmosphere of London, but looking greener and gayer in the little garden-pot of the country cottage parlour. We have now several species, and many others will probably yet be brought from the wild places of Peru and Chili. The most interesting as well as the earliest introduced, is the scarlet fuchsia, (*Fuchsia coccinea*) which is wild in Chili, and was brought into this country and presented to the royal garden at Kew, in 1788; the remaining species of the genus not having been introduced before 1823. This fuchsia was long considered a very delicate plant, and was kept in the greenhouse, and known only to the rich; but it is found to be so hardy as to be now also the poor man's flower. The richly coloured tints of its crimson calyx, and the purple corolla within, rolled up like a ribbon, enable the scarlet fuchsia to vie in beauty even with the brighter scarlet of the splendid fuchsia (*Fuchsia fulgens*) and others recently imported; while it is far superior in beauty to the pale flesh-coloured and green varieties, now cherished by the curious. The slender fuchsia, (*Fuchsia*

gracilis,) which is a crimson and purple flower, is one of the best for the garden bed. It is a handsome slender shrub, about four feet high; its leaves, like most of the fuchsias, veined with red. This was introduced from Chili in 1823, and though usually a shrub, may be trained to a single stem. The smaller plant, the globe fuchsia, (*Fuchsia globosa*,) is also very hardy.

The fuchsias were named after Leonard Fuchs, a well-known German botanist, who published some valuable works in the sixteenth century. Their fruit is a dark berry, which when ripe is agreeable to the taste. These plants are often, when in the garden, five feet high; while in the greenhouse it is no uncommon thing to see them nine or ten feet in height.

The French honeysuckle has long been an ornament to our gardens. Parkinson, who published his "Garden of Flowers" in 1596, calls it the red satin flower, and the red-flowered fitchling; and adds, "some foolishly call it the red or French honeysuckle." The numerous species of *hedysarum* are all hardy flowers, and one which grows wild in various parts of Asia, the prickly-stemmed species, (*Hedysarum Alhagi*,) is celebrated as being the shrub which produces manna.

Many beautiful poppies are expanding their crumpled petals to the sunshine, and though their unpleasing odour renders them little suited for nosegays, yet they are very brilliant additions to the parterre. The brightest of them all is the large scarlet eastern poppy,

(*Papaver orientale*,) which was first found by Tournefort in Armenia, and soon dispersed throughout Europe, by the seeds which he sent to the Garden of Plants at Paris. It is of the most dazzling colour, and on summer evenings bright flashes of light have been seen to emanate from its fire-coloured flowers. The large bracted poppy (*Papaver bracteatum*) is no less splendid a plant, and is now very generally cultivated. It is a native of Siberia.

Some pretty delicate poppies, called carnation poppies, are in flower by the end of the month, and continue blooming till August. So frail are they, that it seems as if a shower or a rude wind would scatter them all away, yet, like the delicate cobweb with which the spider entwreaths the hedges, the light shower of summer only brightens them by its spangles, and the soft winds only ruffle them to display their beauty. Still, however, they are frail flowers, even where all are frail; and a long-continued rain will so beat them down, that they cannot rise after it. Sometimes they are like white gauze; again they glow in brightest scarlet, or deepest crimson; or their white petals are traced with a blush-coloured streak, or edged with a rim of rose colour. These are all varieties, produced by culture, from the common poppy of our cornfield.

The yellow poppy, often called Norway poppy, (*Papaver nudicaule*,) with its bright orange-coloured flowers, is very handsome, and has a sweet fragrance. It is a native of Siberia and Russia.

And now the pretty minor convolvulus (*Convolvulus tricolor*) is beginning to blow, and its large cups of deep azure will soon cover the branches. This species grows wild in southern Europe, and the blossoms have usually rays of white. Sometimes they are pure white or blue, rayed with yellow in the centre. This flower is not very similar to the climbing plant, called by gardeners the major convolvulus, (*Ipomæa purpurea*.) This, in its different varieties, of purple, white, pink, or lilac, is a beautiful American plant. In its native woods it is very luxuriant, twining so among the branches of the trees, and so mingling itself with its neighbour plants, that the Americans term one species of the flower "busy body." With us it will sometimes climb ten feet high, but in Jamaica its bells hang from the loftiest trees of the forests. All the species are ornamental. That known by the name of indigo convolvulus (*Ipomæa nil*.) is of the clearest blue tint. The Italians term it *campana azurea*, and as, unlike the others of the convolvulus tribe, it opens at night, it has also the name in Italy, of *fior di notte*.

Many species of the ipomæa are to be found in our hot-houses, and comparatively few can bear the winter in the garden.

Our wild species of convolvulus are among the most graceful plants of the hedges, and so also are other species in the hedgerows of Italy, as well as in tropical lands. A beautiful climber of this tribe, (*Quamoclit angulata*),

produces, in the Mauritius, an immense profusion of scarlet flowers, which hang about the shrubs, and render them so bright, that it has obtained the name of fire-in-the-bush. The scammony, the jalap, and other medicines are the produce of plants of the convolvulus tribe, and the sweet potato (*Convolvulus batata*) is a well-known food in tropical countries. Backhouse, when in the Mauritius, saw some of the poor people collecting the long stems of this plant, and binding them together in bundles. This formed a simple net, which, when thrown into the sea, and presently drawn ashore, was full of small fishes. The stems extended many yards along the sandy coast, and produced a very pretty convolvulus flower in great abundance.

The various kinds of nasturtium, or Indian cress, make a great show in the garden. Linnaeus named the flower from *tropæum*, a trophy, because of its helmet-like shape, and because, like too many of the trophies of man, it wore the dark red stain of blood. The round leaf, too, is like a buckler. The French term the flower *la capucine*, and the Italians, *caprivola*. Until the year 1823, two kinds of nasturtium only were known in this country. These were the large and small-flowered common species; and owing to the more showy flowers of the larger kind, the smaller has been little cultivated. Several varieties have, of late years, been raised from seed, and one of the most handsome and generally known is the dark red-

brown nasturtium, (*Tropæolum major atrosanguineum*.) A flower which, until the last few years, was deemed unfit for the open air, is now a common and beautiful climber on the wire or trellis-work of the garden. This is the canary bird flower, (*Tropæolum peregrinum*,) the little delicate fringed flowerets of which seem hovering over the green sprays, as if some pale yellow bird were alighting there beneath their chequered shadows. The nasturtium is quite a Peruvian genus. The flowers of our common species are sometimes eaten as salad, and both these and the young succulent leaves and shoots have a pungent property, which renders them very wholesome. The seeds are very commonly pickled and used instead of capers.

During this and the two following months, the plants called slipper wort, but more generally known by their botanical name of *Calceolaria*, are either flowering in the greenhouse or on the garden plot. They are half hardy plants, requiring care in the winter. The greater number have yellow blossoms, and in all, the lower lip of the flower is inflated like a bag, and the form of the whole suggests the idea of a slipper. A few of the species have purple or pink flowers, and sometimes the dark brown tint mingles with the yellow, as in the common wallflower, or they are of a dark rich brown. The different species grow as wild flowers in almost every variety of climate, owing to the various elevations on which they are found. The whole family are natives of South

America, and abound, either on the western side of the Cordilleras, or the southern parts of the continent, or in the contiguous islands. Some grow at such a height on the Andes, that their yellow flowers vary the somewhat monotonous tint of grey lichens and green mosses which are found in these elevated regions ; while some smile among the flowers of the lowliest valleys. In Chili, and on the mountains of Peru, they grow in thick profusion, so that they are said to give a peculiar character to the vegetation. In 1820, six species only were known out of the number now to be found in Britain. The species most common in gardens, and the most hardy, is the little shrubby rugose slipperwort, (*Calceolaria rugosa*.)

Several pretty kinds of veronica, with blue or white flowers, all in some degree resembling the wild speedwells of our meadows, are blowing in the gardens in the month of June, while the eye is almost unable to gaze on the bright scarlet patches of the vervain, which now cluster in glowing colour. These flowers are better known by their name of *verbena*, and though the botanist may perceive that they bear much resemblance to our wild vervain, yet the unpractised eye might not discern the resemblance. The scarlet species, (*Verbena atrosanguinea*,) is the most intense in colour, and absolutely pains the eye by its brightness ; but the most common species, the scarlet verberna, is, in some of its varieties, little less brilliant than this. Several of the species have purple

flowers ; some pale lilac, or rose-coloured, or white. These flowers are chiefly natives of North or South America.

The shrub generally called sweet-scented verbenæ, (*Aloysia citriodora*,) does not properly belong to the vervain tribe. It has panicles of small pale lilac flowers, and its highly fragrant leaves are well known. This is a native of South America, and tolerably hardy, requiring protection only when the frost is very severe.

The pea-shaped blossoms of the pink, blue, white, and yellow lupins, are among our prettiest and well-known border flowers. They are some of the oldest annuals of the British garden. The yellow kind, (*Lupinus luteus*,) is sweet scented.

The great tree lupin, (*Lupinus arboreus*,) when trained beside a wall, in a sheltered situation, will often grow six feet in height ; and the changeable lupin (*Lupinus mutabilis*) is a handsome plant, branching like a tree, and frequently five feet high. The white lupin, (*Lupinus albus*,) is much cultivated in the Levant, and called fig-bean. Our small blue lupin is a native of the south of Europe, and the common yellow species grows wild in Sicily.

Among the sweet odours with which the air of June is laden, there is perhaps scarcely any more pleasant than that of the sweet scabious, (*Scabiosa atropurpurea*.) This is the dark, rich mulberry-coloured flower, often called musk rose, and termed by the French, *fleur de veuve*, and *scabieuse des Indes*. It is an old

ornament of our gardens, so old that we know not whence it came originally, though it is generally thought to be a native flower of some part of India.

The lily, interesting to us by its historical associations, and leading us by its very name to think of the tender charge of our Saviour to the trembling disciples, "Consider the lilies,"—the lily, the tall white lily, (*Lilium candidum*), may now be seen in its beauty and purity, towering above all the other flowers; and we can say with Bernard Barton,

"Ye loftier lilies, bathed in morning dew
Of purity and innocence, renew
Each lovely thought."

Dr. Royle quotes Dr. Bowring's description of a lily, which that writer terms the lily of Palestine, and heard called *Lilia Syriaca*, and which grew in great profusion about Galilee. Yet our white lily is not likely to be the lily of the field, or the lily of the Song of Solomon, or the prophets of the older Scriptures. The white lily is not known to exist as a wild flower in Syria. None of the natives of Palestine can give any account of its growing wild there, but it is cultivated in pots, and regarded as a rare exotic. The fields of Palestine are, however, full of liliaceous plants, and Sir J. E. Smith and Dr. Kitto both consider that a species of amaryllis was intended, the golden flowers of which are common in fields of Palestine, or the Levant. Dr. Bowring plainly indicates the scarlet martagon lily, which was in

former days called the Byzantium lily, and which grows from the Adriatic to the Levant. It is commonly called Turk's cap, or turn again gentlemen, and is the *Lilium chalcedonicum* of botanists. This species of lily is in flower during this month in our gardens, and as it is in bloom at the season when our Saviour spoke his sermon on the mount, Dr. Royle concludes that this is most probably the lily of the field, of which the disciples were to learn a lesson of faith, and this invests this flower with fresh interest. The common white lily has been planted from time immemorial in the English gardens, and its mucilaginous roots boiled in milk form an old remedy for wounds.

As long since as the days of Dioscorides, the martagon lily has been known as a flower of Asia, and he mentions its having been found at Antioch, in Syria. The lily of the Old Testament has shared with the lily of the field, in having a variety of flowers assigned as the lily intended by the Hebrew name Shushan. The violet, the rose, the jasmine, and many other sweet flowers of the Holy Land, have been said to be the lily. Whatever it may have been, it was doubtless a flower much esteemed in the east.

