The LANDSWOMAN

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CHRISTMAS NUMBER 1/6 DEC: 1920

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THE LANDSWOMAN

The Journal of the Land Girl and Every Country Woman

Editorial and Advertising Offices: Priory Lodge, Orpington, Kent.

Christmas.

The Christmas Tree.

All this night bright angels sing;
Never was such carolling.
Hark! a voice which loudly cries,
"Mortals, mortals, wake and rise;
Lo! to gladness
Turns your sadness;
From the Earth is risen a Sun—
Shines all night, though day be done.

Wake O Earth! Wake every Thing!
Wake and hear the joy I bring,
Wake and joy; for all this night,
Heaven and every twinkling light.
All amazing,
Still stand gazing;
Angels, powers, and all that be,
Wake, and joy this Sun to see!

Christmas Carol, 1633.

Christmas Greetings

To "The Landswoman" from the MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE.

I fully realise the important part that women have to play in the rural life of this country, and every movement which can give them help and encouragement in their work, either on the land itself, or as home-makers in the villages, has my warmest sympathy. I welcome, therefore, the excellent progress which has been made by the newly formed National Association of Landswomen, which carries on the splendid war tradition of the Women's Land Army.

There are, no doubt, difficulties to be overcome, but women's special gifts, and proved experience in many farming operations will, I am convinced, be of material assistance in the deliberations of the new County Committees and Councils of Agriculture, and I attach much value to their co-operation in agricultural reconstruction.

Meanwhile, I send to every reader of the "Landswoman" my best wishes that Christmas may bring them the real happiness and satisfaction which come from a sense of work well done in the interests of their country.

Lee of Fareham.

VOCATION.*

This be my pilgrimage and goal,
Daily to march and find
The secret phrases of the soul,
The evangels of the mind.

While easy tongues are lightly heard,
Let me with them be great
Who still upon the perfect word
As heavenly fowlers wait.

In taverns none will I be seen
But can my daemon teach
My cloudy thought to wash all clean
In the bright sun of speech.

John Drinkwater.

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Mistletoe.

FEW people know the history of the mistletoe and why the custom of hanging it in our houses at Christmas-time and kissing underneath these clusters of white shining berries came about. Our custom of decorating the home with mistletoe goes back for centuries, to the ceremonials of the Druids. We hear it spoken of as the sacred mistletoe of the Druids, and it is a reminder to them of their winter custom of keeping green things indoors as a refuge from the spirits of the wood, exiled by the severities of cold and snow—a really very beautiful idea. They were such plant lovers, these men of old time. Because of its pagan associations, mistletoe was long forbidden in the churches, and if we come to think of it we do not often use it in our church decorations to-day. However, about five centuries ago assemblies were held in public squares to greet the sacred plant, and its continual use as a protection against spells is reported in Worcestershire, where the farmer offers it to the first cow that calves *after the new year,* thereby securing his stock against illness and trouble for a whole year.

In Germany, if you will take the trouble to carry a sprig of mistletoe into an old house, the ghosts who live there will appear to you, and by means of it you may force them to answer your questions.

The symbolism of mistletoe in Druid rites was spirit, hence its relations to spirits, for like the orchids, it grew not on the earth, but in the air or the sacred oak. When the Druids required it at the end of the year, a wonderful ceremony took place. The mistletoe was cut by a white-robed priest, with a golden sickle, and was not allowed to touch the ground, a white cloth being held for it as it fell. Two white bulls were then slain beneath the oak where it had grown, and its twigs were distributed among the people, who placed them over doors, or twined and carved them into rings and bracelets to keep off evil. Mistletoe is believed to be a remedy against fits, witches, apoplexy, poison, tremors, consumption, and the like. The wide extension of the plant is due to the birds that eat its sticky berries and carry its seeds from tree to tree. Its fruit ripens after the snow begins to fly—for which perversity it may be said to entitle itself to renown for strength. Technically speaking, it is a parasite in that it derives most of its food from the tree on which it lives, sending out feelers or rootlets which pierce through the bark right into the inner recesses of the tree's life, and from there it sucks up the sap or food made by the tree for its own consumption. However, the mistletoe is not entirely dependent upon its stolen provender, it has a few leaves with which to make food and thus help to nourish it. And, moreover, the mistletoe was not always the bare parasite it is to-day; it was once a tree, until its wood was used for the Cross of the Creator, after which it shrank to its present proportions. There has always been much discussion and controversy as to the tree used for making the Cross of Christ, but personally I have always thought it must have been hewn from the mistletoe. Everything seems to point to this, as undoubtedly it was originally a tree, but after being used to bear the sacred Body of its Creator it could no longer be used for any earthly purposes, and so was destined to live as near as possible to its Creator, worshipped by the Ancients as a spirit, and never allowed contamination with things of earth, to live nestled into the heart of a tree, one of God's thoughts. The mistletoe has always been considered sacred, the old-time monks named it "Wood of the Cross," and swallowed chips of it or water in which it had been steeped, or wore fragments about their necks as cure for all diseases.

