Flowers for Home and Garden

BY A GARDEN GROWER.

DESPITE the low temperature, particularly at night, the gardens in and about the city are gradually taking on their spring dress. Tulips probably will be at their best this week, although many of the earlier blooming varieties showed their best last week. The various fruit trees, particularly the cherry and plum, this week have been gorgeous and the apple soon will be. Magnolias are blooming, the one at Graham Glass' house, Park and Vista avenues, having been a gorgeous sight early this week. The rock gardens everywhere are a mass of arabis blooms, both the white and the blue, the latter being particularly effective. While the grandiflora type of saxifraga are about over the little dwarf variety, with its star-shaped flowers of delicate rose add much to rock gardens. Primroses are abloom everywhere and on Portland Heights there are many gardens aglow with the wonderful Lord Beaconsfield variety. This is the primrose which more than 25 years ago L. G. Pfunder, Portland's veteran florist, introduced in this section, and I really think it is the handsomest and showiest of all primroses, for its big cluster of cream-colored flowers are carried on stiff stout stems a foot or more in length. A vase filled with them is effective, particularly if a few sprays of spirea thunbergi, with its dainty little white flowers are added. Scillas are coming into bloom and both the lavender and the blue colored types are quite attractive, particularly when used in a border. And speaking of borders, or rather an edging for a border, I think that at this time of the year nothing has quite the same appeal as the forget-me-not, both the blue and white, and when mixed in an edging there is a dash of color most appealing. It is surprising that more persons do not use these little blooms, for if the flowers are cut liberally you can have a continuity of bloom throughout the season. The St. Brigid anemones are coming into bloom and they are wonderfully brilliant. There are so many shapes and shades that in each plant you can find something of charm and interest. In the shrubbery line rhododendrons rank first from the blooming standpoint and this week I expect the Wilcox gardens on St. Clair street will be well worth seeing, as the rhododendons there are about the finest in the city.

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As the blooming season for the early bulbs is drawing to a close a few suggestions as to the care of bulbs during the summer may be of value to the amateur. Too get the importance of proper storage and care for bulbs it must first be realized that the flowers and resources for the next season are garnered within the bulb after blooming, through the agency of the roots and foliage. If your foliage this year has been poor and undeveloped it will mean that next year your flowers will be poor or you may have none at all, therefore in gathering flowers care should be exercised in the way the foliage is sacrificed or cut. To care properly for the bulbs after blooming the best thing to do is to leave them in the ground until the leaves have died down. It is usually best to remove all bulbs from the ground, and this is particularly true of such bulbs as hyacinths and tulips, although late tulips in borders may be left undisturbed several years with fairly good results. Each year, however, the single early type should be taken up. As to the time for digging the bulbs it should be borne in mind that they should not be disturbed unless absolutely necessary, until the foliage becomes brown and is in a decidedly limp condition. From the time the foliage becomes in this condition until the new root system starts bulbs can be taken up. With the exception of hyacinths and tulips the bulbs, such as daffodils, narcissus, etc., should be divided as soon as dug and replanted, but with tulips and hyacinths it is better that they be stored over the summer in a cool, dry place, but even then do not remove the foliage. It is possible that you may want to take up your bulbs before they ripen to make room for summer bedding plants and this can be done without damage to next season's flower if a little care is exercised. Dig the bulbs with a spade, going deep enough so that the roots of the bulb are disturbed as little as possible, also exercising care to see that the leaves are not cut or crushed. Have prepared a shallow trench and in this heel in the bulbs just as you have dug them, including the soil, seeing that they are spaced sufficiently apart to permit free air circulating around the foliage, so it will aid in the ripening process. If possible heel the bulbs in a half-shady place.

Just one suggestion about handling tulips, and that is it is safer to lift them too early than too late, and you cannot always tell from the foliage but you can usually tell the time for lifting from the stem. If you notice that the stem is drying but the leaves are not curing, watch the stem, and just before it gets wholly dry then dig your bulb. If this is followed it is more than likely that the protective covering of the bulb will remain while the bulbs are out of the ground. Darwin tulips, particularly, have thin skins and if the bulbs are left too long in the ground the protective skins frequently come off, and without this protection the bulbs have a tendency to become soft during the resting period.

In taking up narcissus you can do so even if the foliage has not all withered, but if you divide and replant right away do so without cutting off the foliage. I feel that in growing bulbs there is nothing quite so important as to the care of the foliage, for all the good we hope for in the next season comes from the leaves. If you are partial to using the natural foliage with the flowers, and there really are no prettier or softening shades of green, I would advise that you plant in one corner of the garden some of the cheaper varieties for foliage purposes only, but on your fancy flowers never cut a leaf, for if you do you may be disappointed next year. In storing the bulbs, clean them thoroughly and then spread them out on trays if you have a good cool place, or you can cure them by storing them in dry sand or dirt in the basement, but do not pile or heap them.