The sweet flowers of the white and purple stocks are fragrant now. The old favourite red or carmine stock, called queen's stock, (*Mathiola incana*) is called by the French *giroflée des jardins*; by the old writers, purple gilliflower. Its rosettes are sometimes of a pale pink, or

variegated hue. The Brompton stock is a variety of this, and was probably improved by the skill of some Brompton florist. The wild flower, from which many botanists consider the garden stock to have been derived, is, indeed, a blossom very inferior in beauty to this, and few would detect, in the small purple flower of our sea-side cliffs, the parent of this beautiful ornament of the cultivated ground. The annual, or ten-week stock, is called by the French, *la violette d'été*. It is generally about two feet high, with white, red, and variegated varieties, both single and double. It grows on the cliffs of southern Europe, and, like all the species, flourishes best near the sea.

There are, besides, some cinnamon-coloured stocks, and the night-blowing stock is of a dingy brown. The bright pinkish lilac annual, called Virginian stock, which is planted round the garden bed, is not a species of this plant. It grows wild in the Mediterranean isles, and is called by the French, *giroflée de Mahon*. Some of our most beautiful stocks are reared from seeds brought from Germany and Russia, and are hence called German or Russian stocks.

Several species of campanula bloom now from the various pretty little flowers, which, with their blue and white bells, cover the rock-work to the tall pyramidal campanula, or the Canterbury bell, and throatwort. One of the kinds frequently seen in gardens, is the peach-leaved bell-flower, (*Campanula persicifolia*), often called paper flower, with blue and white spread-

ing blossoms. It grows wild in the south of Europe. The fan-shaped branches of the pyramidal campanula, (*Campanula pyramidalis*), are thickly covered with their numerous blue flowers, but more often grace the hall, or window-seat, than the garden bed. The Canterbury bell and great throatwort are very generally cultivated; the latter is a native of Europe, as well as of Japan, and some parts of Asia. It is wild in some parts of Britain; the Scottish poet speaks of it, as growing on the heath of his native land:—

“ He laid him down
Where purple heath profusely strown,
And throatwort with its azure bell,
And moss, and thyme, his cushion swell.”

The French call this species, *la cloche*. The lesser Canterbury bell, (*Campanula medium*), is a native of Germany, but was by Gerarde deemed a British flower.

Very beautiful are the blossoms of the passion flower, (*Passiflora cærulea*), which, with its twining branches, and dark-green leaves, now climbs over the front of the dwelling, or the garden arbour. It is the only species which is quite hardy. Its fruit ripens in England, and is not unwholesome. It is a wild flower of the American wood, climbing up to the highest bough of the tall forest tree, and hanging its rich festoons from one branch to another. It is called by a name similar to our familiar one, in most of the countries of Europe. The Spaniards, when they first saw its flower, regarded it as a token that the Indian should

be converted to Christianity, for they fancied that its several parts indicated the various accompaniments of the crucifixion. In the five anthers, the monks saw a resemblance to the wounds on the body of our Lord ; the triple style, they considered emblematic of the three nails by which he was fixed to the cross ; the central column, of the pillar to which he was bound ; while the rays of the flower figured to their minds the rays of light which the old painters always represented as surrounding the Saviour ; or were by some regarded as the sign of the crown of thorns, which sinful man placed around the brow of man's Redeemer. Exaggerated descriptions and figures of the marvellous passion flower were soon circulated throughout Europe ; and "there are cuts," says Sir J. E. Smith, "to be found in some old books, apparently drawn from descriptions, like the hog in armour upon our signs, to represent the rhinoceros, in which the flower is made up of the very things themselves."

The common passion flower grows very rapidly. Its shoots are said, by Loudon, to make fifteen feet in the summer. The fruit is about as large as a mogul plum, but its flavour is not agreeable. The species first cultivated in Europe, was the rose-coloured passion flower, which is a native of Virginia. All the species are very handsome flowers, and their fruits are much valued in tropical countries.

A very popular flower of this month is the common sweet pea, (*Lathyrus odoratus*,) which

equals in fragrance almost any flower in the British garden. Its butterfly-like blossoms are streaked with white and red in the kind called painted lady; but another variety has petals of a dark rich purple. Linnæus says that the pink and white sweet pea is to be found in Sicily, while the purple kind grows wild in the magnificent hedges and woods of Ceylon.

The everlasting sweet pea (*Lathyrus latifolius*,) is considered a wild flower of Great Britain, but it is a doubtful native. Its large rich blossoms, growing on stems sometimes seven or eight feet high, add much to the beauty of the shrubbery, while the still larger flowers of the perennial pea (*Lathyrus grandiflorus*,) are remarkably showy. Gerarde calls the former kind, pease everlasting, tare everlasting, and chickling.

A very pretty border annual is the Tangier pea, (*Lathyrus Tingitanus*,) which is said to be a native of Barbary. It is a tall-growing plant, with small dark purplish brown flowers. The light blue pea, now sometimes seen in gardens, is a perennial plant, remarkable, not only for the colour of its flowers, but also for its beautiful foliage. It is to be regretted that it is not more commonly cultivated.

The odour of the sweet pea, delicious as it is, is injurious to a close apartment; and an instance occurred in France, in which a person, owing to carrying a small bunch of these flowers in the mouth, on a warm summer's day, was seized with convulsions.

Another sweetly fragrant flower is the common white jessamine, (*Jasminum officinale*.) It is a very old garden flower, and Gerarde says, in 1597, that it was in common use for covering arbours. The white flowers are often used for making a fragrant oil. Cowper well describes it:

“The jasmine, throwing wide her elegant sweets,
The deep dark green of whose unvarnished leaf
Makes more conspicuous, and illumines more
The bright profusion of her scattered stars.”

A few, besides the common species, bear the open air, but many jessamines require the hot-house. The Italian yellow jessamine (*Jasminum humile*,) is a border flower, and the curled yellow jessamine, a native of Nepaul, grows well against walls. The sweet night-blowing Arabian jessamine is most fragrant during night. Its powerful fragrance renders it a favourite flower, both in the East and West Indies. Loudon remarks of this plant, that it grew in the Hampton Court garden at the close of the seventeenth century, but being lost there, it was known in Europe only in the garden of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, at Pisa, where the plant was placed under guard, that no cuttings might be stolen.

But no species of the jasmine tribe is more interesting than that called the tree of mourning, (*Nyctanthus arbor tristis*,) which, however, requires to be grown in a stove in this country. It is an Indian tree, and the Hindoo women use its flowers to decorate their hair. It is deliciously fragrant, the blossoms having the scent of fresh honey, but the brightness of day

must have faded into the dim light of evening, or the darkness of night, before they unfold, a circumstance which makes this tree the frequent allusion of the poet :—

“The timid jasmine buds that keep
Their odour to themselves all day ;
But when the sunlight dies away,
Let the delicious fragrance out
To every breeze that roams about.”

Both because of its blowing in darkness, and from its ragged and melancholy appearance when its flowers are withered, the plant received its poetic name.

Some of the monkey flowers are showy ornaments of the borders. They bloom from early spring, and several of them as late as August. They are natives of North and South America, and received their familiar name because the front of the seed is curiously marked, and resembles the face of a grinning monkey. They are nearly all hardy flowers, and two common species, the cardinal and the musk monkey flowers (*Mimulus cardinalis*, and *Mimulus moschata*,) will bloom for many successive summers without needing winter shelter.

The species called the gaping monkey flower, was the earliest introduced, and was first cultivated in this country in 1759, and numerous kinds are now in British gardens.

Our wild marjoram, so common on the chalky hills, is often planted in gardens for its fragrant flower, which is so delightful to the bees. The Oregon territory is said to have received its name from the abundance of

marjoram which grows there, and which the Spaniards term *origano*. The sweet or knotted marjoram, (*Origanum majorana*,) cultivated for seasoning dishes, is a native of Portugal. The hop marjoram (*Origanum dictamnus*,) has pink flowers, on green cones, something like those of the hops : it is a native of Candia, and though more frequently grown here in pots than on the garden bed, is quite hardy. This plant is the celebrated dittany of Crete of the ancient writers. It clothes, in profusion, the rocks of Candia. It is an excellent stomachic, and the ancient physicians considered the air of Candia especially healthful, on account of the fragrance with which it is imbued by the marjoram. Its balsamic odour is very lasting.

The tribe of larkspurs which now arise, of almost every colour except yellow, the blue, white, pink, and even scarlet larkspurs, have a gay effect on the flower bed. The double larkspur has, however, a somewhat formal appearance, and must, perhaps, yield in grace and beauty to the more simple single blossom. It is to the latter kind only that the familiar name of larkspur can be applied, for the spur becomes lost in the multiplied petals of the double flower. The common blue larkspur (*Delphinium consolida*,) grows wild almost throughout Europe, and is very frequent in some of the fields in Cambridgeshire. It is said to be an ingredient in those cosmetics used by French ladies, the frequent application of which proves so destructive to the skin. These

flowers received their Latin name from their resemblance to the imaginary dolphin, which, with griffins and other strange animals, figure in heraldic inscriptions. It was formerly called also lark's heel or lark's foot. It is probably from the sceptre-like appearance of the double flower, that the Italians call it (*Fior regio*) king's flower. It is an old inhabitant of the British garden, and is mentioned by the herbalists of queen Elizabeth's time.

Far more beautiful than the common species, are the handsome Siberian larkspurs, with tall stems, dark green leaves, and deep blue flowers; which, as Mrs. Loudon observes, seem to have a metallic lustre, the hue of which resembles that of silver that has been tarnished by fire. These, both in their single and double varieties, are now in bloom. The bee larkspur (*Delphinium intermedium*) is also a flower of great beauty, with blossoms of intense blue, and petals so curiously folded, that they present the appearance of a bee or blue-bottle fly.

Another of the Californian annuals, which, like the escholtzia, has of late years become very common in gardens, is the clarkia, with rose-coloured, white, or lilac flowers, of a very singular shape: and the different kinds of cistus are now very handsome and frequent plants. There is the frail gum cistus, (*Cistus ladaniferus*), smiling for a day, with its white petals, each ornamented with a dark crimson spot at the centre. Both this and the many-flowered gum cistus, (*Cistus ledon*), furnish the

odoriferous drug termed ladanum, so much employed in the east. This ladanum is of old repute, and is thought by many writers, to be the substance called myrrh in Scripture.

But besides the gum cistus, we have a variety of plants of this genus now in full flower. There are several shrubs covered with blossoms, while clumps of lovely flowers of the cistus kind, nod to every breath of wind which ruffles the leaf. The pretty purple-flowered species, (*Cistus purpureus*,) is quite a popular shrub from the south of Europe. This flower blooms not only during this and the next month, but, if the autumn be mild, will bloom again at that period. The lower growing cistuses, of orange, red, yellow, or other colours, are often seen on the bed. The old writers called the larger cistuses *Rosa alpina* and *Rosa montana*, while Parkinson terms them holly roses. Several of the herbaceous species are used as ornaments to the rock-work, and have evergreen leaves. The different plants of this genus were well known to our old botanists and gardeners, and Gerarde mentions that, in his day, there were thirty-eight kinds cultivated in England. They are all natives of the southern countries of Europe, where even if the winter brings some chilly days, yet the summer season is hot and dry. Their perfume exists rather in their leaves and young buds, than in the flowers. A beautiful greenhouse species, the oblong-leaved cistus, (*Cistus vaginatus*,) often grows five feet high, and has rose-coloured

flowers, sometimes as large as the monthly rose. It is wild on the rocks of Teneriffe.

The flowering raspberry (*Rubus odoratus*) is covered now with its large red flowers, and the beautiful Californian bramble (*Rubus spectabilis*) invites our attention, not only by its dark purple flowers, but by its sweet odour; while the American raspberry looks among the bushes and trees of the shrubbery like some bush spattered with snow, from the abundance of its white single rose-like flowers. This last plant is very plentiful among the bushes and trees of the forests of the new world.