The Girl on the Land.

"When have I known a boy
Kinder than this my daughter, or his kiss
More filial, or the clasping of his joy
Closer than this?"

Thus did a mother think,
And yet her daughters had been long away,
Estranged, on other business, but the link
Was fast to-day.

This mother, who was she?
I know she was the Earth, she was the Land.
Her daughter, a gay girl, toiled happily,
Sheaves in her hand.

ALICE MEYNELL.

A Mediæval London Garden.

WE published some time ago an article showing how traces of the rural character of parts of London survive in the names which they still bear. These cover, of course, in many districts, fields and gardens, orchards, and farmyards long since obliterated by streets of houses, of which no such reminder, if indeed any record, survives. And there are others whose sites may be discovered unawares by those whose musty business it is to search old documents. The following description of a garden in Holborn comes from such a source. It is from an ancient statement of accounts preserved in the office of the Duchy of Lancaster, and we can imagine the grey-haired old antiquary when he happened upon it sighing for a real breath of the country which it must have conjured up in his mind.

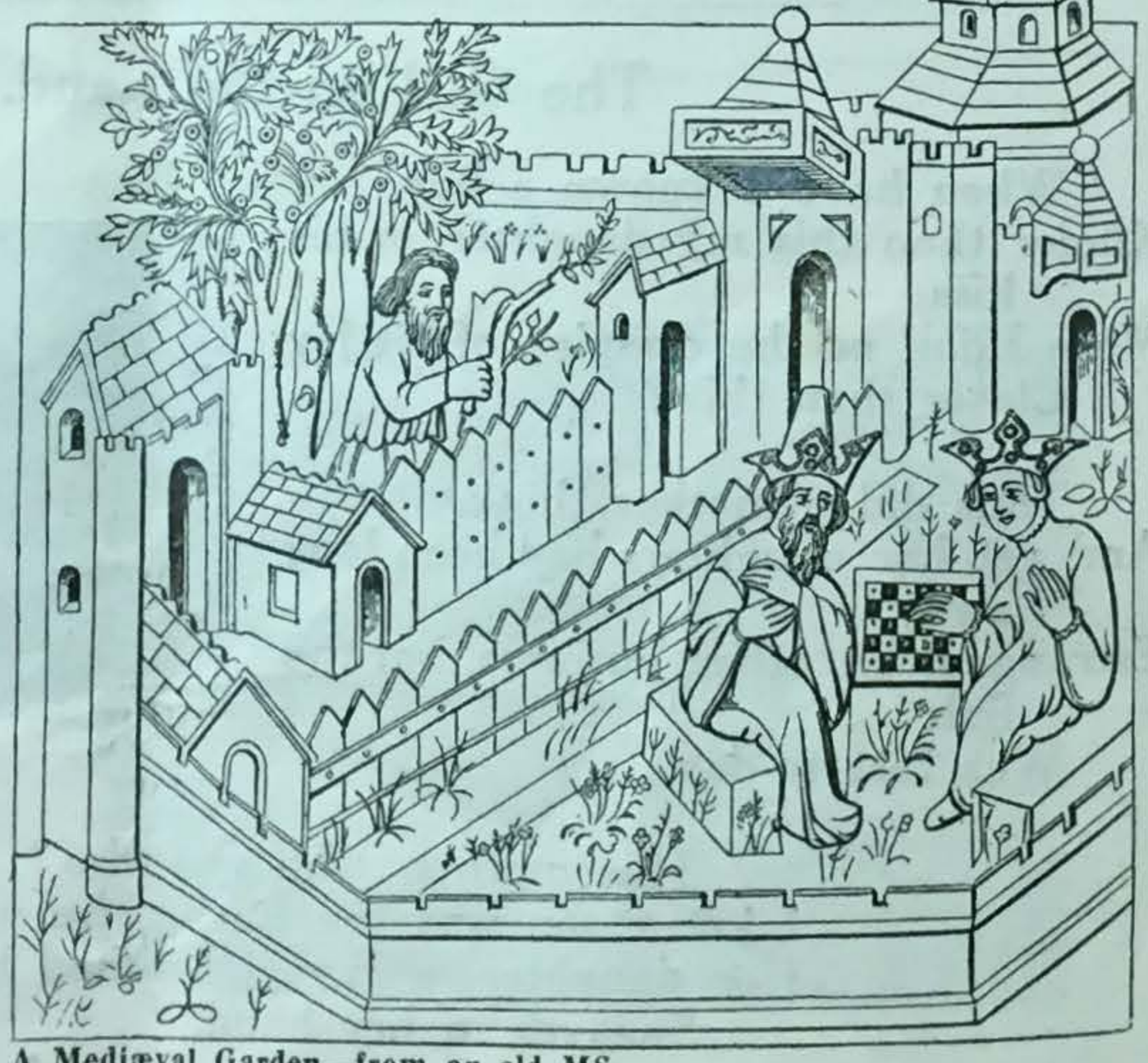
The statement of accounts was rendered by the bailiff of the Earl of Lincoln, and dealt with the profits from and expenditure upon the Earl's garden in Holborn in the twenty-fourth year of the reign of Edward I—that is, in 1296. We learn from it that apples, pears, large nuts (probably walnuts), and cherries were produced in sufficient quantities, not only to supply the Earl's table—no small matter in those days when great nobles kept open house—but also to yield a profit by their sale. The comparatively large sum of £9 2s. 3d. in money of that time, or about £135 in modern currency, was received in one year from the sale of fruit alone. The vegetables cultivated in this garden were beans, onions, garlic, leeks, and some others which are not specifically named. Hemp was also grown there, and some description of plant which yielded verjuice—possibly sorrel. Verjuice was much used in the sauces and other culinary preparations of those days, and it seems to have been prepared either from sorrel or from grape-juice or vine leaves. The Earl had vines, too, in his garden, and we may gather that they were held in some estimation, for cuttings of them were sold.