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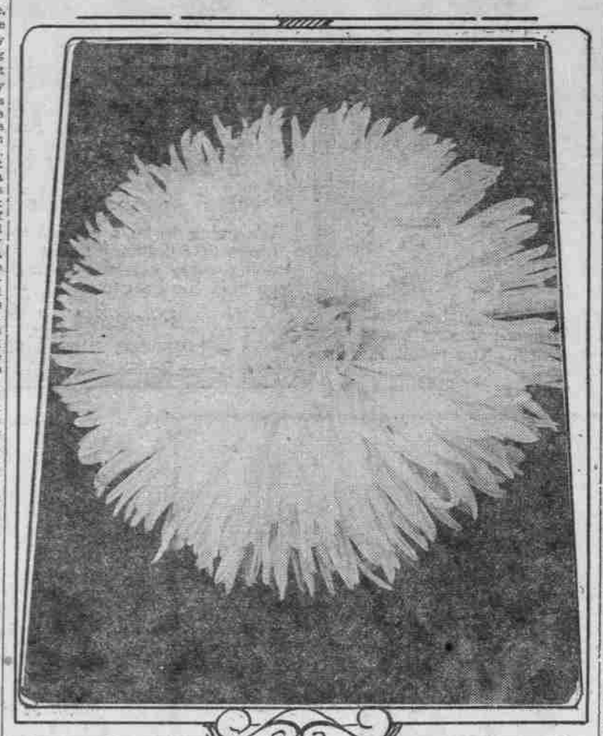
About every third person one meets these days has the same question to ask, and that is, "are we going to have roses for the Rose Festival?" I am not a prophet, but the question is one that is debatable if such a subject as weather is debatable. According to the record of various gardens in Portland it takes an average of 20 to 25 days for a rose to mature after you can first see the flower bud, and as buds have been noticeable for a week or more and it is about 25 days to the Rose Festival, I would say there is an opportunity to have roses, provided there is no serious change in present weather conditions. As long as the temperature does not get below 50 degrees during the day time the rose will continue to grow, but the cold nights we are having are likely to upset the most careful calculations. A week or ten days of good warm weather would, I feel, assure us of a plentiful crop of roses for the festival, but I doubt if the quality would be of the kind of which Portlanders have a right to boast. A continued hot spell would so force flowers that they would lack the substance which is so desirable and then also the colors would not have the brilliancy so much desired. A week of warm weather right now to give the plants the stimulus they need and then followed by alternate days of sunshine and clouds would be ideal for assuring wonderful roses. If we do have roses for the show they will have to come principally from the east side and the lower sections, for there will be practically none from Portland Heights and the higher sections. A few days ago I examined the hedge at the home of Mrs. Fred H. Page, who, for several years, has taken prizes for the best Caroline Testout roses at the show, and I think that under average weather conditions as we can expect Mrs. Page will not have a rose to show this year. At another point on Portland Heights I examined a group of more than 100 Ulrich Brunner and the growth on them is not more than three inches long, and in the same garden is a hedge of Frau Karl Druschki which, if it gets into bloom by the Fourth of July, will be showing some speed. In this garden are some bushes of Ophelia which have buds on them and some General McArthur, but I doubt if they will be ready for the show. Neither will be the wonderful Chateau Clos de Vouget roses, which have been a feature for several years of the display made by Mrs. John C. Ainsworth. It will be a rare opportunity this year for the east-side districts, such as Irvington, Laurelhurst, Sunnyside and lower Mount Tabor, to obtain the honors, as the competition from Portland Heights and other elevated sections will be limited. Not only have the rose growers a backward season to contend with, but the green worm has already made its appearance, and every one should give his bushes attention and destroy this pest. Due to the fact that some of the cold nights have curled the tender foliage, it is difficult to tell at first glance whether the damaged foliage is due to the cold or the worm, therefore it is best that if your foliage shows any defect whatever to examine the bush carefully. If there is a leaf in which a hole has been cut or the edge of which has been eaten away you can be assured that the green worm is busy, therefore go over the plant until you find him and then give him a quick but firm pinch between your thumb and fore finger. Such treatment is the only thing that will do good and while it may sound repulsive, put on a pair of old gloves and remember that you are out for revenge and you will soon overcome any scruples about such treatment, particularly when you find that this insect has bored into your finest bud and destroyed it. At present this worm is not much over a quarter of an inch long and about as big around as a pin. He will get on a leaf and by a slimy trail he leaves glue several leaves together and then he goes quickly to work. As soon as he has fed up on the leaves and got a little strength he starts for the flower bud, bores into it in such a way that it is either cut off from the stem or ruined. This worm always comes in May and will remain throughout the season, and while the flowers may be late you will never find this destructive pest behind time, so if you want flowers give your bushes a going over now. One worm on a bush can in a few days do more damage than can be repaired by a week of fine weather. No spray I know of is effective but if you check him now you can save yourself a lot of disappointment later.