That very elegant plant the single-seeded broom, (*Spartium monospermum*), with its blossoms like snow-white butterflies, seated on its long pliable branches, is now frequent in gardens. It is a native of Portugal, and is said by Osbeck to grow along the shores of Spain, like the willow tree, as far as the flying sands can reach. Few plants will thrive so well near the ocean, and its roots are most useful in binding down the sands; while the swine which frequent these shores, and the goats which browse on the surrounding cliffs, seek some relief from the scorching sun, beneath its shadow. Its foliage, too, is much relished by the latter animal, and the peasants make baskets of the long twigs, in which they carry their provisions to market for sale. It grows also in Arabia and Syria, and along the sandy coasts of Barbary.

The Spanish broom (*Spartium junceum*) is,

as its name implies, a native of the same land as the one-seeded species. Both in France and Spain it is cultivated as fodder for sheep, and its fibres are woven into a kind of cloth, and still more often made into cordage. Its handsome flowers are often double, and are of the same bright golden hue as the broom of our heath lands, which Cowper describes as

“Yellow and bright, as bullion unalloyed.”

The handsome petunias, now so general, have been but recently objects of culture in this country. When first introduced they were treated as greenhouse plants; now some are found to be quite hardy, and others, which must be raised on a hot bed, may yet flower in the open air. The petunia earliest brought to England, was the white flower, (*Petunia nyctaginiflora*,) now so common in gardens and flower-pots, and whose odour is so sweet in the air of the summer evening. This is a native of Brazil, whence it was brought in 1823. It was thought to resemble the tobacco plant, and as the “fragrant weed” of America is known in Brazil by the name of petun, so this flower gained its name. About seven years after the introduction of the white species, the equally common purple kind (*Petunia violacea*) was brought from Buenos Ayres. Since that period the British gardeners have produced from them a great variety of flowers, of white, of all shades of purple and red, and streaked with many beautiful tints. The dwarf shrubby petunia,

which will thrive only in a greenhouse, is a native of Panama.

The white and yellow prickly poppies are now blowing freely. They are fit only for a large garden bed, for their showy flowers and spreading foliage occupy much room. The yellow Mexican poppy (*Argemone Mexicana*) is a most annoying weed in the West Indies, springing up in the plantation, and attaining a luxuriance of growth which it requires constant care to check. Its fruit is something like a fig, closely beset with prickles. It abounds in a thick white juice, and contains seeds which are said to be even more powerfully narcotic than opium. The thick juice, when exposed to the air, becomes hard and yellow, and can scarcely be distinguished from gamboge.

Besides the common fox-glove, we have some other handsome species on the garden bed. The yellow fox-glove (*Digitalis ambigua*) grows wild on the hills of Switzerland, and is less general than the smaller yellow species, (*Digitalis lutea*), which is as common in the woods of France and Germany, as is our purple species with us. Then we have the iron fox-glove, (*Digitalis ferruginea*), which has short globular bells of rust colour, and is common in the countries at the south-east of Europe, and also in many parts of Asia.

The handsome Madeira fox-glove (*Digitalis sceptrum*) requires to be kept in the greenhouse during winter. It grows wild in the woods of Madeira, and when cultivated by florists in the

neighbourhood of Ghent, has been known to grow to the height of ten feet. It has large yellow bells, sometimes varying to a bright orange.

JULY.

"The cottage garden, most for use designed,
Is not of beauty destitute. The vine
Mantles the little casement, and the briar
Drops fragrant dew among the July flowers;
And pansies rayed, and freaked with mottled pinks,
Grow among balm, and rosemary, and rue;
There honeysuckles flaunt, and roses blow,
Almost uncultured—some with dark green leaves
Contrast their flowers of pure unsullied white;
Others like velvet robes of regal state,
Of richest crimson; while in thorny moss
Enshrined and cradled, the most lovely wear
The hues of youthful beauty's glowing cheek."

CHARLOTTE SMITH.

How beautiful, in this season, are the dew-drops which at morn and evening glitter on half-opened flowers, or twinkle on every blade of grass, or bestrew every leaf with their pearls! Truly the dew of heaven, even if it brought not with it the "fatness of earth," would at least delight the eye with its lustre. In our own land we see the appropriateness of the numerous comparisons which are made to the dew by the inspired writers; while in the hotter regions of the earth, its greater copiousness renders them still more striking. Some lands, like Egypt, would not be habitable but for the dews, and the driest deserts of earth are watered by the dews of heaven. "He shall be as the dew

unto Israel," said the prophet Hosea,* as he foretold how the Spirit of God should again revive the withered graces of the erring Israelites, who might well be compared to dying flowers. And when the psalmist would liken to some natural object, the sweetness, and blessedness, and cheering influence of brotherly affection, no more fitting image could have been presented to his mind by the Holy Spirit, than the dew of Hermon, and the dews which descended on the mountain of Zion.† And while we look at the dew on the flower, it would be well that we remembered, that it has been likened to the momentary feeling of goodness, which, though lovely to look upon, was frail and transient; leaving no trace of holiness upon the character, more permanent than the drop which glitters on the rosebud; and that the glow of devotion, which is soon drowned in the act and habit of worldliness, is recorded by the angel of God, as the morning cloud, or as the early dew, which passeth away.

The sweet lavender (*Lavandula spica*) is fragrant in the garden, and the cottage dame will soon gather it to lay in her drawers among her store of linen. It was named from *lavare*, to wash, because the ancients used it in baths, and the fragrant perfume which it yields in distillation, is both pleasant and useful. The flower is called, in Provence, *l'espice*, and hence the foreign oil of lavender is often termed oil of spike. The lavender is found on the deserts

* Hos. xiv. 5.

† Ps. cxxxiii. 3.

both of Asia and Africa, diffusing its most welcome odour when little expected by the traveller. It grows wild too in southern Europe. In our gardens it is too well known to need description, and it is still brought to market for the purposes to which Shenstone describes his school-mistress as applying it.

‘ And lavender, whose spikes of azure bloom,
Shall be erewhile in arid bundles bound,
To lurk amidst the labours of the loom,
And crown her kerchiefs clean, with mickle rare perfume.”

Fields of lavender are cultivated at Mitcham, and Henley-on-Thames, as well as in Kent, for the oil of commerce. An ounce of oil is said to be yielded by sixty ounces of the blossoms.

There is no summer month from May to September, in which we may not find some species of phlox decking the garden. On the prairies of America, as well as in the woods of Canada, it grows to a great height, and is very abundant; but most of the purple kinds, like many flowers of the American forest, are scentless. The large white-flowered or scented phlox (*Phlox suaveolens*) is now, however, in bloom, and has a very pleasant odour. A very pretty variety of this species has pure white flowers, with a pink star in the centre, gradually fading as it approaches the edges.

All the species of these handsome border flowers are natives of America. The fine-leaved phlox, (*Phlox setacea*), with flesh-coloured blossoms, and its snow-white variety, are among the earliest blooming species. They

are low trailing perennials, blooming in April and May. The Canadian species has pale blue flowers, and grows about a foot high; and the ovate phlox has purple flowers, and is, like the former, a spring flower.

The paniced phlox (*Phlox paniculata*) is one of the most popular species. It is a tall plant, sometimes four feet in height, with numerous clustered flowers of pale lilac. This flower is very conspicuous on the plains of America. It has been an inhabitant of the British garden for more than a hundred years, and blooms in autumn.

And now that frail and beautiful flower, which blooms but for one day, then droops and dies, the lovely day lily, may be seen opening its yellow vase to receive the dew-drops of the morn. The French term it *La belle d'une jour*, and some of their writers call it the asphodel lily. Frail as it is, it is long ornamental to the garden, for though one flower may die to-night, yet to-morrow's sun shall gild another, and the root will bloom for one or two months. Both the yellow lily, (*Hemerocallis flava*), and the copper-coloured species, (*Hemerocallis fulva*), were known in England in queen Elizabeth's time. The latter species is a native of the Levant, and is a much taller flower than the yellow kind, being sometimes four feet high. The flowers generally called Japan lilies, are natives of China and Japan. They bear the open air well, and are handsome, and most of them fragrant flowers. The blue Japan lily is

quite hardy ; the white species require some protection.

Several species of hibiscus are in bloom during this and the next month. They are very nearly allied to the mallow. The shrubby kind, called *Althæa frutex*, (*Hibiscus Syriacus*,) is very generally cultivated. A large number of species of hibiscus are known to botanists, and they are an interesting tribe of plants, not only because of the beauty of their flowers, but on account of the various uses to which they are applied in the lands where they are native. Abounding in the tropical regions, they are of great value to the people of those lands, but many of them, when transplanted to our country, need protection from its climate. In the hotter regions of the continent of Asia, in India and Ceylon, some of the most beautiful species are abundant. In Africa and South America they are also wild, and even in North America a few are found: while in the West Indies, as well as in other tropical islands, a great variety exist. Like the mallow, they are remarkable both for the mucilage which they contain, and for the fibres which their stalks yield on maceration. One species, the esculent hibiscus, called *ochro*, in the West Indies, is cultivated as an esculent vegetable, and is also used for thickening soups ; but the English residents rarely like it as diet. In France it is planted for the pods, which are gathered while green, and either eaten in soups, or pickled like capers, and they are often spiced and made into a rich dish. In another species,

the flower cups are of a deep red colour, and are so acid that they are made into tarts. This flower is in the East Indies called red sorrel; while in the West India islands, the refreshing acid is used to make a drink resembling lemonade, which is much valued in the sugar colonies. From the bark of this and other species, the people of the Malabar coast manufacture, not only coarse cordage, but fine thread; while the acid leaves serve as a salad. Several species are cultivated both for food and for the manufacture of India matting; while the seeds of several are, in Hindostan, used as a cordial medicine, and in Arabia are mingled with the coffee berry to heighten its flavour. Of one species were made the whips with which the slaves were beaten in the West Indies, ere British justice had declared that all the subjects of the British empire were a free people. The leaves of some species yield a good blue dye.

The beautiful flower called China rose hibiscus, (*Hibiscus rosa Sinensis*), is a favourite flower in the hot-houses of this country, and is very common in China, where the plant grows to a high tree. Its flowers also grace the hedges at the Cape of Good Hope. It is one of the flowers often represented in Chinese paintings, on screens, and other articles of furniture. It is chiefly from its rich petals that the thick black substance is extracted, used instead of blacking, and which, from the purposes to which it is applied, has given to this flower, in its native land, the name of shoe flower. With

this colouring matter the women also blacken their hair and eyebrows.

One of the very few plants of the hibiscus tribe which is quite hardy, is the common bladder ketmia, (*Hibiscus trionum*), or Venice mallow, sometimes called buff-coloured mallow, from its flowers, which are also striped with brown veins. It is a native of Italy and Austria, and was called by the old writers, "Good night at noon." If we are to believe Gerarde, however, still shorter than this name would imply, is its little hour of beauty, for he says, "it opens at eight in the morning, and closes again at nine." Many persons who have had it in their gardens have never seen it flower, for though it is sometimes open so late as three o'clock in the day, yet, unless the weather be clear and bright, many days will pass by, and it will remain folded up, waiting for the sunshine.

The common corn flag (*Gladiolus communis*) is too tall a flower to be overlooked, and it has a long spike of bells, of elegant shape and bright pink colour. Several varieties of this species are in cultivation, but some of the less general kinds are more brilliant in colour. The superb corn flag (*Gladiolus cardinalis*) has rich scarlet flowers, spotted with white, and the different orange-coloured species are very showy. Almost all our garden gladioli are natives of the Cape of Good Hope; but these flowers are not limited to that part of Africa, but are to be found scattered over the vast deserts of that country. Backhouse describes

one which he saw in Caffraria, which had dense spikes of flowers, of a dingy hue, covered with minute purple spots; and other travellers have named them as blooming in all shades of yellow, pink, and brown colours, among the brilliant blossoms which enliven these arid lands. They have bulbous roots and long sword-shaped leaves; the latter suggested their botanic name, from *gladius*, a sword.

