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The Flower Lovers

They Spoke Only in Flower Language

By F. A. MITCHEL

March 1.
My Dear Adele—Here we are in our new home in this quaint New England town, which I think can have changed very little in the last 200 years. The people who lived in it then were doubtless well to do, for there are many places which were at that time quite imposing. Our house is built on the street, with a terrace garden in the rear, and the place on one side is much the same. Everything snatches of the seventeenth or eighteenth century.

I am glad that we have taken possession before the flower planting season, for I am sure I shall be devoted to the old fashioned garden. I shall secure the services of a man to spade up the beds for me, but I shall do all the rest of the work myself. You should see how artificially they are laid out, every one inclosed in a narrow border. Besides, there are low hedges and dwarf trees cut in shapes that remind one of the present cubist pictures.

While our garden has been long neglected, the one beside it has been well kept up. Everything there is as trim as if Miss Dorothy Somebody in the quaint costume of two centuries ago was still caring for it. Some one doubtless lives there who cares for flowers, for though spring has scarcely arrived, I can see that when the season comes I shall look out upon a delightful scene. Your loving RUTH.

March 12.
I have discovered who it is that is interested in keeping up the garden next door, and my discovery is surprising. The flower cultivator is not a woman, but a man. Who would expect a man to take an interest in flowers? I wish rather that he would take an interest in me, for he is fine looking, and from observing him through the window, carefully concealed by the curtains, I am sure I shall like him. But I fear he is not inclined to be neighborly, for, though we have been here nearly two weeks, he has not called.

March 20.
I have learned something about our next door neighbor. They say he is peculiar, preferring to live alone in the house he has inherited from a long line of ancestors. He neither goes out into company nor entertains. This is strange in a man who cannot be more than thirty years old. They say he loves only two things in the world—his library and his garden. What a temptation for me to make him love a third thing, which is human—a temptation to which I have already yielded!

I must attack him through his taste for flowers since I know nothing of books. Indeed, I think I shall keep away from him, fearing to reveal my shallowness until I shall have effected an entrance to his favor through his plants. I have already two men digging up my beds preparatory to the siege I am about to lay to his heart. He little thinks that there is one next door to him who is planning to batter down the old fashioned high brick wall that protects him and his garden from us and ours and that my siege guns will be roses and lilies and geraniums and peonies. But I must be careful not to let him come near me until I have effected this breach. What would I do if he were to begin to talk to me before I had excited an interest through our both loving the same thing? What would I say if he should speak about the relation between the edict of Nantes and the Thirty Years' war? The only war I am interested in is the war of the roses which I propose to wage myself.

April 10.
My neighbor next door is taking his plants from his conservatory and putting them in beds. I am using seeds almost entirely, for my garden has not been cultivated for years. He, too, is laying out a few spaces to be filled in with seeds. I am doing all to make my garden attractive. What plants I buy are of rare and beautiful varieties. My neighbor's plants are chiefly what he has always possessed. All I can do is to make my garden as beautiful as possible. On that I rely to attract him.

May 15.
My flowers are all doing well. I have eclipsed my neighbor. From my window I have seen him admiring my display. A few days ago I saw him go to a bed and prepare it to receive some seeds. I wonder what he is going to plant there—something very nice, for he was particular about getting it smooth, throwing out every loose stone and making the soil very fine.

May 20.
I have made a discovery today. The seed he planted a week ago is coming up in very singular curves. They look something like letters. I am beside myself with curiosity to know if they are letters. If they all broke the soil together I could tell, but they do not. Some are above the ground, while others are below it. A few days will tell.

May 23.
They are letters—not only letters, but a message for me. They spell "Welcome, flower lover." I am delighted. They say that the best way to attack a man is through his stomach. This

will do for the ordinary man, but not an ideal one. I have been working in my garden a great deal, and I presume he must have seen me from an upper window, for the wall between our places is so high that he could not have seen me from his garden or the ground door. I am delighted at my success. This bookworm flower lover has been made to feel a sympathy. He has been attracted to one who loves what he loves.