White King, Popular Aster.

My friend, the old gardener, dropped in to see me one day last week, and as usual he had some interesting information for the amateur. I was telling him about an experience of mine with a cold frame in which I had planted some particularly choice American Beauty aster seeds that a friend had given me and how just as they got above the ground and I was congratulating myself on what fine asters I would have a snail got into the frame one night and by morning all my seedlings had disappeared. I think there is nothing quite so disheartening as to lose a fine stand of seedlings, but I had no one to blame but myself, for I had been careless. After expressing his sympathy for my loss, the old gardener said: "Snails are always a bad thing and I often wonder how it is that so many flowers escape their ravages. Take it right now, when the pansies are starting to look into the world with happy faces, but how often is an admirer of these cheerful, bright little blooms shocked and disheartened to find that the flowers have been eaten up or mutilated by some unknown force. He looks all around to find the cause, but there is nothing which looks guilty. It is the pesky garden snails, or slugs as they are sometimes called, which do the mischief, and to catch them is quite a task unless you are familiar with their habits. Night after night, unless they are disposed of, the snails will return and chew up the choicest of your floral tidbits. Some persons suggest many methods, but the majority of them, such as putting rings of sand, lime or ashes around the plants are worthless in the majority of cases. If the sand, lime or ashes could be kept dry they might in a measure be effective, but you cannot keep them dry with the kind of weather we are having, for if we do not have rain in the night we have a heavy dew. The only real way of getting these snails is to have a bucket of fresh air-slacked lime or hydrated lime ready. This lime will kill the snails very quickly if strewn over them when they come out after night to their feeding grounds. If snails have appeared in your garden, take this dry pulverized lime after 10 o'clock at night, when it is not raining, and spread the lime freely over the plants and surroundings where snails have been observed. The lime is harmless to growing plants, and if you object to its appearance you can wash it away in the morning. It is essential that the ground and plants be dry, for if the lime gets wet it will be harmless to the snails. If you have ever studied snails you will find that when the lime strikes or a snail runs into it the snail will at once start to emit a liquid to neutralize the caustic effect of the lime, and also turn around and try to escape. Therefore, if the ground is well covered the snail will soon curl up and die. Another method I used that I found most effective was a flashlight and a pair of scissors, with which I would go over their feeding ground between 10 and 11 o'clock at night and when I found one he was easily despatched with the scissors."

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One contention I have often made is that Oregon grown seed has greater vitality and therefore better germination quality than seeds from many other sections and in support of this contention I want to call attention to the fact that last week I picked up one of the great journals published for the florists' trade and found there ample evidence. In this paper 34 firms in the east who specialize in growing pansies for the wholesale trade advertised and of these 19 were users of Oregon grown pansy seed and as further support 14 of the 19 advertised that their pansies were raised from seed produced by E. J. Steele of Portland. Of course, there are many persons who know that Mr. Steele specializes in pansies at his twenty acres on the Powell Valley road, but I believe there are very few who realized in what high esteem this Oregon produced seed is held by the professional growers of the country. That it is of higher worth and germinates better is evident from the fact that the Oregon grown seed commands a higher price than does pansy seed produced in other sections. It has created such a demand that this year Mr. Steele is enlarging his output and driving by his place a few days ago I judged that he had a million or more pansy plants under cultivation. I stopped long enough to look over his selection beds which contain between 300,000 and 400,000 plants and these occupy a very small section when compared with his two main plantings. Pansy growing, particularly on the scale as followed by Mr. Steele, is a whole garden story in itself and I doubt if there are more than a half dozen persons in Portland, outside of professional growers, who really know what makes a good pansy and the trouble and pains it requires to make selections to get proper types. I also doubt if there are more than six persons in Portland who know of the vast number of experiments Mr. Steele is carrying on at all times to improve the types and furnish the seed demanded not only in this country, but also in Europe. Pansy growing as followed by Mr. Steele is a most absorbing business and a pleasure and in a few weeks I am going to give the readers of this department some interesting data about what is being done with pansies in Portland, particularly as to how the Scotch type is being brought to perfection unuder our advantageous climate.