The common bladder senna (*Colutea arborescens*) is a pretty shrub, now covered with its clusters of butterfly-shaped yellow flowers; nor is it less ornamental in autumn, when its large inflated pods stand thickly among its foliage. It is remarkable as growing and flowering on Mount Vesuvius, even on spots quite near to the crater. It is wild in many parts of France, and its leaves afford a grateful food to cattle. Both seeds and leaves are used medicinally. The smaller species, the oriental bladder senna, (*Colutea cruenta*), is a much prettier shrub than this. Its flowers are of a reddish colour, and it is a native of the Levant.

The blue commelina, (*Commelina cælestis*), as well as the other species of this flower, is a native of South America. And very brilliant is the tint of its blossoms, which are now open. Far less showy are the flowers of the basil, but the air is quite perfumed with the odours of this plant. The blossoms are shaped like those of the lavender, but are either purple or white. The common sweet basil, (*Ocimum basilicum*), notwithstanding that its native soil

is Persia or India, is a hardy annual. In Persia the basil is planted on graves, and is a favourite addition to the bouquet. Both in India and on the continent of Europe it is much used as a culinary aromatic plant. The Hindoos attach a superstitious veneration to some of the species; they use them in religious ceremonies; and one kind, known in Calcutta by the name of *toolsy*, is much cultivated there. The ancient Greeks held the strange superstition that this plant flourished best when planted amid railings and angry words; and it seems strange, that as both Greeks and Romans so highly prized its fragrance, a malignant custom should have been connected with it. In former days many persons in our own land refused to plant it in their gardens, from the absurd notion that smelling it infected the brain, and that it produced scorpions. This idea was so prevalent, that sir Thomas Browne thought it worthy of his notice, and attempted to refute it in his "Inquiry into Vulgar Errors," where he affirms that the Africans deemed it a remedy against the bite of a scorpion, and that if any one has eaten basil he is safe from danger, should a scorpion inflict a wound. And thus this learned writer displaces one error to advance another.

Although the stately hollyock (*Althæa rosea*) is too large a flower for the smaller garden, yet on a large space of ground it well repays its culture. It is said to be a native of China, and is undoubtedly of eastern origin. The French term it *rose d'outre mer*, and it was long known

in this country as the outlandish rose. It was well known to the ancients. Pliny describes it as a rose growing on stalks, like the mallow. This, as well as some other species of that plant, has been cultivated for its fibres, from which thread has been manufactured. Phillips states that, in the year 1821, about two hundred and eighty acres of land were planted with the common hollyock, with the view of using the fibres of the plant instead of those of hemp or flax, and converting them into thread. It was discovered, in the progress of the manufacture, that the plant yields a fine blue colour, little inferior to indigo.

The common hollyock is a biennial plant. It sometimes attains the height of ten feet. Its varieties are of many hues, from the bright clear white, to the rich dark purple which gardeners call black. It is a native, not only of the east, but of Siberia, and the southern countries of Europe ; and the single yellow hollyock has been found wild in Africa.

That common, but handsome flower, the French willow, (*Epilobium angustifolium*,) often termed rose hay willow, is now very conspicuous. It is, by its height, well fitted for the shrubbery, but it is often seen, too, on the garden bed. So far from requiring any culture, it is a most troublesome flower in the garden ; for the long pods which contain the seeds produce a great abundance, and each seed is crowned with a tuft of down, which facilitates its dispersion, so that the gardener finds considerable trouble in eradicating the numerous

young shoots. This flower is occasionally found wild in Great Britain, and is a native of most parts of Europe, from Lapland to Italy. In no country, however, is it so luxuriant as in Lapland. Dr. Clarke says, that it there attains a magnificence, compared with which it seems in other lands but a stunted plant ; and adds, that among the many gay flowers which decked the river sides of that land, its gaudy blossoms shone pre-eminently. Its high clusters of purple lilac flowers acquire a prodigious size among the rocks and stones. This traveller observes, that it may be considered as the garland of Lapland ; often attaining the greatest magnitude, when every other sign of vegetation diminishes. The Lapps call it *almoke*, and among the inhabitants of Dalecarlia, the flower is familiarly termed heaven's grass.

The French name this flower *laurier de St. Antoine*. Its young shoots may be eaten, and the pith, bitter as it is in its fresh state, becomes, when dried, very sweet, and, by a certain process, is made into ale ; while, by a farther process, the Kamschatcales derive vinegar from it. It is also used as fodder for cattle, and the goat is glad to come to the cliffs by the river, to eat its foliage. The great quantity of down which exists in the pods, has been mixed with fur or cotton, and made into stockings and other articles of wearing apparel. The little red Alpine willow herb is a pretty ornament for rock-work, and several species are among our wild flowers.

A very pretty Californian annual is now blooming. This is the shady nemophila, (*Nemophila phacelioides*.) Its flower is of brightest blue, and its name, taken from the Greek words, to love, and shade, indicate that this genus is to be found chiefly where trees and bushes cast their shadow.

Among the many odours of this season, few are more pleasant than that of the pinks, which flowers are now in perfection. It was, perhaps, for its fragrance, still more than for its beauty, that the pink was called the divine flower. The carnation (*Dianthus caryophyllus*) is thought to have had its origin in the wild clove pink of our land, and which also grows on the Alps of Switzerland. At the commencement of the eighteenth century, four hundred varieties of the carnation were enumerated, and their numbers are now increased. They are all sweet and beautiful flowers, and their leaves, which gardeners term grass, are, from their evergreen nature, ornamental to the bed in winter or early spring. The plant called tree pink (*Dianthus arboreus*) is merely a kind of carnation, with a woody stem, and its pink flowers are found in the isles of Greece.

Many writers have considered the pink (*Dianthus plumarius*) as merely a variety of the carnation; and as it does not appear to be found in a wild state, it is probably derived, if not from the carnation, yet from some of the smaller pinks, which grow wild in various countries. Our native pinks are few, and chiefly inconspi-

cuous flowers, but a great variety bloom in the lands of southern Europe, and grow on the mountains of Germany and Switzerland at a great height. The kind of pink called laced pinks, is that cultivated so much by florists, and their flowers should be about two inches and a half in diameter, with white petals, rose-coloured edges, and a dark purple ring in the centre. It does not appear that this tribe of flowers was known to the ancients, for no poet of Greece or Rome has sung of their perfume or beauty ; and they are not mentioned by Pliny, or any other naturalist of those distant ages.

The sweet-william (*Dianthus barbatus*) is a clustered species of pink, and is called by the French, nosegay of pinks. It grows wild in Germany, and also on the hills of Normandy, but with much smaller flowers than it has in our gardens.

The China pink, (*Dianthus Chinensis*), which seems neither exactly like a pink nor a sweet-william, is of a beautiful red colour, each blossom growing on a single stalk. It appears to have been introduced from China, into our gardens, about the middle of the last century.

The numerous species of groundsel have among them a few handsome flowers. One common and very ornamental species is now in bloom. The purple ragwort, or jacobæa, (*Senecio elegans*), has sometimes double flowers, of rich velvet surface, and beautiful dark hue. It is a native of the Cape of Good Hope. One

species, the hawkweed-leaved groundsel (*Senecio hieracifolius*) is a most troublesome weed in newly-cleared grounds of North America, and is called by the Canadians fireweed, because it springs up from the ashes of the clearing flame. Its white flowers bloom in August. A yellow, creeping-rooted kind, which grows wild in Britain, (*Senecio Sarracenicus*,) was used by the Saracens in the cure of wounds.

Some species of groundsel are found wild in every part of the world, but a great variety exists in South Africa. Backhouse describes the groundsel of the sandy deserts as of purple or lilac, resembling those of our gardens. Humboldt found this tribe very numerous in the upper regions of the Andes, just below the limits of eternal snows, "where the sun has very little power, where hurricanes are incessant, and not a tree is able to rear its head."

The greater number of those handsome annual border flowers, the fair-eye, or coreopsis, are now common. The dyer's coreopsis (*Calliopsis bicolor*) is one of the most popular kinds. Its yellow flowers grow wild on the borders of the Missouri, and have been used in dyeing. The whorl-leaved coreopsis of North America, (*Calliopsis verticillata*,) which is a tall plant, often cultivated in our shrubberies, is in bloom now, and for several months. The colour contained in its flowers is used for dyeing cloth red.

Some of the species of sage which are now so generally cultivated for their blossoms, are

blooming during this and the following months. The well-known sage (*Salvia officinalis*) of the kitchen garden, would give little idea of the beauty of many of the exotic kinds of salvia which thrive with us ; yet there is so much similarity in all, not only in the shape of the blossom, but in the wrinkled foliage and aromatic odour, that the sage plants are plainly distinguished. Our common sage was formerly in great repute as a medicine. Eating a quantity of its leaves was supposed to avert sickness, and hence the old Latin proverb, "How can a man die that has sage in his garden?" The Chinese have a high opinion of the virtues of the common sage, and prefer it to the tea, whose stimulating properties are deemed so refreshing in our land. Indeed, the Dutch appear at one time to have been engaged in a very profitable commerce, for it is said that they carried a cargo of the sage leaf to China, and returned to their own country freighted with four times the quantity of tea. But though the Chinese thus valued the sage, yet they had a high opinion of their tea also, as a remedy. So early as the ninth century, travellers in China mention their custom of drinking an infusion of the leaves of a plant, which they termed *sali*, that was reputed as a medicine for all diseases, and which is proved to be the tea, which, from having been at first a luxury, seems now to have become a necessary article in the diet of an Englishman. With us the sage is much used as a condiment

for dishes. It grows wild in the south of Europe.

There are between one and two hundred distinct species of sage in gardens, and the tints of their blue, purple, scarlet, white, or yellow flowers, are very bright. The apple-bearing sage, (*Salvia pomifera*,) with large azure blossoms, is among the handsomest kinds. This plant is subject to the puncture of an insect, which produces excrescences as large as oak-galls, and which contain an acid aromatic juice. These apples are much valued as food in the isle of Crete, where they are sold in the markets. Our common garden sage is also, in that island, covered with these substances, and they are called sage-apples. In all the Mediterranean isles, different kinds of sage are abundant. Dr. Clarke observes, too, that they flourish on the south coast of Crimea, and says that there the sage of our kitchen garden is the principal spontaneous production of the rocks and mountains. He observed, that here, as in the isles of the Archipelago, the sage plants attained to a very considerable size, being tall enough to be ranked as shrubs.

Several of our cultivated species are shrubs, as is the case in the bright scarlet kind, termed the shining-leaved salvia, (*Salvia formosa*,) which is a native of Peru. Some lovely species, as the tooth-leaved sage, have white flowers. One of the most ornamental is the fulgid sage, (*Salvia splendens*,) which is a native of Mexico. The gold-flowered sage, a native of

the Cape of Good Hope, has pale silvery leaves, and deep yellow flowers, and blossoms from spring to autumn.

The plants which we term clary, are also species of sage, and are cultivated not so much for their flowers, as for the deep red, purple, or violet colour, which some of their young shoots exhibit. The common clary, (*Salvia sclarea*,) a native of Italy, has a most powerful odour, and was once much used medicinally. Our common wild clary (*Salvia verbenaca*) has a still stronger fragrance, and is found in almost every land of the globe. Its seeds contain a mucilaginous substance, which, if it be placed under the eyelid, envelopes any grain of dust which may have settled on the eye, and brings it away. It was this which gave the plants the name of clary or clear-eye. A wine is made of the common clary, which, when boiled with sugar, is said to have the flavour of Frontignac, and is remarkable for its narcotic qualities. This plant grows wild in Syria, Italy, and Bithynia, and is one of the exotic herbs of longest standing in the British garden. Another species of salvia is used in Holland, to flavour Rhenish wines.