The stock purchased for the garden comprised cuttings or sets of four varieties of pear trees, and it is stated that these cuttings were for planting. The names of the pears are given :—St. Règle, Martin, Caillou, and Pesse-pucelle, and from other sources we may get some idea of their quality. The Caillou, known also as Kaylewell, was a Burgundy pear, hard and inferior, and fit only for baking or stewing. The St. Règle was also a French variety, as was the Pesse-pucelle or Pas-pucelle, and these two seem to have been the best of the four, for their price in the fruiterers' shops of the period ranged from 10d. to 2s. or 3s. a hundred. Martins sold at 8d. and Caillou at 1s. The Earl's bailiff seems to have made a fairly good selection, for there were other qualities to be bought at 2d. and 3d. a hundred.

No varieties of apple are mentioned among the purchases, but doubtless the garden was well stocked with them, for they were certainly cultivated in England many years before the date of this account. The existence of one apple-garden is noted in the Domesday Book. Apples were considered more wholesome than pears, which, unless cooked, were regarded as cold and indigestible, whereas apples were classed as " soft " fruit. It is quite possible, indeed probable, that the Earl grew peaches, for there is a record that Edward I. planted them in his palace garden at Westminster in 1276. The King also planted gooseberries, but this was not an innovation, and we may believe that the Earl had them as well. Doubtless, too, he had mulberries, which appear to have been grown in England from a very early period. Strawberries and raspberries were probably not included. They were certainly eaten at the time, but they were looked upon as wild fruit and not generally cultivated, since they could be found plentifully in the woods.

