

and there, there are patches of ground made clear from the cover, and these are either carelessly planted with some common and useful vegetable, or else are left free to the wayward ways of nature, and bear rank weeds, moist-looking and close to the eyes, and freshening the sense with their earthy and better fragrance. There is a lane opened through the thicket, so broad in some places that you can pass along side by side; in some so narrow (the shrubs are forever encroaching) that you ought, if you can, to go on the first and hold back the bough of the Rose-tree. And through this wilderness there tumbles a loud, rushing stream, which is halted at last in the lowest corner of the garden, and then tossed up in the fountain by the side of the simple alcove. This is all. Never for an instant will the people of Damascus attempt to separate the idea of bliss from these wild gardens and rushing waters.

Notes from a Wild Garden.

MY wild garden is a narrow strip of land, less than an acre in extent, which I began to plant four years ago. Some twenty years before this it had been planted with Grape-vines, which were dug out so thoroughly that they have not since troubled me by sprouting. Already this little spot begins to assume quite a wild and woody look. A group of Sassafras trees is especially fine. Sweet Gum, Wild Cherry and Maples are also making a good growth. Conifers are doing well, none better than the Hemlocks. The finest one, planted four years ago this spring when less than three feet in height, now measures nine feet high, with a spread of branches eight feet in diameter. It is graceful and luxuriant, with nowhere a dead twig to be seen.

The frost of early May injured a good many trees and shrubs, among others the Hollies, Mulberries and English Walnut-trees; also the Japanese Akebia and Actinidia, but they are now growing rapidly, and are apparently making up for lost time.

Among the herbaceous plants is *Xerophyllum setifolium*, which is considered a most difficult plant to cultivate, but I have succeeded in establishing a number of fine plants. They were set four years ago, and this spring twenty-three bloomed, making a fine display. I was told by those who had tried to cultivate it that it would surely not live longer than the first summer. But I was undismayed, and had a strong man take up the plants with such great balls of earth that some of them could hardly be crowded into a bushel basket. I stood by during the removal, and rejected every one that could be suspected of mutilation. We had a great wagonful of them and other plants, and when we reached home the *Xerophyllum* was set in a trench somewhat lower than the surrounding ground, and well watered. This is all the care they have ever received, beyond an occasional watering the first summer, and every plant is flourishing.

Helonias bullata is also growing nicely. This charming plant blooms among our earliest flowers in April. Notwithstanding that its native home is only in dense Cedar swamps, where it is often entirely covered with water, it is not difficult to grow in common garden-soil. It is a rare local plant, belonging in the Lily-family, and in early spring sends up a naked flower stem, a foot or two high, surmounted by a dense raceme of showy purple flowers. The leaves are evergreen, and are handsome the entire year.

Under and among the trees and shrubs many creeping plants have become at home and are growing nicely. Trailing *Arbutus* blooms freely here, as does the Partridge-berry, while the aromatic Wintergreen is full of bloom now, with promise of pretty clusters of scarlet berries in late autumn and winter. The wild Yam is here too, climbing about in its graceful way. This vine is much handsomer and far more delicate than the Chinese Yam, which florists are sending out under the name of Cinnamon Vine. *Apios tuberosa* is clambering about here and there without care, having been brought in among clumps of plants from the damp Pines, where it is very abundant. But it is quite welcome here, with its dense clusters of fragrant dull purple flowers.

Wild Lilies and cone-flowers, Rudbeckias, and various Sun-flowers, with one species of Golden Rod, *Solidago odora*, are now in bloom. Groups of Yucca, too, are scattered about with their wealth of flowers on the tall stems, which in the moonlight look like ghosts.

Among the shrubs, *Azalea viscosa* is still in bloom, and *Clethra alnifolia* is just beginning to open its flowers. This is one of our most desirable shrubs. Its dense raceme of white flowers is fragrant and handsome, and it remains in bloom a long time, commencing about the middle of July and continuing through August. The sweet-scented shrub

Calycanthus is still in flower, and so are wild Roses from the Pines. But among the most attractive features of the wild garden are the Ferns, of which there are several species perfectly at home, growing luxuriantly in the shady places.