And now the awning is spread to keep the sun from injuring the full-blown ranunculus, (*Ranunculus Asiaticus*,) which glitters in every colour of the rainbow, and is streaked with each hue of nature. This is the month in which florists usually display them in a mass, and for this purpose they are planted late in autumn; but when planted in January, they

will bloom at an earlier season. Indeed, they may be made to flower at almost any part of the year. On the culture of this florists' flower much has been written. At the end of the last century, more than eight hundred varieties had been enumerated, and it would now be difficult to ascertain their number. These lovely flowers grow wild on the mountains of Persia, and are significant emblems in the eastern bouquet. They are very general in the Levant, and in many parts of Palestine; and, like our common buttercups, which are species of *ranunculus*, they have very acrimonious properties. The Turks cultivated them in their gardens for many centuries before they were known in the other parts of Europe. Gerarde speaks of them as common in his time, and says, they flourish here, as well as in their own country.

The love of the marvellous, and the consequent watchfulness for it, have so declined in modern days, that the marvel of Peru (*Mirabilis jalapa*,) now no longer excites any degree of wonder. Gerarde thought it ought to be called the wonder of the world, and its changing hues, varying from white to red, purple, or yellow, as well as the circumstance of its opening at night, excited the astonishment of the older botanists. This flower is not a native of Peru only, but is also a common wild flower in China and India, and grows both in the West Indies and in Africa. Some of the old writers called it the Mexican jasmine, and the specific name was given to it from the

idea that this plant yielded the true jalap of commerce. The forked marvel of Peru is a smaller flower, of a reddish purple colour. It is called, in the West Indies, the four o'clock flower, as it opens at that time of the day. The white sweet-scented marvel of Peru expands only at night; and its odour of musk is so powerful, as to be disagreeable to many persons.

A large number of plants are blooming in the garden, of the genus *Centaurea*, with flowers many of them something like thistles. Two very common flowers, long included in this genus, but now removed into another, are the purple and yellow sultans. The purple sultan (*Amberboa moschata*) grows wild in corn-fields in the Levant, and is also a native of Persia. Parkinson, who wrote his work in 1629, thus mentions it: "As a kind of corn-flowers, I must needs adjoyne another stranger of much beauty, and but lately obtained from Constantinople; where, because it is said the great Turk, as we call him, saw it abroad, liked it, and wore it himself, all his vassals have had it in great regard, and it hath been obtained from them, by some that have sent it from these parts." He adds, that it was also called the blackamoor's flower. The tint of this sultan is purple, white, or flesh-colour, and its odour of musk very strong. The French term it *fleur du grand seigneur*.

The common yellow sultan (*Amberboa suaveolens*) has a much more pleasant fragrance, but differs little, except in colour, from the

purple kind, and is wild in the corn-fields of the same countries.

The tall flower, termed yucca, or Adam's needle, (*Yucca gloriosa*,) with its pyramids of large pendent bells, is now very conspicuous. Its blossoms are greenish-white, and its ever-green leaves, like those of the aloe, are long and pointed. The natives of St. Domingo call the plant *yuca*. It grows both in these islands and on the continent of America. Its pointed leaves have been compared to a needle; but, as Dr. Lindley observes, it better deserves the name of needle and thread plant, for "by soaking in water, the fibres of the leaves may be separated from the pulp, without being torn from the hard sharp point, so that when properly prepared, the leaves do really become needles, ready provided with a skein of thread." Two other hardy species of yucca are commonly cultivated in England. They flourish well by the sea-side, and are very suitable ornaments to the grounds of marine dwellings.

The dark rich velvet zinnias unfold their stars. They are annuals. The red zinnia (*Zinnia multiflora*,) is a native of North America, and its purple-red blossoms seem as if a shower of gold had alighted on its petals. The whorl-flowered zinnia, (*Zinnia verticillata*,) and the elegant zinnia, (*Zinnia elegans*,) are both wild flowers of Mexico. The former species has double red blossoms, and the latter has red flowers, which change as they decay, to a deep violet hue. The zinnias have very

thick stems. They were named by Linnæus, in honour of John Godfrey Zinn, a German botanist.

Somewhat similar in colour to these flowers, are the African and French marigolds; but the latter have been much longer in the British garden. The very unpleasant odour of these plants, is hardly compensated by the velvet suit of yellow and brown in which they are attired; but one of the African marigolds (*Tagetes lucida*) has a pleasant fragrance. Parkinson remarks of the flower, that it "smells like a honeycomb, and has not that poysonful scent of the other kinds."

The French marigold (*Tagetes patula*) is called in France *petit œillet d'Inde*, but it is not, as its name would import, a native either of France or India. Both this and the African marigold are cultivated in the gardens of India, China, and Japan. This species has great brilliance of colours, varying from a bright yellow to a deep orange tint.

The Italians term these plants *garofano Messicano*, and also death flower, *fior di morto*. All the species are American, and the Italian names have both probably a reference to the tradition which exists respecting them. It is said that these flowers sprung up on grounds on which had been spilled the blood of the unfortunate Mexicans who fell victims to the love of gold, and the thirst of power, which induced the Spaniards to destroy these unoffending people. And truly has the Scripture said, that "the love of money is the root of all

evil." The African marigolds appear to have been introduced into this country about the year 1573. They were named from a Greek word, principality, on account of their splendid and regal appearance. Some of the double varieties of the French marigold are very handsome.

The variegated balsams, with their clear succulent stems, and spikes of delicately-tinted flowers, bloom in July. The balsam grows wild in India, China, Japan, and the West Indies, and is used in Cochin China by the ladies, who make of its flowers an infusion, with which to cleanse and perfume the hair. The great attention paid by the females of the east to personal decoration, renders this a valued flower, for they tinge their nails with the deep pink dye which its petals, when mixed with alum-water, will furnish. The flowers are white, red, or purple, or variegated and striped with all these hues. Several of the species throw their seeds, with considerable force, from the seed-vessels.

Some very pretty grasses are admitted to the parterre, and are now in flower. There is the large quaking grass, or, as gardeners term it, the hop grass, (*Briza maxima*,) so like the pretty tothering grass of our fields, that every one may know it. If the hop-like cones are sucked, they are found to contain a sweet juice, resembling that of the liquorice root. There is also the tall reed-grass, looking almost like a bamboo, which the Italians call garden

cane, (*Arundo donax*), and which they use for fences, for supporting the graceful festoons of the vine, or for fishing-rods. In Spain and Portugal it forms an important part of commerce, being used in those countries in looms, and for numerous purposes. The striped variety of this plant is well known by the name of ribbon-grass, and in Scotland is called gardeners' garters. The roots of several species of arundo are used in dyeing. And now as the soft wind blows, and the beautiful plumes of the feather-grass (*Stipa pinnata*) wave up and down, we do not wonder that the Russian poet celebrates it in his songs, and finds comparisons to it in the movements of feminine gracefulness. It grows freely on almost all the steppes of Russia, and waves to the winds which play around some alpine rocks of our native land. Ladies of former days wore it as an ornament to the hair, and it is now often used to adorn the mantel-piece, but, unless gathered just before the seeds ripen, it will fall into shreds; nor can its beauty be long preserved under any circumstances. A species of stipa is one of the grasses so much used by the Spaniards, under the general name of *esparto*.

The large handsome flowers and magnificent foliage of the sweet-scented or Virginian tobacco plant, (*Nicotian tabacum*), may be seen in many gardens. The tubular flowers are of a purplish rose-colour. It grows wild in the West Indies, as well as in some countries of America.

AUGUST.

" A drowsy indolence now hangs on all;
 Each creature seeks some place of rest, some shelter
 From the oppressive heat: silence prevails,
 Nor low, nor bark, nor chirp of bird is heard;
 In shady nooks the sheep and kine convene:
 Within the narrow shadow of the cot
 The sleepy dog lies stretched upon his side,
 Nor heeds the footsteps of the passer by,
 Or at the sound but raises half an eyelid,
 Then gives a feeble growl and sleeps again:
 No sound is heard but humming of the bee,
 For she alone retires not from her labour,
 Nor leaves a meadow flower unsought for gain."

JOANNA BAILLIE.

If there is less variety in the flowers which during this month expand afresh, yet there is as great an amount of brilliant colouring in the garden, as in the more prolific season of mid-summer; for dahlias, sun-flowers, and amaranths, wear hues more deep and glowing than the rose or lily of June. A magnificent flower is the dahlia, and it is pleasant to think that its culture affords an innocent recreation to many a florist of humble life. The autumnal flower-shows in which it is exhibited, give evidence how wonderfully the skill of the florist has improved the stately flower, which, when it grows in its native land, is neither so bright nor so beautifully formed, as the blossom to be seen in the humblest garden. The dahlia grows wild on the sandy plain, as well as on the mountains of Mexico; and was introduced into Europe by the great naturalist Baron Humboldt. He, in the year 1789, sent it to Professor Cavanilles, of the Botanic Garden of Madrid, who in that year presented it to the

Marchioness of Bute. This lady kept it in the greenhouse, and from this species (*Dahlia variabilis*) nearly all the numerous varieties have been obtained. In the field of Mexico it is a single flower, not remarkable for the brightness of its purple or lilac tint, and growing to the height of about eight feet. Few flowers vary more in colour when under cultivation, and we have now the dark purple and richest puce, with every shade of scarlet, crimson, and pink; while the dahlia of pure white, or delicate yellow, grows beside others streaked with the variegated hues of the tulip or ranunculus: though that great desire of florists has not yet been fulfilled in any approach towards a blue dahlia, nor is it often of unmingled white. More than two hundred varieties have been raised from the seeds of the common purple flower.

In 1802, two other species of dahlia were added to that already in the garden. They were both procured from Mexican lands. The barren, rugged dahlia, (*Dahlia frustranea*,) and the scarlet flower, (*Dahlia coccinea*,) both, however, produce smaller blossoms and fewer varieties; and the variable dahlia, which was first brought into our land, is still the favourite flower of the florist. A species of recent introduction, (*Dahlia excelsa*,) called the tree dahlia, is said to attain, in Mexico, the height of thirty feet, with a stem proportionably thick.

The Mexicans boil and eat the tuberous roots of the dahlia; but even could we spare

them for such a purpose, they are not palatable to European taste.

A handsome American plant is now equally conspicuous on the parterre. This is the tall and brilliant sunflower, (*Helianthus annuus*), which is a native flower of Peru and Mexico, as well as of Canada, and several other parts of North America. In the Canadian woods it grows to a great height, and the blossom is as large as a dinner plate. On the prairies, Catlin observes of it, that it often taunted them by striking against their faces, as they made their weary way through the tall grass. Dr. E. D. Clarke also saw it in abundance on the steppes of Tahtary, growing very tall and large. The ancient Peruvians, when found on their native plains by the Spaniards, were worshippers of the great natural light of day. They had their temple of the sun, and the maidens who officiated in the service of their god, were crowned with wreaths of sunflowers, made of purest gold, while they wore on their breasts similar emblems of the idol of their worship. The holier faith professed by their conquerors, as yet was not accompanied by that spirit of love, and truth, and justice, which we who read our Bibles know to be its sure fruit, but which in times of papal darkness was understood but by a few, and the sight of these golden ornaments, while they aroused their hatred of idolatry, appealed but too surely to their covetousness. And when, at a later season, the Spaniards saw the fields bright with the same golden hue, and

observed these magnificent flowers on hill and valley, by wood and river side, Peru must have seemed to them a land of glowing gold.

The seeds of the sunflower are recommended as an excellent food for cattle, and the settler in the woods of Canada gathers and stores them for a winter supply for his poultry. In the United States the flower is cultivated to a great extent for the oil procured from its seeds, which is as good as Florence oil. The whole plant, and especially the golden blossom, exudes a thin, clear, resinous substance, the strong odour of which resembles that of Venice turpentine. The sunflower is not found wild in any part of southern Europe, but in Asia and Africa a few species are to be met with. Several double varieties are cultivated in the garden.