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As the blooming season for various flowers is approaching it is probable that Portland will have several exhibitions in addition to the annual rose show. The Garden club of southeast Portland is a live hustling organization and has made plans for a peony exhibit to be held during the second week in June, the exact date to be selected later. This exhibit will be held at the home of Mrs. Hugh Graham, 1131 East Thirty-eighth street. The club is very active in promoting gardens in that section of the city and holds frequent meetings in the Woodstock branch library. The exhibit this year will be largely on educational lines as many of the residents are growing unidentified varieties of peonies and experts will be present to identify the type and give them their proper classification.

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During the last few years iris has increased in popularity and now a number of Portlanders boast of their collections. There are still a number of persons who not being familiar with the new types of iris and the wonderful shades produced, regard many of them as little superior to the old-fashioned purple "flag," never stopping to consider the improvements which plant breeders have wrought in shape, substance and improved blooming quality, to say nothing of size and color. Some of the delicate pink shades of the modern day iris are equal to most orchids and already there is talk of organizing an iris show. In past years some iris have been shown at the rose show, but this is not the proper place, for no one can get the real value of the iris as a garden flower unless it is shown in competition with flowers of a similar type.

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A few days ago I received the following letter from an amateur gardener of Salem, which contains a suggestion that some Portland organization might adopt with profit and benefit the city:

"As you seem to be interested in gardens and landscapes, I wish to write about a condition in Portland (and this from a Salemite) that could be greatly improved without any great expenditure. Have you ever noticed coming into Portland on the different trains the dreadful condition of property, vacant lots used as dumping grounds, etc.? Yes, I know this property belongs to the individual and the kind that is too indifferent to care about looks and then trains have the way of always going through the most unattractive part of the city, but cannot something be done to insist upon some improvement? Portlanders are not so apt to see these defects as travelers and the traveler forms his impressions from what he sees—and the majority from the car window. And here is a suggestion that might be feasible. Where the railroad has cut through high embankments and left the bare ground exposed, could not native shrubs be planted without injuring the property? Think how a hillside of Scotch broom, clothed in its golden robe, would attract the tourist, especially those who are not in the habit of seeing this rank though beautiful shrub grow out of the conservatory. Then our mock-orange and ocean-spray, evergreens galore, Oregon grape, snowberry, wild roses and countless others, all found so near the city and yet not always in the most conspicuous places—could not these be planted most effectively, or would the railroad company not allow such 'fool notions' tried on their property?"

Notes of the Garden.

Mrs. A. Sturgess of 396 East Fortieth street, North, has added to her garden this year a large planting of gladioli, representing a number of the standard varieties and a few of the novelties of this year.

Mrs. George Nevins of 1059 Cumberland road, will have as a feature of her garden this year a planting of mammoth verbenas and pansies, having selected for the latter some of the new smoky shades, interspersed with beautiful yellows.

Mrs. W. A. Hunter of The Dalles has added considerable shrubbery and a number of roses to her garden. Among the roses she has put in a planting of Miss Lolita Armour, the chrome yellow and fawn rose which won honors in the test gardens two years ago.

M. Senders of Albany has added to his perennial garden a large planting of hardy phlox and St. Brigid anemones.

Mrs. Thomas Papworth of 73 Ella street, has added a number of roses to her garden this spring, including a liberal planting of Hadley.

Mrs. Isaac Jay of Hermiston, Or., has this year added a number of bushes of the Mildred Grant and Ophelia varieties to her rose garden.

In addition to a large planting of perennial phlox Mrs. A. M. Sproul of South Bend, Wash., is putting in a large planting of cannas.

Every week seems to witness some new feature that Mr. and Mrs. William MacMasters are adding to their garden at Ardgour. Another feature they will have this year is a large planting of the single-flowered English bedding chrysanthemums.

Mrs. F. A. Nelson of Oswego has added to her shrubbery a number of weigelia, whose bell-shaped pink blooms on the long stems make a wonderful garden picture.

Dr. A. C. Epley of Salem will feature in his garden this year a large planting of the snapdragons of the half-dwarf type.

Mrs. J. B. Cleland of 175 East Sixteenth street, North, in addition to a number of new carnations, will this year have in her garden a large planting of snapdragons of the Enchantress, Matchless, Melrose and White Queen varieties.