The only flowers mentioned in the Earl's garden are roses, of which a quantity was sold, producing three shillings and twopence. But there were certainly other flowers which are not mentioned because they did not come into the bailiff's account of purchases or sales. Roses and lilies were bought in 1276 for the royal garden at Westminster which we have already mentioned, and sunflowers, violets, and poppies are among the flowers noted in a very old manuscript as proper to a " noble garden." The narcissus is also included, and doubtless the Earl, or the Countess, insisted on having all of these. Unquestionably, too, the gilly flower,

(*Continued on Page 281.*)



A Mediæval Garden—from an old MS.

UNFORTUNATE OVERSIGHT ON THE PART OF A PRACTITIONER CALLED AWAY FROM HIS CHILDREN'S PARTY TO ATTEND A PATIENT IN HIS CONSULTING ROOM.

[*Reproduced by permission of the Proprietors of "Punch."*]

Christmas Day.

BY AN OLD CURMUDGEON.

CHRISTMAS is on us; stair and hall
  Are decked with sprigs of mistletoe,
And berries high on every wall
  Blush blessings on the world below.
One cannot doubt the best of luck
  Must come where holly berries are
(But why the dickens have you stuck
  A bunch in my tobacco jar?)

How sweet, when Christmas morning breaks,
  To feel the edge of winter's knife;
This seasonable weather makes
  One understand the good in life.
(By jove! the thaw has burst the main
  And sent the water far and wide!
It's fairly easy to explain
  What people mean by Christmas-tide.)

The fiends of storm and rain and snow
  Have left their work and gone away;
For, though the fields are white, we know
  It's always fine on Christmas Day.
(The rain is pelting on the roof!
  I lent my gamp the other night,
And what I call my waterproof
  Is not exactly water-tight.)

The carol-singers—happy boys,
  They sing their merry songs of praise,
And call to mind the season's joys,
  With simple unaffected lays.
(I'm not a savage-minded man;
  They may not come, but if they do,
I fancy that my water-can
  Will teach those boys a thing or two.)

And then the Waits—sweet nightingales—
  With what convulsions of delight
We hear them tell their tuneful tales
  At twelve or one o'clock at night!
(I've stored a most effective show
  Of missiles in a handy spot,
And people who are in the know
  Proclaim me quite a tidy shot.)

'Tis time to love one's fellowmen,
  Fair Charity her heart unlocks.
(There's that confounded bell again!
  The postman wants his Christmas box.)
The time of turkeys, savoury meat,
  Plum puddings, fizz, and such-like cheer,
(I'd infinitely rather eat
  A chop, with half-a-pint of beer.)

Poultry Notes.

By W. Powell-Owen, F.B.S.A.

IT is surprising how few breeds there are that may be termed popular. Most breeds have their followers, but only a handful are very extensively kept. And yet there is always the desire on the part of the beginner to take up an uncommon breed in an endeavour to be different from the rest, and assuming, no doubt, that egg-production varies very little among all of them. In real practice it is just the opposite, so many of the varieties that attract for colour being quite poor layers. I will try simply to sift matters!

Most Popular Breed.—The most popular breed to-day is undoubtedly the White Wyandotte, and it would be quite fair to say that the White Wyandotte leads for *number* of eggs per annum. But each breed has its drawbacks, and when considering the merit points one should also bear in mind any defects. The defect in the White Wyandotte is the small egg that is so noticeable in very many strains. The White Leghorn presses the White Wyandotte very closely for both number of eggs and popularity, but it is more prolific in the summer months when the Wyandotte takes "broody" rests. In the winter the White Wyandotte would lead for egg-production, and, of course, it is during this period when eggs fetch the highest prices—a valuable asset.

Size of Egg.—I have always advocated the sale of new-laid eggs by weight, and had this been adopted I do not think we should have had this bugbear of small eggs. I admit that pullets lay small eggs, but when we find pullets laying 1½ oz. eggs, as many do, then that is not worthy of our poultry industry. I aim at 1¾ oz. pullet eggs because within a few months they should scale 2 oz., and the latter is my standard size and the one to aim at. We do not want 3 oz. eggs until they are sold by weight, but we do not want the "pigeon" egg. In the past we have worked to injudicious standards. In our laying tests we scored by numbers, and the hen laying most eggs took the premier award without regard to weights or even market values. As a result breeders have gone along that channel which ended up with number of eggs per annum only.