The numerous clusters of the garden hydrangea (*Hydrangea hortensia*) bloom in the autumnal season. This flower is often called the Chinese guelder rose, as it is much cultivated in the gardens of China, as well as in those of Japan, but its native place of growth is unknown. The flowers are usually of a pale rose colour, but are sometimes blue. Great pains have been taken by cultivators to discover under what conditions of the soil the blue colour may be insured. The yellow loam of Hampstead heath will produce it, as does also the peat of the bogs near Edinburgh, and the soil in the neighbourhoods of Berlin and of St. Petersburg. Water impregnated with alum, steel filings, carbonate

of soda, or common salt, has been known to give the blue to the hydrangea ; but on no one of these can any certain dependence be placed. Inglis says that this tinge is very general in the flowers of this plant in the isle of Jersey. The hydrangea is there seen growing as a shrub at every cottage door, or in one of those gardens which are always planted by the houses of that island. It is often twelve feet in circumference and five in height, and is tall and branching enough to form a shade, under which one might find shelter from the sun of August. "These beautiful shrubs," says Inglis, "here almost as trees, form the avenues in the neighbourhood ; and at the season in which they are covered with their large blue flowers, the effect is indeed most captivating. I have nowhere seen the hydrangea so luxuriant in growth as in the channel islands, and the flowers are most commonly blue, not pink, as we are accustomed to see them in England."

As the different flowers, called everlasting flowers, bloom during this and the two following months, they may here be noticed together. The yellow flower, called love everlasting, has been long known to botanists as the eastern everlasting, (*Gnaphalium orientale*), but it is now very generally included in the genus *helichrysum*. It grows wild in abundance on some of the mountains of Asia, and the pilgrims who visit the flowery Carmel, and the lofty Lebanon, gather it from their sunny slopes, as memorials of their pilgrimage. Another kind

which has been introduced into England, the blood everlasting, (*Gnaphalium sanguineum*), is generally gathered by those who, when treading the Mount of Olives, wish to carry thence some record of a visit to so sacred a spot ; and the durable nature of the chaffy petals of the lowly floweret, render it a very suitable one. Few flowers, indeed, preserve their beauty like this, when brought from a warmer climate; and to these blossoms the description of the poet is applicable—

“ They look as infants do, who smile when dead.”

A species of cudweed grows in great profusion on the steppes of Tahtary, and the Cossacks drink an infusion of its yellow flowers as a cure for the jaundice.

The brilliant everlasting flowers, which, as they have no English name, we must call by their botanic one of *helichrysum*, are so named from two Greek words signifying sun and gold. They are chiefly natives of Africa, especially of the southern parts of that continent. The handsomest, as well as the hardiest kind, is the waved-leaved species, (*Helichrysum bracteatum*), which grows wild in New Holland. This has yellow flowers. Some species are white, and one beautiful kind has its flowers tipped with pink, and is brought from the colony of the Swan River. Backhouse writes thus of one species, which he saw at Cape colony: “ In the course of the day I walked to the top of a hill, on which the *helichrysum proliferum*, a beautiful crimson everlasting,

was growing in profusion among low rocks and ferruginous sandstone. The plants were about the size of gooseberry-bushes, covered with flowers, and as fine as I ever saw them, when highly cultivated, in an English greenhouse. This is not generally the case with wild shrubs; they are broken by storms and cattle, and overgrown one by another, in the situations where they grow naturally; but when cultivated, they are carefully protected from injury."

Another genus of flowers called purple everlasting, and whose blossoms retain their beauty for many years, are the xeranthemums. They are popular annuals, and their Greek name signifies dry-flower. There are but few species, and all are natives of southern Europe. They are purple, red, or white, and one is yellow. Some of the species are small shrubs. The flowers of all these kinds of everlasting, when mingled together, form a beautiful and permanent bouquet for the winter season.

A flower which is equally well entitled to the name of everlasting, is the globe amaranth, (*Gomphrena globosa*.) Milton has immortalized this lovely flower in his *Paradise Lost*, where he describes it as encircling the brows of angels—

"To the ground,
In solemn adoration, down they cast
Their crowns, inwove with amaranth and gold,
Immortal amaranth, a flower which once
In Paradise fast by the Tree of Life
Began to bloom."

Nor is the mention of the amaranthine wreath

peculiar to our great poet. Homer had long before told how, at the burial of Achilles, the Thessalians wore it in honour of the warrior, and it appears to have been often worn at funerals, in the early ages of Greece. In Sumatra, where this flower grows wild, its purple globes, which seem as if sprinkled with gold, are worn as garlands around the head ; and both in Portugal and in Paris, these flowers are mingled with the wreaths made to deck the shrine of the saint, or the tomb of the dead. In the former country, churches are adorned with this flower, and the French term it *violette immortelle*. The plant, though separated by modern botanists from the amaranth genus, is very nearly allied to it.

A large number of amaranths are cultivated in this country, one of the most common of which, is the flower called love-lies-bleeding, (*Amaranthus caudatus*,) the flower gentle of the old writers. It was known to Gerarde by this name, and also by that of florimor. He says of it, "It has exceeded any skill of mine to describe the excellency and beauty of this rare flower." It has variegated leaves. It grows wild in Persia, China, and India.

The prince's feather, (*Amaranthus hypochondriacus*,) with its long velvet plume-like flowers, is equally common, and blooms also at this season ; and the three-coloured amaranth, which blooms from June to September, and is called by the French *fleur de jalousie*, is a very pretty species. It is a native of the East Indies,

and was known to the old English gardener by the name of *passevelours*. The leaves of some species are eaten, and the foliage of several is boiled as spinach, in the East Indies.

The coxcomb amaranths are very curious flowers, and notwithstanding a certain formality of appearance, are much prized for the deep purple or red of their silky or velvet blossoms. The crested amaranth (*Celosia cristata*) is a native of many parts of Asia, and is said by Thunberg to be cultivated to such perfection in Japan, as that the heads of flowers are often a foot long, and of equal breadth. There are many varieties of this amaranth, and the scarlet species are extremely beautiful. Several are natives of China.

The strawberry blite, or Indian spinach, is now red with its juicy fruits, by which it is known to us, rather than by its less conspicuous greenish flowers, which bloom in April. These fruits are something similar to our wood strawberries, but are neither so handsome nor so palatable. Their juice flows very freely, often staining with its deep red the hand which touches them, and the juice was formerly used by cooks in colouring puddings. The berry-headed species (*Blitum capitatum*) is the most ornamental; it is a native plant of southern Europe. There are three species in our gardens; they are commonly called strawberry spinach. Their name, blitum, taken from the Greek, and signifying fit only to be thrown away, would suggest the thought that they were

not ornamental, yet their berries render them so in a good degree, nor is their handsome spinach-like foliage unworthy of admiration. The crimson berries are covered, like those of the strawberry, with small seeds.

The strawberry blite is one of the greatest ornaments of the summer woods of Canada, and it grows in great profusion in those forests, where

“ The hickory, the sumach, and the red maple,
The fringe-tree, and the acacia triple-thorned,
Temper the ardour of the burning sun,
And on the locust's violet-breathing flowers
Cast the pale yellow of its meekened fire.”

The author of the “Backwoods of Canada” mentions having gathered branches a foot in length, thickly studded with its crimson berries, and regrets that the beautiful fruit should, by its insipidity, be unfit for eating: she adds, that on the banks of creeks and in rich ground it grows luxuriantly, “sending up twenty or thirty branches, drooping with the weight of their magnificent burden. As the middle and superior stems ripen and decay, the lateral ones come on, presenting a succession of fruit, from July till the frosts nip them off, in September.”

The Canadian Indians are said to be fond of these unpalatable berries, and they use the juice as a dye, and make it into ink. The writer before quoted, states, however, that this ink is liable to fade unless mixed with alum. She mentions the circumstance of a lady, who sent a letter from Canada, crossed with the red

ink made from the juice of this plant, without having first taken the precaution of fixing it with alum. The epistle from the far country reached its destination, but the ink had faded, and the writing become illegible; and the friend who had anxiously longed for the intelligence which it was to convey, had to wait some months before a more permanent liquid should record the good news, which the Scripture has described as in its effects like cold water to a thirsty soul.

The tribe of *rudbeckia* are annuals of great beauty, but their large size excludes them from the smaller gardens. This is exclusively a North American genus. They have all starry blossoms, and are yellow or purple. The purple *rudbeckia*, (*Rudbeckia purpurea*), which was known to our gardeners as early as 1699, and is very hardy, is a singular looking flower. Phillips observes of it, that its petals being pendulous, and curling inwards, have the appearance of so many pieces of narrow ribbon, notched at the end. The colour of this flower is of a purplish crimson. One or two of the species are fragrant. This genus was named in honour of Rudbeck, an enthusiastic botanist of Sweden, who, having just completed a work entitled "The Elysian Fields," was so distressed at witnessing the destruction by fire of this cherished production of his mind, that he died of grief, in 1702. During his last days, however, his son laboured diligently to re-write this work, and it was published in the course

of the year of his death, and that which preceded it.

If we were to go now into the fields, we should see the milfoil, or yarrow, scattered in plenty over their grassy surface, and the garden yarrows are blooming too on the border. They are a vigorous family, with yellow, red, or white flowers, the ornaments of the pasture lands of southern Europe. One of the prettiest kinds, which is also one of the most general, is the woolly milfoil, (*Achillea tomentosa*,) which has pale yellow flowers, and blooms from May to October. The red-flowered kind (*Achillea tanacetifolia*,) is also a pretty flower, and grows on the Swiss mountains; while the double variety of our wild milfoil is no less ornamental. The musk-scented yarrow is the *genipi* of the Swiss, who use the plant medicinally; while the herdsmen of the hills value it much for their cattle. The Laplanders and Finns mix some species of yarrow with their tobacco, for smoking. The golden yarrow of our gardens, which is not more than six inches high, and has an abundance of rich yellow clusters, is a beautiful plant for the edging of a border.

The sweet-scented golden rod, (*Solidago odora*,) is another of the few fragrant flowers which we find in the garden at this season. The odour is diffused from the leaves, and is compared to the mingled scent of sassafras and anise. It is often planted in the garden or shrubberies, and is sometimes called Aaron's rod.

SEPTEMBER.

“ Whither be the violets gone,
Those that bloomed of late so gay,
And in fragrant garlands strown,
Decked the blooming flower-queen's way?
Youth, alas, the spring must fly,
Yonder violets withered lie.

Whither are the roses fled,
We so gaily singing bound,
When the brow of shepherd maid,
And the herdsman's hat was crowned?
Maiden, summer days must fly,
Yonder roses withered lie.”

JACOBI.

ALMOST all the flowers of the last month bloom also during September, yet now, as their number will seem gradually to diminish, we are pleased to mark the bright foliage of the ever-greens, and to look on the pale greenish flowers which hang among the branches of the arbutus or strawberry tree. The common arbutus is now generally enumerated among British plants, but several others, as well as this species, are cultivated in this country. The oriental arbutus (*Arbutus andrachne*) is scarcely less general than the common kind, though requiring more care. It blooms some months earlier than that, and may be distinguished by the greater beauty of its foliage and flowers, its broader leaves, which are also less notched at the edges, and by its red bark which peels off, and leaves much of the trunk smooth and brown.

This arbutus is a native of the Levant. In the isle of Cyprus it attains an enormous size.

In a great part of this island, no other tree is large enough to cast any extent of shadow, and the inhabitants sit in parties beneath its boughs. Both this and our common arbutus are abundant in many parts of Palestine, and growing to a much larger size, they are very picturesque objects, the oriental species flowering in spring, and our common kind in autumn. The arbutus, in the lovely valleys, is often found with a stem six feet in circumference, and, with the oak and the fir, is said to be one of the trees which principally give a wooded character to the hills of Gilead and Bashan; So too, in southern Judea, these shrubs form an important part of the woodland scenery, mingling with the Scotch fir and the oak; and although the olive still is, as it ever was, the characteristic tree of Palestine, yet the arbutus is so general as to attract the attention of all travellers who observe the scenery of the Holy Land. Its fruits, too, are more beautiful and conspicuous than its flowers, and they may be safely eaten. A very showy species from the Canary isles is kept in the greenhouse, and we have also a handsome Peruvian kind.