E. H. Bauer of 1106 Glenwood avenue, is now busy putting in his large planting of dahlias, which number several hundred plants and represents about 100 different varieties. In addition to these Mr. Bauer is experimenting this year with a number of new seedling dahlias.

Mrs. Franklin T. Griffith, 679 Elliott avenue, has put in a garden of perennials of many types, in which delphiniums, canterbury bells, gaillardia and the newer double hollyhocks will be featured.

Mrs. C. H. Gropper of Stevenson, Wash., has planted a choice collection of roses.

E. A. Darr of Capitol hill has added to his rose collection a number of the latest varieties, including Los Angeles, Columbia, Hadley, Cleveland and similar varieties.

Mrs. Isadore Lang of Twentieth and Jackson streets, Portland heights, has made plans for a fine assortment of bedding plants, which features annually the grounds surrounding her home.

Among the newer varieties of roses which Dr. R. C. Coffey of 789 Glisan street, has added to his garden are Columbia, Hadley, Los Angeles and other novelties.

Mrs. C. W. Ertz of 925 Alameda Drive, will feature her garden this year with large plantings of both annual and perennial bedding plants.

E. F. Walton of 779 East Firteenth street, North, has added quite an extensive collection of roses, including some of the newer varieties to his garden.

J. P. Cooke of 215 North Twenty-first street, whose garden is always well arranged, will again feature a collection of annuals, adding to his plantings some of the newer novelties in bedding plants.

F. O. Carney of 171 Kingston avenue has made a number of improvements to his new home. The lawn, newly seeded, is looking good and the planting of shrubs at the entrance is quite effective.

Mr. and Mrs. George Anderson of Woodlawn, Wash., and their friends have enjoyed the display of more than a thousand daffodils, including many of the new giant flowering variety, which Mr. and Mrs. Anderegg have at their farm along the Lewis river.

Mrs. G. E. Schott of 504 East Forty-seventh street North, has added a number of new plants this year, among which is a choice collection of penstemons.

For a beautiful effect the porch boxes of Mrs. J. L. O'Donnell at 629 Fremont street, take front rank and to those who admire the sweet-scented wall flowers these porch boxes will prove an interesting study.

Mrs. S. Goldstein of 665 East Eighteenth street, North, has put in a cutting garden, featured with plantings of scabiosa, snapdragons and sweet peas.

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Hilton, whose new home is at 425 East Twenty-fifth street, North, contemplate the planting of bright-colored annuals in the place of shrubs for the first season. They have, however, featured the entrance to their new home with fine specimens of English boxwood.

Problems of the Garden.

How deep can zinnias be planted without impairing the blooms? If planted shallow they usually tip over when the fall rains come. Do slips from winter stocks make as good plants as those raised from seed? Will the long-fed palms seen frequently in tubs stand the frost and about how much? How are new palms started?
SUBSCRIBER.

Answer—The best way to handle zinnias is to top them. When the young plants are about four inches high pinch them off right under the first two leaves. This will give a stouter stem, causing the plants to branch and will not interfere with the blooms but increase them. Stocks grown from seed are better than if propagated from cuttings. The long-leafed palms you mention will, according to a prominent florist, stand about eight degrees of frost, that is, they will survive if the temperature does not get below 25 degrees but no semitropical plant should ever be exposed to frost. New palms are started from seed secured from the native habitat.

Please tell me how to plant Job's tears? I planted some last year but the beads or seeds on them were very small. Perhaps I had them planted too close. How can I cut roses or rose buds be sent east? The distance to take about five days. I sent some last June but they were all mouldy when they arrived. Each rose was wrapped in damp newspaper. If they are packed in moss will they get mouldy? I planted about 300 of the rose cuttings I got from the park and they are very close together as I did not think they would all grow. It looks now as if everyone was growing. When will be the best time to transplant them and how could I get the names of them?
MRS. C. M.?

Answer—You probably planted your Job's tear too closely, as they should have plenty of room. The bushes should be separated by at least six inches. Soil is also important as you cannot expect to get large seeds or beads unless the ground is good and also you should see that they were well cultivated. Do not attempt to ship roses back east as it is only a waste of time and effort. Your rose slips may now be putting forth foliage that is due to the early sap, but if they remain in foliage after the Fourth of July you can depend upon it that they have taken root. Do not transplant them until fall. Relative to having them identified, the only way is to have some one who knows roses to visit your garden when they are in bloom and give you the name. Do not let your slips bloom this season, as it takes too much strength and the root system will be impaired. If flower buds appear upon your slips pinch them off.