The Standard Egg.—Our laying tests are now setting the fashion of the 2 oz. standard egg, and as time goes on and breeders tread the right path we should get back what has been lost in the past. In the N.U.P.S. Laying Test at Bentley each pen of five pullets is allowed to lay 100 second-grade eggs during the twelve months of the trials, all small eggs beyond that number do not count in the pen's score. That is a step in the right direction. Selective breeding will obtain for us the standard egg, and one should bear in mind the part that rearing plays in regard to size of egg. The utility poultry-keeper is often a bad rearer, and as a sequence the pullets at maturity are undersized and produce small eggs. The secret of success in rearing is first to get a good frame so that it will take the flesh that follows. Secondly, too early laying should be prevented because growth stops with the first egg, and we have an immatured pullet that will lay small eggs and be ruined for breeding purposes. No egg should be incubated that does not scale 2 oz.

Winter Laying of Leghorns.—Taking an average of flocks, I prefer the Black Leghorn for winter egg-production as against the White. It seems hardier and does better on soils that are heavy or damp. For town runs, too, where white birds would not look so attractive, the Black Leghorn would be ideal from the colour standpoint. There are drawbacks here, however. It is a breed that is difficult to get true in leg-colour, which should be yellow. As a rule the legs come black, but one can help matters by selective breeding. For instance, the male influences exteriors, and if you use a cockerel that has yellow legs that will improve the colour of the shanks in the progeny. Another drawback lies in the fact that Black Leghorns are not so docile as the White, but that is an asset on the farm or free range, as these busy-bodies forage so well. But one can help matters during the rearing stages by making the birds friendly. A further drawback with Leghorns and light breeds generally is the small weights made by the cockerels.

Notes on Breeding.—It is very noticeable how self-coloured breeds are at the top for popularity and laying records, seeming to prove that one does not want to add colour-points in excess for fear of this being at the expense of the eggs. But there are many poultry-keepers who do not like just white and just black fowls, and are willing to lose a few eggs and take up a more attractive breed like the Light Sussex or the Rhode Island Red. In such cases they should learn all about breeding for points so that they can mate their pens to the best advantage to obtain exteriors, while at the same time they concentrate also upon egg-laying merits. In the breeding of poultry the females influence size in the progeny, while the males have the most voice in the exteriors. If in Light Sussex or White Wyandottes you use a feather-legged male, this defect will be very noticeable in the progeny. For the same reason one should not select for breeding utility specimens a male with very coarse wattles or comb. In Rhode Island Reds, too, never use a male bird that has a lemon-coloured neck-hackle, or this defect will be handed down. By observing a certain glaring external fault in an adult cock it should be possible to trace his son and grandsons through the same failing.

All-round Breeds.—The Rhode Island Red stands next to the White Leghorn for number of eggs, and in most strains size of egg has not yet been lost. Next we come to the Light Sussex, one of our best table breeds, a very rapid grower, a splendid winter layer, and full of hardiness. But we must not expect such high egg-records from this breed, because it is an all-rounder with laying well above the medium. Being a table variety, the Sussex needs to be carefully fed, as it inherits the tendency to fatten and results are poor by way of eggs, and mortality heavy directly one gets the birds overfat. Fat hens are always a source of trouble, and are far from profitable. Apart from egg-production, overfat hens will fail the owner during the breeding season, giving much trouble from infertility and weak germs, and as a sequence weakly chicks. For this reason one should not mix all breeds, but should adopt a

(*Continued on Page 282.*)

A Timely Reminder.

Do not look a Gift Horse in the Mouth.

Heifers.

THE handling of freshly-calved heifers requires most careful study, and provided the heifer is a nice, well-bred beast, it must be remembered that a good cow will be lost or won, at the time she comes down with her first calf. It is therefore of prime importance to manage her properly, and a few words concerning the subject will not be out of place.