And now let us see whether the seed planted in his heart will grow like the plants he loves so well. But I must respond to his greeting. Evidently he is an ideal person or he would not have taken such an ideal method of communication. He will look for a reply in kind. Can you not give me some condensed sentiment about flowers that I may put it in the ground for him to read when the letters spring up? I have hunted for something beautiful, impressive, ideal, but can find nothing to suit me.

May 26.
Your letter is received, and I am delighted with your suggestion. You are right in saying that the words are the most beautiful, the most touching and comprise the most of any written or spoken about flowers. "Consider the lilies of the field; they toil not, neither do they spin, and yet I say unto you that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." The words are a poem in themselves, a far more effective poem than if they had been written out in stanzas with a rhyme in every second line. But I can only give a part of them in flower letters. Complete they would take up too much room. Two or three words would be quite enough to suggest the whole. I think I shall put in only lilies, and they to read, "They toil not."

June 10.
Not being willing to wait for the seed to spring up, I planted the words in lilies. I did it at night, and when the sun shone bright in the morning it glistened on the dew that sprinkled my message. I found that I had planted them so as to form pretty well shaped letters. I have been in hopes that my correspondent would permit me to see his appreciation of my work. It seems to me that were I a man and a woman arranged so beautiful a message in so beautiful a method I would go out on the balcony and shout my appreciation. But thus far, if he has admired it, he has done so in concealment. For all I know he is completely oblivious to what I have done.

June 30.
Fancy, my dear, your seeing me standing by my window clapping my hands. I was wrong in thinking that my correspondent was unappreciative. On rising this morning and looking down into his garden a touching sight met my eyes. Roses have been in bloom during the month, but my correspondent has not used them for messages till today, and even now he uses only one. Since my last letter there has been time for some seeds to spring into green letters—I know not yet of what plant—and what do you suppose they spell? But first I must tell you that they were planted in a circle, in the center of which was a single rose in full bloom. Indeed, its petals were beginning to fall. I could see several of them under it on the ground. But the words that inclosed them—they were quoted from Moore's beautiful poem "The Last Rose of Summer." "Oh, who would inhabit this bleak world alone?"

Now, hasn't this been a unique bit of lovmaking? And yet all the girls in the town have been living in the delusion that this man was not to be won from his castle. I have broken down the wall, as I planned, or have at least drawn him to the top of it, for on going into my garden after breakfast a head appeared above it and my neighbor stood—on a ladder—looking at me.

"I should have claimed the privilege of a neighbor," he said, "before this, but—"

"You were more interested in your flowers than in those living beside you."

"I have noticed that you have the same taste."

"Indeed, I love them dearly."

"No man can love flowers as a woman will love them, but I confess I enjoy them."

And so the dialogue went on. Seeing that my water pot was empty, he jumped down into my garden and, taking it from my hand, went to the faucet and filled it for me and sprinkled my plants.

July 30.
A month has passed since I wrote you, my dear—a month of rare happiness. My flower lover has mounted his ladder and jumped down over the garden wall nearly every day. He is not bookish at all, though I know he is a great reader. He doesn't seem to care for intellectual women, which is lucky for me. He says that I must have a rare identity or I would never have conceived that idea about the lilies. I suppose I should confess to him that you gave me that, but I can't, really. I doubt if a woman capable of laying a trap for a man and catching him in it can have a very tender conscience.

Aug. 15.
This has been the summer of my life. But the flowers—oh, the poor flowers!—which have brought all this happiness! They have been dying for water, and, shameful to relate, we have been so absorbed in each other that we have not noticed that while we have been in lilies they have been shriveling for want of attention. Oh, the pity of it!

Aug. 18.
We are engaged.