If I cut the blooms from my tulips this year will it injure the bulbs in any way so they will not bloom again? I have recently been informed that it would. I am very anxious to know as I have cut a few of my tulips which I would not like to lose. I also have a few more to be in bloom soon and which I am anxious to cut if the bulbs will not be damaged.
MRS. A. E. B.

Answer—This department this week has an article on the care of tulip bulbs which will answer your questions. It does not hurt to cut the blooms but be careful and do not damage the foliage.

Do you consider it more desirable to leave tulip beds undisturbed from year to year, or to take the bulbs up and replant in the fall? One year I left a large lot of tulips in the bed, and all failed to come up the next spring. Perhaps I failed to give proper winter protection. Would you kindly give me directions for lifting, curing and storing the bulbs until fall planting. We have large lily of the valley beds, one of which has been undisturbed for a number of years. Would you advise dividing and resetting? If so, what is the proper time and method. I do not like to interfere with next year's bloom. We enjoy the flower page very much, and find it of especial interest to know what others are planting.
CALDWELL, (IDAHO) GARDENER.

Answer—Your first question is answered in another part of this department today. Relative to your lily-of-the-valley you will spoil the blooming quality for two years when you replant the roots. If you do any replanting do a part of it at a time if you want flowers. The best time to replant lily-of-the-valley is in September or October.

Swedish Cartoonist Gets High Honor

Albert Engstrom, Editor of Stix, Elected to Famous Academy.

STOCKHOLM, May 12.—For the first time in history of Swedish academy, founded by King Gustavus III in 1786, a humorist and comic artist has been elected to that exclusive body. This honor has just been bestowed on Albert Engstrom, one of the most popular figures in Sweden editor of Strix, a Swedish humoristic weekly, writer of distinction and the creator of some of the funniest cartoons and character sketches that ever came out of Scandinavia.

Two others were elected at the same time as Engstrom to fill vacancies caused by death, Tor Hedberg, poet and dramatist, until recently director of the Royal Dramatic theater of Stockholm, and Professor Frederik Book of Lund university, one of Sweden's leading literary critics and essayists.

The Swedish academy, popularly known as "The Eighteen" for its membership is limited to that number, was moulded by its royal founder on the pattern of the French academy for the special object of preserving, purifying and elevating the Swedish language. Its motto is "Genius and Good Taste."

While most of its members are eminent in the world of arts and letters its doors are open to those who have won great distinction in other spheres such as science and theology. The late Professor Harald Hjaerne, the historian and Oscar Montelius, the world famous archaeologists, both of whom died recently, were members. Archbishop Nathan Soederblom, head of the Swedish church, is a member. Miss Selma Lagerlof is the only woman ever elected to the Swedish academy.

Although Engstrom's admission to the academy marks almost as radical a departure from old traditions as that of Miss Lagerlof, the Swedish press and public as a whole rejoice that Engstrom has become "one of the 18." Engstrom's popularity is based on his brilliant essays, principally on marine subjects as well as on his sympathetic sketches of the common people, sailors, fishermen, longshoremen and country types.

Librarians to Pick Books for Country School.

Selection of Best 25 to Be Made by Votes of Several Thousands.

CHICAGO, May 13.—The best 25 books for a one-room country school will be selected by the vote of several thousand librarians and teachers at the annual conference of the American Library association in Detroit, June 26-July 1 and of the National Education association in Boston early in July.

The winning titles will be announced after the conferences "in order that people everywhere may know what books are considered by librarians and teachers as most interesting and useful to children in the elementary grades," it was stated by Carl H. Milam, secretary of the American Library association.

"A recent study of children's reading in one state showed that sometimes scores of children in a given district do not read anything but the textbooks; and that not infrequently there are no readable books in either the schools or the homes," Mr. Milam said. "In other districts school libraries are made up of discarded books from dusty attics or of large sets of books in near-leather binding which nobody ever reads.

"It is the hope of the two associations conducting the contest that the selection of this list will serve to stimulate interest in good books for general reading and to encourage the establishment and development of small school-library collections. The desire of the organizations is to interest not only the teachers and librarians but also the school boards, trustees, public officials, parents and the children themselves."

Hens to Aid Churches in Wide Hollow District.

Every Tenth Egg Promised to Fund for Religious Work.

YAKIMA, Wash., May 13.—Every self-respecting hen in the Wide Hollow district, near here—at least every Methodist hen—is pledged to adopt the tithing system of benevolence, at least for the current season.

Rev. J. Fred Stilwell, pastor of the Wide Hollow Methodist church, originated the plan, and said it promises to add a sizable sum to the church fund. Every tenth egg laid is set aside for the church. These "church eggs" are collected and sold at regular intervals and the total so gained is proving surprisingly large.