And now clumps of the China aster, (*Callistephus*,) with their large stars of white, lilac, pink, purple, or variegated blossoms, are among the most attractive of the autumnal flowers. This is one of the flowers which the Chinese prize and cultivate so highly, and in China it is much larger than in our gardens. Several kinds of starry flowers, under the general name

of aster, among which are this genus, as well as that commonly called chrysanthemum, receive especial care in China. By this people, their large water-lily, the *nelumbium*, is esteemed as the very chief of flowers, and though it grows wild in their streams, yet it is brought into their enclosed grounds. Next to this, in their estimation, come the fragrant olive (*Olea fragrans*,) and the innumerable varieties of star-like blossoms which glitter in golden beauty, or are shaded off to most delicate tints; and which, arranged on terraces, one above another, offer every variety of hue.

The Michaelmas daisy, or Christmas daisy, arrayed in its sober tints, is a very useful flower now, when flowers seem gradually going, and brown leaves rustle on the spots where zephyrs lately played among soft green branches. The common Michaelmas daisy, (*Aster Tradescantia*,) and the Alpine species, (*Aster Alpinus*,) are among the handsomest kinds. Like most of the genus, these flowers are natives of the fields of Virginia, and the common kind was named in honour of the celebrated naturalist John Tradescant, who introduced it in England among several other plants, the seeds of which he brought from America.

Far more beautiful in colour are the brilliant bell-shaped blossoms of the gentianella, or large flowered dwarf gentian, (*Gentiana acaulis*,) which are now blooming for the second time in the year, and seem to be as vigorous at the autumnal season, as in the early months. This

beautiful flower grows in profusion on the Welsh mountains, and has been found on some of the highest of the Swiss Alps. Its large flowers are of the colour called mazarine blue, and they are sometimes used as an edging for the border. It is less difficult to cultivate than most of the gentians. These flowers, inhabiting naturally the high mountain regions, require conditions of atmosphere not to be found in the lowland garden. A pure and rarefied air blows over the lofty height where they grow wild, and the bright light of the summer season on the mountain can never be rivalled on the plain. The effect of a bright light on colour, has been well ascertained by dyers, who cannot produce the most brilliant tints under a cloudy sky ; while it is equally evident in its effects on the plants which exist under its influence. Our winters too are often unfavourable to mountain flowers ; for though the cold of elevated regions is far more severe, yet the snow remains much longer on the earth, and thus the plants are not subjected to the alternate frosts and thaws to which they are exposed in the winter and early spring of our country.

We have in our fields a pretty gentian, (*Gentiana campestris*,) which, however, attains a greater degree of perfection in some other countries, and in the month of October covers the tops of the hills of Norway. In Sweden too it is abundant at the same season, and it is described as one of the most beautiful flowers of the alpine pastures of that land, its blossoms

clustering among the short grass, and studding all the surface of the mountain. "The whole plant," says Dr. Clarke, "was scarcely an inch in height, and seemed to consist of little else than the petals of its flowers, which, in size and luxuriance, were out of all proportion to its diminutive leaves and branches."

"The taller yellow gentian (*Gentiana lutea*) is also a species which can be well cultivated in the British garden. This flower, besides being handsome, is valued for the bitter medicine afforded by its root. It grows wild on the mountains of all the central parts of Europe, and is gathered for the French and English markets. The root also contains an abundance of sugar, and a spirit is distilled from it called *enziangeist*, or bitter snaps, which the peasants of the Swiss Alps drink, under the idea that it will preserve them from the injurious effects of the fogs and damps sometimes prevalent on these regions. Wherever this bitter plant abounds, the pastures are untouched by cattle, and large tracts of land which the herdsman would value, remain unused, because of its bitterness. It is this principle, however, which renders it so useful in medicine, and it is one of the medicines of greatest antiquity. In the West Indies, where the European constitution becomes languid by the heat of the climate, it is customary to take a preparation of gentian before meals, in order to assist the appetite.

Some other gentians may also be seen commonly in the garden. The small Alpine

species, (*Gentiana nivalis*,) which delighted Linnæus when on the Pyrenees by its blue blossoms, is tolerably hardy ; and the kind termed Calathian violet, succeeds well. These have both blue flowers. The name of Gentius, a king of Illyria, is preserved to memory by these flowers, as this monarch is said, by Pliny, to have discovered their tonic virtues.

The different kinds of autumnal crocus open as the season advances. The purple species, which is so general in this and the next months, is the saffron crocus, (*Crocus sativus*,) the stigmas of whose flowers form the saffron of the druggist. This flower has long been cultivated in many parts of Asia, as well as in Greece. In Persia and Cashmere, large plantations of this crocus are general, and some of the lands of Smyrna are said to be quite purple with it, while its flowers are in great abundance in the gardens of Aleppo. In Europe it seems to grow wild on the south of the Tyrol, and on the Alps of Savoy ; but its occasional appearance in our British meadows does not prove that it is indigenous there. Dr. Clarke found the plains of Tahtary covered with its gay flowers, and its bulbs were deeply seated in the black vegetable mould which forms the soil of these wide plains. Notwithstanding that the saffron crocus is cultivated in England, yet we receive our chief supply of the drug from France and Spain. In the latter country the cultivator of this flower is much annoyed by a fungus found upon it, and which the French call *mort de*

safran. Saffron was formerly much employed as a medicine and condiment, and is still so used in the east. The ancients esteemed it as a perfume ; and so high an opinion of its cheering and stimulating powers was once prevalent, that when a man was merry, he was said to have slept on a bag of saffron.

And now when the meadow saffron is, by its purple crocus-like flowers, turning our wild pasture lands into a gay carpet, we find too in the garden several cultivated species of this plant. Like the wild colchicum, the leaves of all wait for the following spring to make their appearance. Our garden colchicums are of many colours, and several varieties have double blossoms. None, except the wild colchicum, is of much value to the druggist, but great quantities of the roots, seeds, and blossoms of this are annually collected for medicinal purposes. Though very similar to the saffron crocus, so much so, that an inexperienced observer would mistake the one for the other, yet one simple and obvious distinction exists, in the fact, that the crocus has only three stamens and one central column or pistil, whereas the colchicum has six stamens and three pistils. This distinction might seem of little worth, yet it is truly valuable; since though the crocus is a plant which is perfectly innoxious, yet all the species of the colchicum possess an acrimonious quality, which in the meadow saffron of our fields is highly poisonous. Our garden species are some of them from the isles of Greece, and some

from Hungary and Russia. They were termed colchicum from the ancient Colchis, interesting to the classic reader, by its association, in the legends of ancient Greece, with the expedition of the Argonauts.

OCTOBER.

“The little bird, yet to salute the morn,
Upon the naked branches sets her foot,
The leaves now lying on the mossy root;
And there a silly chirruping doth keep,
As though she fain would sing, yet fain would weep;
Praising fair summer, that so soon is gone,
Or mourning winter, too fast coming on.”

MICHAEL DRAYTON.

EVERY gust which blows thins the scanty foliage yet left on the boughs, and the leaf is broken as it waveth to and fro, while each bright sunbeam seems to leave its red or yellow tinge on the leaf ere it quits it. The humble flowers which yet remain of the summer are pale and wan: even the taller dahlias are drooping; and were it not for the Michaelmas daisies and the Chinese chrysanthemums, and the verdure of the evergreens, the scene would be already desolate. Of these, however, it may even now be said, “They are green before the sun, and their branch shooteth forth in the garden:”* yet still we can see that our Saxon forefathers had appropriately designated this month, when they termed it winter fyllith—winter beginning.

But though no straggling flower needs to be

* Job viii. 16.

tied to its support, and no luxuriant growth has to be restrained by the hand of the cultivator, still this month too brings its work to the gardener. It is now that the autumnal transplanting of the shrubs takes place, and most practical gardeners seem to prefer this season to the spring for these removals. Suckers of the rose, the lilac, and other trees are to be taken, and a pleasure is felt in the culture of these plants,

“Which, save himself who trains them, none can feel.”

Much has now to be done too in the greenhouse:

“The surplus branch
Must fly before the knife; the withered leaf
Must be detached, and where it strews the floor
Swept with a woman’s neatness, breathing else
Contagion, and disseminating death.”

The interest which has in all periods of time been taken in the culture of plants, would of itself prove that the care of a garden is calculated to afford to many persons a source of delightful enjoyment. This is confirmed, too, when we remember that when God planned the earthly happiness of man, he placed him in a garden, in which were made to grow, not only “every tree that was good for food,” but such also as were “pleasant to the sight;” while the employment of our first parents in their state of innocence, was to “dress the garden and to keep it.”

The odour of the chrysanthemum is now very sweet, and it seems as expressive of the autumn, as the violet is of spring. Several

star-shaped flowers are by botanists placed under the general name of chrysanthemum, but our winter flower is the Chinese chrysanthemum, (*Chrysanthemum Sinense*) which, however, most modern botanists term pyrethrum. The most aromatic of all the species is the old-fashioned small red kind, which was the first cultivated in the gardens of this country; but this has little beauty compared with those of modern introduction, the flowers of which are very large, and have an odour like honey. The chrysanthemum is brought to great perfection in the Chinese garden; and figures there in every variety of garden pot, from the elegant vase, to the uncouth little round pot which we often see figured on their paintings; while the poet of China sings the praise of the chrysanthemum, as the minstrel of Persia tells the delights of the rose. The Japanese value the flower equally with the Chinese, and it is a favourite ornament of their saloons and gardens.

In the year 1795, the chrysanthemum was brought into the English garden, though it appears to have been cultivated here at an earlier period, but to have been lost. Receiving it from a warm region, our cultivators naturally thought that it would require great care in our colder climate, and it was long deemed unfit for the open air. Now every garden sends forth its sweet fragrance, at a time when it is almost the only fragrant flower of the border. The Chinese are said to cultivate more than fifty varieties of this plant, for each of which they

have a distinct name. In England many varieties are enumerated, and the number is increasing; and the beautiful quilled species which have of late years been introduced, will, probably, originate many more. The varieties indeed are perpetually changing; but Mrs. Loudon has observed, that they may all be classed in one or other of the following divisions: the ranunculus flowered; the incurved; the China aster flowered; the marigold flowered, the clustered, the tasselled, and the quilled. The best annual chrysanthemum is considered to be the chrysanthemum tricolor, which has yellow, white, and purple flowers; and equally hardy, and worthy a place in every flower garden, is the yellow chrysanthemum coronarium.

The Greeks gave the general name of chrysanthemum to several flowers of a similar form to this. It signifies gold flower, and was given from the bright colours of some species known to them.

Some species of feverfew, with flowers something like those of the camomile, bloom late in the year. The roots are used in medicine, and several of the kinds which have double blossoms are very ornamental. The flowers of the double variety of our common feverfew (*Pyrethrum parthenium*) look like little tufts of snow on its branches, but the odour is very unpleasant. One or two yellow-flowered kinds are handsome, as the milfoil-leaved species, which is a native of Caucasus; and some very pretty ones grow wild on the Peak of Teneriffe.

The cotoneasters are now assuming their red, or in some species, their purple berries. Their pretty white or red blossoms come out in early spring, but they are so small as to be little conspicuous, and the plant is far better known to us by the beads of coral with which it is studded during autumn and winter. The common kind (*Cotoneaster vulgaris*) often grows in gardens. It is a frequent shrub in southern Europe, and was introduced into this land in 1656. The other species are of comparatively recent introduction, and are natives of India. The plant was named from the cottony down which invests the young shoots and fruits. Some of the Nepal species are handsome, especially the taper pointed and the downy kinds. They are all hardy, and may be grafted on the quince or hawthorn.

Although the sweet mignonette (*Reseda odorata*) is truly a summer flower, yet it may, by a little management, and without the aid of the greenhouse, be made to flower almost throughout the year. Indeed, the hardy plants which are self-sown, are often numerous at this season. If the mignonette be wanted for a winter flower it should be sown in July, and kept well watered. It is very fragrant, and the Parisians and the inhabitants of our own metropolis alike value its odours, for it may be seen in both cities where

“ The sashes ranged
Of orange, myrtle, or the fragrant weed,
The Frenchman’s darling,”

send forth sweet odours on the air.