Skyrocket Still Holds Supremacy Among Fireworks

THE skyrocket, with its possibilities of flight, color and variegated display, still holds its position of primacy as the most beautiful of all fireworks. The firing composition extends around a hollow, conical bore for three-quarters of its length. When fired the bore fills with heated gas, which, forcing its way down through the narrow central orifice, urges the rocket up through the air. Above the firing composition is a plaster of paris plug, through which a fuse communicates with the head, which contains the stars, sparks, serpents, crackers or gold, and silver rain to be scattered by bursting fire as soon as the rocket has reached its highest point.

These beautiful effects, which experts call the "garbure," are largely trade secrets, always kept inviolate by the firms possessing them. In successful experiments with garbure for rockets and shells the pyrotechnist finds his richest rewards, while failures are often attended by unforeseen destruction of property or life.

Some of the later devices in rockets are of surpassing beauty in grace of motion, brilliancy of fire and variety of color. The new "golden cloud" rocket, for example, presents to the eye, at the highest point of its fiery flight, a huge and gorgeous cloud mass, blazing brilliantly for some moments and dropping streams of fire far below. How such an expansive and continued display can follow upon the flight of so small a projectile is a secret save to a few of the higher guild of pyrotechnists. The larger rockets of this type—they cost \$8 each—fairly fill the upper air with fire of dazzling brilliancy.

Even more impressive and wonderful is the "mammoth balloon rocket," which makes the largest aerial display yet achieved by pyrotechnic skill. At a height of 600 feet this rocket releases simultaneously seven balloons with variegated signal stars attached. These float in the air for some time, burning with changing colors of intense brilliancy. With these the patriotic citizen can burn up his money quickly. They are sold for \$12 each. Another high novelty is the "diamond chain" rocket, which rises to a great height and then projects a series of fiery chains with diamond shaped links, which change swiftly in color as they slowly descend and finally disappear in the distance amid a shower of colored stars and golden rain.

COLONEL MARTIN'S BANQUET.

First One to Commemorate the Fourth of July.

The first banquet to commemorate the Declaration of Independence took place at Colonel Martin's hotel in Boston on July 4, 1780. The following was the toast list:

- First—"The grand congress of the United States."
- Second—"General Washington and the American army."
- Third—"His most Christian majesty the king of France."
- Fourth—"His most Catholic majesty the king of Spain."
- Fifth—"The strength and unity of the triple alliance."
- Sixth—"The council of the Massachusetts state."
- Seventh—"The new levies for the war in 1780."
- Eighth—"General Lincoln and the officers and soldiers in captivity."
- Ninth—"The Marquis Lafayette."
- Tenth—"May the officers of the Boston regiment be spirited; may they be supported in making the regiment of the town respectable."
- Eleventh—"To the memory of General Montgomery and all the officers and soldiers who have fallen in the glorious cause of liberty."
- Twelfth—"May Americans never forget that virtue, valor and science (wisdom) are the bulwarks of their high beneficence."
- Thirteenth—"May the anniversary of American Independence be celebrated till time shall be no more."

THE FIRST CELEBRATION.

Joy and Festivity in Philadelphia on the Fourth of July, 1777.

Of the event in Philadelphia, where the Fourth had been born the previous year, a contemporary writes in the Pennsylvania Packet of July 8, 1777: "Last Friday, being the first anniversary of the independence of the United States of America, was celebrated in this city with joy and festivity. About noon all the armed ships and galleys in the river were drawn up before the city, dressed in the gayest manner, with the colors of the United States and streamers displayed, and at 1 o'clock, the yards being properly manned, they began the day by a discharge of thirteen guns from each ship and one from each of the thirteen galleys in honor of the thirteen United States.

"In the afternoon an elegant dinner was prepared for the congress then in session here, to which all distinguished citizens and strangers of eminence were invited. * * * The Hessians bands of music, captured at Trenton on the 26th of December last by General Washington, attended and heightened the festivity with some fine performances suited to the occasion, while a corps of British deserters, being drawn up before the door, filled up the intervals with feus de joie."

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