"Many of the women of our church did not feel they could pledge a large amount to the church work," said Rev. Mr. Stilwell, "so we decided to put the hens on a tithing basis. Nearly every family has a flock of hens, and all the women were willing to make them provide tithes for church work. We may continue the system indefinitely."

THE MARRIED LIFE OF HELEN AND WARREN

BY MABEL HERBERT URNER

HELEN IS LURED TO A HARROWING ADVENTURE BY AN AUDACIOUS AND CRAFTY RUSE

A SILKY night. The breeze-stirred darkness seemed a cooling palliative after the sun-scorching heat of the day.

Half-past nine by the window-clock in the corner drug store, yet the quiet street suggested a later hour.

Again Helen glanced over her shoulder, nervously conscious of the heavy steps that for several blocks had been keeping pace with here.

A rough-looking man, his hat pulled low over his eyes, was just a few yards behind. Her heart beat riotously as he gained upon her.

Warren's admonition to take a taxi she had economically ignored—and the street cars were so crowded. Surely she was safe on this well-lighted thoroughfare.

Yet the menacing steps were now ominously near. With an effort, she kept to her brisk walk—to run would be an absurd confession of her fear.

"Good evening! Out for a walk, girlie? Not so fast! I'm good company." A heavy hand gripped her arm.

Terror-stricken, she tried to jerk away, but his steel grasp only tightened.

"Let me go!" in panting fright. "I'll call a policeman!"

"Not if you know what's good for you! You keep mum, or I'll—"

His hold suddenly relaxed as some one ran up behind them.

The next second, a portly man clutched him savagely by the collar.

"Now, beat it!" as he flung him against the lamp post. "If it wasn't for this lady and the notoriety—I'd have you jugged."

Mutteringly, the ruffian slunk away as his assailant turned to Helen.

"Hope he didn't frighten you. There's a lot of these bums around. I'm glad I happened along."

"Oh, I—I don't know how to thank you," faltered Helen. "I should've taken a taxi—but it was only a few blocks."

"Yes, you're not safe anywhere these days," guiding her through the inquisitive group that had quickly gathered. "The papers are full of hold-ups. You'd better let me take you home."

"Oh, thank you," gratefully. "It's not far. Perhaps I can get a taxi at the next corner—I don't want to trouble you."

"I'll be glad to—I'm just out for a stroll. Let's get away from this crowd," turning into a deserted side street. "Is this much out of your way?"

"No, not at all, but this block is always so dark. I was afraid to come along here alone."

It was a residential street with most of the houses closed for the summer. Helen, glad to escape the curious crowd, welcomed the quiet desertion.

"Wonder what that fellow was after? Been following you far?" solicitously. "Did you show anu money or jewelry?"

"Why, no. I just came from a friend who's ill. I promised Mr. Curtis, my husband, I'd take a taxi back."

"That's what you ought've done. No well-dressed woman is safe on the streets alone after dark—particularly if she wears jewelry. They're keen on spotting it. He must've seen something worth holding you up for? Isn't that a diamond lavallere you have there?"

"He was behind me—how could he see that? He may have noticed my rings", turning her diamond rings palmward. "It's too warm to wear gloves. But you wouldn't think on a well-lighted street with people passing—"

"Oh, they're bold these days. Never been such a crime wave. I see a lot of it. I'm a private detective for one of the big banks—that's why I've a permit to carry a gun. It comes in mighty handy sometimes," drawing a gleaming revolver from his hip pocket.

The next moment, under cover of the newspaper he carried, the steel muzzle was pressed against Helen's side.

"I'll take those rings and that lavallere," in a low, strangely altered voice. "Your first scream'll be your last—so keep your trap shut!"

In speechless, congealed terror, Helen did not move as he snatched her purse, and the lavallière from her neck.

"Now, the sparklers! Come across quick!" with a threatening snarl.

Her nerveless fingers pulled helplessly at the diamond rings.

Shifting the gun to his left hand, ruthlessly he jerked off the rings himself.

"Now, don't open your mouth—or I'll blow off the top of your head!" Backing away a few yards, he whirled abruptly and ran down the street.

Suddenly blasting shouts tore through the still air. Two men, springing out of a dark areaway, had leaped upon the fleeing fugitive.

A brief, profane struggle, and her assailant was lying on the sidewalk securely held down.

Her rings! She darted forward, then stopped. Her rescuer had turned out to be a footpad. Were these highwaymen, too?