No trouble must be spared throughout the whole of the "breaking in" process, and the attributes that will win are patience, perseverance and firm methods. The latter does not imply rough treatment, as this will be hopeless and mar everything; but the heifer must not be allowed to have her own way.

At the same time it is by no means the rule for heifers to be always troublesome with their first calf, as a great number are perfectly quiet and easy to milk, and settle down like old cows from the very first. A certain number, however, will prove fractious, and evince a desire to kick the milker, pail, and stool over, at sight.

Now let it be stated at once, that with very few exceptions this never denotes viciousness and bad temper; it is purely a matter of nervousness. It is absolute nonsense to strap up a heifer that starts kicking when she is first milked, and the strap is never used on my farm unless the beast is a confirmed kicker, and dangerous to anyone milking her. Of course, there are a number of very bad kicking cows for which no other cure can be found, but these do not come under the same heading at all, and call for no comment here.

The newly-calved heifer must be approached very quietly, and nothing should be done that is likely to frighten her. My advice is, to take the stool and sit close up to her, as I have found the closer the seat, the less likelihood of being unseated. The teats must be handled *very gently*, as quite a lot of kicking and flurry is caused as a result of the milker grasping them roughly, for it must be recollected that the teats of a young heifer are very tender and sensitive at this stage. It is not a bad plan to rub them with a little vaseline or lanoline for a day or two after calving, as this will help to render them less sensitive.

There is no golden law for handling a skittish young heifer, as one cannot lay down any hard and fast rule for the form their behaviour may take. However, the principle I always follow, when a heifer is a bit rough to handle, is to have an assistant at her head.

Exception may be taken to this procedure on account of the time taken and labour lost, but I can only state that it seems very bad policy, in my opinion, if one is not prepared to sacrifice something to make the newly-calved heifer a good milker. If she is strapped up directly she starts kicking, she is not cured, but merely prevented from doing so. The kicking is very rarely indeed the outcome of vice or temper, and it is a great pity to do anything but cure it by reasonable methods. Apart from anything else, it must be a surprise for a young beast to be milked at all, and if she lets out a bit with her hind legs, as indicative of her wonder at this strange operation, who can blame her? It is only a matter of time, and if a good dairy cow is wanted, she must be broken-in properly.

["*Practical Cowkeeping*," P. E. WILSON, 1/-]

The Ideal Dairy Cow.

THE cow should have a small head, a large muzzle and mouth, a clean-cut nose or face, that is, one free from fleshy growth, a straight or dishing forehead, bright prominent eyes, and a thin, long neck and moderate-sized horns. She may be from one to two inches lower at the shoulders than at the hips. Her general form, when looked at from the side, should be wedge-shape, and the same shape should be apparent when viewed from the rear. The shoulders may be thin, lean and bony; the back rather long and rugged; the loin fairly broad, but not too broad, or the animal will tend to put on beef. The hip should be thrown well ahead, which gives a long, powerful hind quarter. The thighs, of necessity, are thin; the flank well up; the hind leg, usually, quite crooked, and the tail long. If the tail be long, it is an indication that the vertebræ of the back bone are somewhat loosely united, which is an indication of good milking qualities. The pony-built, smooth-made, short-bodied, rotund cow is seldom a good milker. The teats should be sizeable and placed wide apart; the limbs neither too small nor too large. The udder should not be very pendent or loose, and should extend well to the rear, also well to the front, and should have a broad and firm setting on the abdomen. The animal should have a rugged, rather lean, but not a delicate appearance. All animals except those kept for speed, should have rather short limbs, as this indicates, to some extent, constitution and power. The milk veins, which extend from the udder forward on the abdomen, should be large and prominent. These indicate that the cow is a great milker, or, in other words, that an ample supply of blood has been furnished to the udder by the arteries, and hence a large amount of blood must be returned through the veins. In time, the veins enlarge in order to make room for the return of the blood from the udder. In some of the better milking strains, these large veins are inherited.

["*Principles of Agriculture*," BAILEY (MacMillan).]

Her Friends.

Something that Begins with "T."

By Kay Cleaver Strahan.

CHAPTER ELEVEN.