Vineland, N. J.

Mary Treat.

Southern California Notes.

THE tall scarlet Larkspur (*Delphinium cardinale*) was introduced into cultivation, I believe, about the year 1858, from California. It has figured repeatedly in recent years as a novelty, although it may be found quoted constantly in many European catalogues.

I have lately seen this showy plant in great abundance on hill-sides east of San Diego, where the brush had been burned off the preceding fall. Attaining a height of five to ten feet, and covering densely almost the entire hill-side bordering the Potrero valley, the brilliant flaming flowers produced a striking resemblance to a hill-side on fire.

The large perennial roots, when in a dormant condition, may be sent with safety in a perfectly dry condition to any part of the world. The plants are also easily produced from seed, and will thrive luxuriantly in any rich soil. They are considered quite hardy. The sepals and two lower petals are scarlet; the two upper petals a delicate lemon-yellow tipped with scarlet and with a portion of the back also scarlet. The stigmas are tipped with scarlet. The sepals are tipped with a delicate pea-green, but scarlet is the predominating color, and unless closely examined no other color will be observed.

Dormant roots of *Dodecatheon Clevelandi*, sent to France in a dry state the past season, failed to grow in all but a few cases. No reports have yet been received from England or Holland, where roots were also sent, but as they are catalogued it may be presumed that they did well under proper treatment. This lovely plant has been denounced as one of the novelties lacking positive merit, but it is doubtless the handsomest of the genus. The centre of the flower is a rich prune-purple, bordered with bright lemon-yellow, the reflexed divisions of the corolla pure white, or tipped with lavender or phlox-purple. In individual plants the divisions are sometimes pure white throughout, or of a deep, brilliant purple, or of an intervening tint.

Papaver Californica is another plant of recent introduction. The flowers are about two inches in diameter, of a bright saturn-red to orange-chrome color, the centre of a delicate sulphur-yellow. Max Leichtlin writes that it has flowered with him the past season, but, while he considers it interesting botanically, he does not consider it worth cultivation. It has been curiously described in one catalogue as possessing flowers ten inches across, and of a different color from its own.

The effect of fire upon the vegetation of a country is an interesting subject for investigation. For the past twelve years I have been botanizing in southern and Lower California, and only in late years has *P. Californica* been seen either by myself or other botanists. John Spence was the first to find it on brush-lands in the Santa Ynez Mountains, but only found it where the land had been stripped by fire. In 1889, I believe, I first found it east of San Diego, near Campo, at a similar elevation, where the land had previously been burned over. Last year I found it sparingly in the same locality, and in great profusion in another locality near by that had been burned over the preceding fall. This year I could find no trace of the plant in either of these burnt areas. But between the two localities, where brush-fires raged last fall, I found it thriving.

Wherever fire has raged the previous year I have not failed to find this Poppy, but the second, or third year at most, it seems to again entirely disappear. As I have traveled over the same route yearly, its presence in previous years would have been detected long ago by myself and others as well.

In the mountain districts denuded by fire, the following spring is sure to reveal a wealth of unsuspected beauty. *Dicentra chrysantha*, in some localities, is sure to become surprisingly abundant. The scarlet Larkspur, as above noted, owes its luxuriance and abundance to the preparation of the soil by fire for its reception. *Calochortus Weedii* often appears by thousands in a burnt district where its presence previously was scarcely suspected. *Phacelia Orcuttiana*, as well as *Papaver Californica*, appears to be a "fire-plant." And the number of other plants which are found in their greatest profusion and at their best in a burnt area are legion. In a few years such plants retire again into comparative obscurity.

The Pride of California (*Lathyrus splendens*) is one of these plants which seem to be benefited by the ordeal of fire, which renders the vine more prolific and adds brilliancy to the blossoms.

Orcutt, Cal.

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