"Here, ma'am, come here!" called one of them.

As hesitatingly she approached, he threw back his coat and displayed a gleaming shield.

"From headquarters," briefly. "Been trailing this bird and saw the whole frame-up. We waited to land him with the goods."

"My rings and lavalliere!" breathed Helen, quaveringly.

"We'll search him," dragging to his feet the now handcuffed prisoner. The gun deftly extracted from his hip-pockets, the jewels and purse was found in his coat.

"We'll have to keep these as evidence, ma'am. You'll get 'em in court. Let's see what we have—three rings, a lavalliere, and a purse. That all?"

Helen nodded.

"Your name and address, please?" drawing out an official notebook.

"Oh, I won't have to appear in court, will I?" tremulously giving her address.

"Afraid you will ma'am. You're the complaining witness. Ten o'clock tomorrow morning at the police court."

"Stop your cussing," snapped the other officer, as he picked up the prisoner's hat from the pavement and slammed it on his head.

"Now, you walk to the corner with us, ma'am—we'll put you in a taxi."

"Oh, if you will! It's all been so horrible!"

"Something new in team work. A roughneck threatens you— then a smooth guy does the rescue act—says he'll escort you home. Gets you in a quiet street and holds you up. Pretty nifty combination!"

"Oh, they were together?" the ruse just dawning on Helen.

"Sure! A slippery pair! They've pulled that stunt twice this week."

As they walked on, Helen marveled at the changed personality of the captive. A gallant, debonair gentleman, a brutal assailant, and now a cowed and sullen prisoner. His hat set rakishly over one eye was in grotesque contrast to his bowed head and lagging, shuffling gait.

At the corner, one of the officers hailed a taxi, put Helen into it, and gave her address to the driver.

"Here's your purse, ma'am. We've got enough evidence with the jewelry. Sorry you had the scare. We'd have nabbed him before he held you up—but that's 'Neck-Tie Ned,' a pretty cagey bird, and we wanted to nail him with the swag. Good night. See you tomorrow in court."

As the taxi slid off, Helen, still dazed from the swift turmoil, leaned back in nerve-throbbing reaction. A threatened assault, a fraudulent rescue, a genuine assault, and a real rescue—all within 20 minutes.

It seemed like a turbulent dream—only her missing rings and lavalliere made it real.

But they were safe! What if the officers had not been following her? She would never have recovered her jewelry?

When the taxi drew up, hastily paying the driver, Helen flew up the steps through the sheltering doorway. In the elevator, the mirror reflected her pale disheveled and the boy's curious gaze.

Now that it was all over, she was beginning to give way. Her trembling fingers could hardly fit her key in the door.

When she entered the library, Warren glowered at her over his paper.

"You said you'd be home by 9:30." Then, as she drew nearer the light, he laid down his pipe with a startled, "Eh? What's wrong?"

"It's—it's all right now," dropping weakly on the window-seat.

"What's happened?" he was beside her. "You're white as a sheet!"

"I—I was—held up!" stretching out her ringless hand.

"Held up? You're not hurt?"

She shook her head, the repressed tears now brimmingly near.

"Never mind about the rings—long as you're safe. Tell me about it." His arm about her, he was holding both her hands. "Steady now! Don't go to pieces. Take your time."

"No—no—they're not gone! They're safe—and my lavalliere, too. The officers have them, but I—I have to go to court tomorrow morning."

"Officers? You were held up—and the fellow was caught? Where'd it happen?"

Within the secure refuge of his arm, Helen relived the first assault and the treacherous rescueJthe ruse that lured her to the deserted street where the trickster had dropped his role.

"I told you to take a taxi," his arm tightening about her.

"Oh, I know, but it was such a wonderful night and only a few blocks—I thought I could walk."

"And save 60 cents!" grimly.

"I never will again. Dear, I promise you that."

"You bet you won't—you won't have a chance! It's the last time you'll be out after dark alone. And now we've got to show up at court."

"Oh, I dread seeing him again," shiveringly.

"That dirty thug?" snorted Warren. "We'll put the rollers under him. He'll do a stretch that'll shelve his slick little game. He ought to be sent up for 20 years. Don't you worry, Kitten," drawing her closer, "I'll see that he gets the limit!"

Next week—Helen's Surprising ingenuity.

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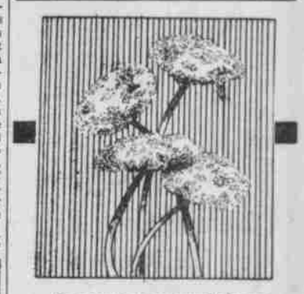

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