He hadn't. When I went into the house yesterday afternoon I found all of my family, his nose wrinkled up with worry, talking to nearly neighbour. It was his first call on us, and in the maze of my astonishment it seemed to me for an instant that he was dressed in bright blue from head to foot. He was not, of course; he just had on his best and brightest blue necktie, and in his button hole (shades of the departed cattle!) he wore a large spray of the pretty poisonous blue flowers.

Said I, far too effusively, "How do you do?" and then, to Pat, "Why didn't you call me, dear?"

"Yes," said nearly neighbour, looking at Pat accusingly, "and that's what I'd like to know. He told me, ma'am, that you was out."

All of my family squirmed miserably: "I thought—" he began.

And I thought it was best not to hear what he had thought, so I interrupted and rescued him: "Of course," I said, "and I was out."

"'Course," agreed all of my family, "else how could you have come in?"

"I have came," said nearly neighbour, ignoring my explanation and Pat's logic, "I have came to proffer a apology."

"No," I protested, "please not."

"I might'a knew you didn't aim no insult—"

"Truly we didn't know—"

"On course you didn't," agreed nearly neighbour, pleasantly.

I fought about in my vocabulary for something to say. Nearly neighbour's pleasantries seemed to act as narcotics towards my conversational ability; dulling it, deadening it.

"Mr. Mi—Totenberry has a bad cold," contributed all of my family.

"Totenberry," said nearly neighbour, "is a lazy onhealthy, miserly old varmint."

"No, surely," I objected.

"Well," said nearly neighbour, "for them that sets store by him." He finished his phrase off neatly, with a period, so it must have meant something, but I could not imagine what.

"I note," said nearly neighbour, next, "that you carried him a puddin'."

"He is ill," I said.

"But no posies," said nearly neighbour.

"No posies," I echoed, "you see Mr. Mi—Totenberry doesn't care for posies."

"I do," said nearly neighbour, "and *thar's* the difference."

I caught myself squirming about in my chair, exactly as all of my family does when he is embarrassed.

"And I'm here to say," continued nearly neighbour, "that I never et anythin' more tasty than that thar puddin'."

I replied conventionally.

"I fotched on the dish and I done up the mat," said nearly neighbour.

"He means," translated all of my family, "that he has returned the dish and washed and ironed the doily."

Stupidly I stared at all of my family without one thought of reproof. I was wondering whether his knowledge was instinctive and, if not, however he had acquired it.

"Well," said nearly neighbour, "ain't that what I said, young man?"

Whereupon the young man slipped from his chair and sneaked out of the room, basely deserting me.

"You should not have troubled to done up the mat," I said.

"No trouble, ma'am. It were a right purty mat." He smiled. I did not like the smile: it was a sort of sickly silly looking and curved rather insinuatingly. A foolish notion of mine, no doubt, but even yet I do not exactly like the memory of that smile.

Again I replied conventionally.

"I judge," said nearly neighbour, "that you are right handy."

"Yes," I said, and corrected myself, "No."

Nearly neighbour rose: "'It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statures.'" He roared it, rather, and he looked very tall and grim standing so, but I thought he was going, so I stood, too, and was just trying to decide whether I should attempt an answer to his quotation, or say something about his departure, when he sat down again.

"That," said he, as if challenging me to deny it, "is from the Psalms." He pronounced it "Sams."

"We were both sorry about your—affliction," I said.

Again he rose: "'She openeth her mouth with wisdom and in her tongue is the law of kindness,'" he roared.

I thought he had made a mistake about sitting down the first time so, again, I stood.

"And that," said nearly neighbour in a more normal tone of voice, "is also from the Sams." He resumed his chair.

I walked to the window. I felt fearfully warm and fuddled and uncertain. The conversation, if it were a conversation, seemed to be whirling dizzily away in the distance beyond me. I could not follow it, much less catch up with it and understand. I supposed that nearly neighbour was attempting to entangle me in a religious controversy but, like Lotta, I did not want to argue. The sun had gone and left a great pigeon-grey and silver curtain in the west, and over its edge little gold-eyed clouds came peeking; rowdy, runaway little clouds who wanted one more glimpse of the funny earth, I think, before they scampered back to Heaven. For the first time in all my life, I truly believe, I looked at what the sun had left for us to see and thought—that it was past dinner time. I turned from the window:

"Will you stay and have dinner with us?" I invited. At least I meant it to sound like an invitation, but deep down in my heart I knew it was a hint as to the lateness of the hour.