It is rather remarkable that we in England should call this flower so exclusively by its French name, from *mignonne*, little darling, when the Frenchman terms it *la resede d'Egypte*. The Spaniards, who are also fond of this flower, retain for it the endearing name of *minoneta*. This plant is much cultivated by the gardeners who supply the London markets, on account of its use for balconies; and its delicate scent is rarely disliked. It is generally thought to be a native of Egypt, and to have been first sown in the gardens of the south of Europe, whence it was sent into England about the year 1752, when it was cultivated by Miller in the Botanic Garden of Chelsea, and soon became a popular flower. The *mignonette* has been found apparently wild in some parts of Barbary, but it seems probable that it may have sprung up from seeds borne by winds or other means from the Moorish gardens, where many flowers are cultivated. The plant was termed, by the ancients, *reseda*, from *resedo*, to calm or appease; because it was in former times applied to allay the irritation accompanying wounds. Pliny tells that it was regarded as a charm, and gives an account of a superstitious form of words which preceded its use as a remedy.

The tree *mignonette* (*Reseda odorata frutescens*) was long considered as a species distinct from the fragrant herb, but it is merely a variety produced by the cultivator. This perennial shrub retains its sweet odour during winter, and

is obtained in the following manner. A vigorous plant of the annual *mignonette* is, during April, transplanted into a garden pot, and the young blossoms nipped off while in the bud. A stick is then placed in the pot, to which the plant may be attached ; and in the autumn all the lower shoots and leaves are stripped off, so as to give the plant the appearance of a miniature tree. It must then be removed to a warmer room. As winter advances the stem gradually becomes more woody ; and if the plant be allowed during summer a free access of air, it may thus be grown for several years in a room.

The attempt to render this plant a perennial, renders it necessary to prune away the seed-vessels as soon as they appear, as, if allowed to perfect its seeds, the tree *mignonette* would soon lose its vigour.

We have a number of species of the *mignonette* in the garden, but the common fragrant one is by far the most valuable. Most kinds grow wild in the south of Europe, and a few of them in the sands of Africa.

And now some sweet violets bloom again at the close of the year. This is often the case with the common purple March violet, and its double variety ; while the sweetly-scented Neapolitan violets and the Russian violets are at this season in full perfection. The Parisians contrive to obtain at almost all seasons the flowers of the common violet, which they so much prize. This is done by checking the

early blossoms that hide among the leaves in spring, and thus

“The violets, whose looks are like the sky,”
may be found in their flower markets, from early spring till winter has long begun his reign.

Old prejudice and superstitions induced our forefathers to undervalue this second fragrance of the violet. Wellsford, in his “Scents of Nature,” records that, “when roses and violets flourish in autumn, it is an evil sign of an ensuing plague the year following, or of some pestiferous disease ;” and so the blooming of a flower, which might have told of God’s love, was enough to trouble a man’s mind, and to presage ills which should have no existence but in his own imaginings.

NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER.

The withered leaves bestrew the garden path,
Made miry with the fall of fleeting showers ;
The sun emits a feeble ray, which hath
No power to warm or cheer the gloomy hours,
The robin only sings among the bowers,
Now bare and desolate, his simple lay :
All other birds are mute and sad, or they
Have flitted with the spring and summer flowers ;
Yet are the borders not entirely bare,
For many tinted asters still remain,
And bright chrysanthemums nod here and there
Their heads, to chilling blast and pelting rain.

H. G. ADAMS.

A CHANGE has come rapidly over the garden during the last few weeks, and few and faint are the tints which variegate the winter landscape.

He "who giveth rain upon the earth, and sendeth waters upon the fields," calls too for "the whirlwind out of the south, and cold out of the north."* Even the crystal brooks are now, in the descriptive words of the patriarch, "blackish by reason of the ice, wherein the snow lies hid;" and of a great portion of the day it may be said, "Now men see not the bright light by reason of darkness." The progress of the early year seems to breathe a call to energy and exertion; but its gradual decline seems to bid us "stand still and consider the wonderful works of God."

The Chinese or monthly rose (*Rosa indica*) yet puts forth its delicate and odorous blooms, which, if they have not quite so bright a tint or so powerful a perfume as in midsummer, are not less valued now, when gayer roses have left us. Like all other species of rose it requires a pure air, and will not thrive well in the crowded city. More than two hundred varieties of the China rose are known, and Villaresi, the royal gardener at Monza, is said by Loudon, to have raised upwards of fifty varieties of this species, which have never reached Britain. The China rose flourishes much better in France and at the south of Europe than in our country, and some of the varieties alluded to are described as quite black, others much resembling a ranunculus, and many of them as highly odorous. The pretty noisette, or tea-scented roses, varieties of the China rose, are sold at

* Job xxxvii. 9; Job vi. 16.

Paris in small bouquets, wrapped round with coloured papers. The monthly rose, as its name might import, is in bloom almost throughout the year, but has most beauty and vigour in the months of June and July. The stem and leaves are of a light green, and the flowers semi-double, and its colour varies from a blush colour to a deep red. In order to secure a good number of autumnal blossoms, the young flower buds should be cut from the tree in June.

The winter cherry (*Physalis alkekengi*) is now in full lustre, as its bright red, glossy fruit shines through the thin, fibrous, bladder-like calyx which encircles it. The white flowers of this plant open in July, and are ornamental, but it is for the sake of the beautiful fruits that the plant is valued. When the calyx is macerated, either by exposure to the rains of the winter season, or by steeping in water, it forms a very pretty addition to the everlasting flowers, and the evergreens which are placed in the winter vase. The fruit, which is slightly acid, is wholesome, and was esteemed by the ancients for some valuable medicinal properties which they considered it to possess. In Spain, Switzerland, and Germany, it is a common fruit of the dessert. In all these countries it grows wild, as it does also in China. The fruits of the eatable winter cherry, (*Physalis Peruviana*), a native of South America, are sometimes cultivated in this country for tarts.

The winter cherry was known by its Arabic name of *Alkekengi* to the botanists of queen Elizabeth's time. Gerarde says of it, "The red winter cherrie groweth upon old broken walls, about the borders of fieldes and in moist shadowie places, and in most gardens, where some conserve it for the beautie of the berries, and others for the great and worthy vertues thereof." Modern physicians think little of the properties ascribed to these plants.

Sometimes the bright stars of the anemones enliven the borders, even in December, while the laurustinus, and the Christmas rose, are the common flowers of every parterre. The former plant (*Viburnum tinus*) is a shrub of much beauty, and justly prized for its winter blossoms, which are of a purplish red colour, when half expanded, and which grow in large white clusters among its evergreen leaves. Dark blue berries succeed the flower. The shrub was introduced into the English garden in the year 1596, and though so hardy as to bloom amid winter winds and nipping frosts, is a native of the soft climates of the south of Europe, and an ornament to the hills and plains of northern Africa. It was known to the ancients by the name of *Tinus*, and, because its leaves, like those of the laurel, are evergreen, it was called *laurustinus*; while the name of *viburnum*, from *viere*, to tie, was applied to it on account of the flexible branches of many species, which are used for binding boughs together. Our wild, wayfaring tree, which

country people of Kent call the cottoner, is used for making baskets, and is also a species of viburnum. Several varieties of the laurustinus are known in our gardens. The hairy kind has its leaves hairy underneath, and on the margin, and is found in the neighbourhood of Spain and Portugal, and near Nice ; and the shining laurustinus has larger and more glossy foliage, and is not in flower until spring. It is abundant about Algiers, and blooms freely in the classic soil of Mount Atlas. When the leaves of these plants decay, they should be carefully cleared from the shrub, if it is growing near a house, as in addition to the injurious effect of an atmosphere tainted by a decayed vegetation, this withered foliage diffuses a remarkably fetid odour.

And now, at Christmas time, we may gather from our gardens a flower as beautiful as any which the summer produces. The Christmas rose, (*Helleborus niger*,) in form like a large white rose, standing among its dark evergreen leaves, is the hardiest of all flowers. It is wild on high mountains, and its abundant growth in the isle of Anticyra, as well as its repute in the cure of mental disorder, originated the proverb of the ancients, "Send the lunatic to Anticyra." This species, as well as another, the eastern hellebore, (*Helleborus orientalis*,) is still in use among medical practitioners, but the powerful effects of these plants render this a remedy requiring great caution. The latter hellebore grows abundantly in the Levant, and

is very similar to our common winter flower, except that its blossoms are purple.

Many superstitions were connected by the ancients with the Christmas rose. In their dread of the presence and power of demons, they had a number of charms, which they considered effectual in guarding them from ill, and when the winter covered the ground with the white flowers of the hellebore, they strewed them over their floors, that thus they might hallow their dwellings; and so they introduced a real evil into their homes, instead of an imaginary one, for the perfume of this plant is highly injurious to health. When the ancients brought in these roses, and scattered them thus, they sung aloud hymns of praise to their pagan deities—the gods whom their own hands had made, while they entreated their aid, to keep them from the devices of evil men. The root of this plant was formerly powdered and taken as snuff, and the ancient Gauls are said to have been accustomed to dip their arrows in the herb. All the species of hellebore contain an energetic medicinal principle.

The moist climate of our island agrees well with the evergreens. Enabled, as they are, by a peculiar structure, to withstand a moderate proportion of heat and drought, yet the hot and dry summers of the greater part of the continent of Europe are unfavourable to them. The thick tough leaves of the evergreen shrubs and trees, are covered with a harder cuticle or skin than those of most other plants; and are also

characterised by having fewer evaporating pores on the surface. The old leaves of this enduring foliage do not drop from the trees till the spring or summer, when the thickening new leaves of the well-clad branches are so many, that we are not conscious of the fall of the leaf. To our gardens the evergreens give a cheerful appearance, as contrasted with cold naked boughs ; but in countries as in Australia, where the trees are almost all evergreen, the traveller wearies of their monotony, and longs for the changing tints which variegate our foliage with the changing seasons.

Our most common and hardy evergreen is the holly, (*Ilex aquifolium*,) which is now glistening on the wild hedge, as well as in the garden. We have, however, under culture, several varieties of this plant, some of which have yellow berries ; others, leaves variegated with pale yellow, or several tints of green ; but none is more beautiful than the common kind. The laurel, too, (*Cerasus lauro cerasus*,) looks bright under the clear sky of a frosty noonday. Both this and the Portugal laurel (*Cerasus Lusitanica*) blossom early in the spring. The first account which we find of the laurel in England, states, that it was planted in the garden of a London merchant, who used, in winter, to cover it with a blanket. It is a native of the south of Europe. The leaves are sometimes used to flavour custards, but it should not be forgotten that they are very poisonous in their nature.

The laurel of the poet is the sweet-bay,

(*Laurus nobilis*.) In former days its branches enwreathed the head of the priestess of Delphi, and were hung about the gates of the Roman emperors. The victorious general, too, who had carried the proud eagle to the conquest, was congratulated by letters wrapped in the fragrant bay leaves; and the soldiers who fought under him, entered the imperial city, carrying triumphantly the branches of the bay tree. It is a native of Italy, and of the southern parts of Asia. The perfume of its bruised leaf is very pleasant, and was once supposed effectual in relieving the symptoms of many diseases.

The handsome evergreen thorn, (*Crataegus pyracantha*), with its profusion of scarlet berries, vies with the mountain ash in winter splendour, and its dark foliage brightens in the sun. It is a native of North America. Some of the garden species of broom, too, retain their verdure, and the rhododendrons are still green; and the hardy alaternus (*Rhamnus alaternus*) glows with as bright a tint, and looks as fresh, even in the middle of the smoky city, as if it were flourishing under the clearest sky.

And thus amid all the changes of nature, God has given to earth, to its wild woods, and its sheltered gardens, a voice to praise him. "For who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this?" Job xii. 9.

3 1197 00256 2459