Nearly neighbour replied that if I meant supper he guessed he might as well.

Dinner was scarcely a success. All of my family quite forgot to eat, he was so fascinated by watching

nearly neighbour. I, for a reason which politeness forbids me to mention, lost my appetite. Nearly neighbour's one remark, during the meal, was that he liked his victuals *cooked*. That remark was concerning the salad.

After dinner nearly neighbour stayed, and stayed, and stayed, and stayed, and kept on staying. Like that. For an hour, perhaps, our conversation was spasmodic, in the distressing sense of the word. It twitched, it writhed, it wriggled about piteously; it fainted and fell down and then, bravely and in spite of its agony it rose up again and made a fresh start; until, at last, completely worn out, completely exhausted, it executed one last convulsive effort and died.

"See here," I said sternly to myself, "this won't do. Not any. You are developing nerves. Say something. Anything."

"I can't," whined my vocal organs.

"Try," I commanded. "Begin with 'a' and go right down the alphabet. There is a system. Use it."

"Apples," I said, aloud, and jumped again, "apples, do you think they will do well this year?"

"Don' know," said nearly neighbour.

"Bees. Did you ever consider keeping bees?"

"Naw," said nearly neighbour.

I decided to skip "c" and "d" because I could think of nothing but cows and death for them (odd how they came together); but I did "e" very nicely with Easter and finished off "f" with the fungi growths on the logs; and was trying to evade goitre for "g" when, quite as if he had been following my alphabetical efforts nearly neighbour rose and said he guessed he might as well be getting on.

Two of them," I thought, "in one sentence. How neat."

"There are the chores," I agreed, and wondered now I could have missed that for the "c."

"I'll come again," he said.

"But of course," I answered, "do."

"To-morrow, mebbe."

I had a blessed inspiration: "Only," I said with a smile which I tried to make deprecatory, "you see, to-morrow is Wednesday." It was a simple statement of fact, nothing else, but it worked.

"Well then," said nearly neighbour, "next day, mebbe. And," he went on, "come Sunday, mebbe. I'll hitch up the mare and take you buggy drivin'." He smiled that same silly half-insinuating smile. I hated it. "We'll not take the kid," he finished.

"Always," I objected, "Pat and I spend our Sundays together. And the mare works all week so it seems mean not to allow her to rest on Sunday. Besides, I really don't care for buggy driving."

"Sensible," approved nearly neighbour, "uncommon sensible for a woman."

Chapter Twelve.

After the visit which I detailed last month nearly neighbour did exactly as he threatened to do; he came the next Thursday evening, and then he kept on coming evenings, every other one, right straight along. At first it made me "down-hearted." Fearfully. Then I talked things over very sensibly with all of my family, and we decided that it was worse than silly, nearly sinful, for us to allow one peculiar male person to make life almost unbearable for us. So, on his fifth visit, I introduced him to a pile of books, carefully selected, and then I sat down and read, and so did Pat sit down and read.

Nearly neighbour didn't read. He sat and watched us read. We kept resolutely on. He stayed until half-past nine, his usual hour for departure, and left, as I supposed then, offended and hurt. I was sorry because he was hurt, and glad because I was sure he would not come again.

(*Continued on Page* 283.)

Enjoying Themselves. ["*Farm and Home.*"]

Garden Talks.

By Elsa More, F.R.H.S., Principal of the College of Gardening, Glynde, Sussex.

DECEMBER.

THIS has been written of by many as the most cheerless month of the year in the garden—truly for some this may be so. The vegetable and fruit crops have been safely garnered into store, the flowers we loved have all gone to their rest, only here and there a few stray blossoms remind us of the former charm and glory of the garden, the trees are bare, the last leaves have fallen, and they stand out like gaunt skeletons against the wintry sky. But to the real gardener, the born lover of Nature, to whom the meaning of each step in God's wonder world stands revealed, there can be no dreariness, no monotony; every year, every season, every day, in June or in December, brings with it fresh interest, fresh work, something new to learn about and marvel at. December can never be dreary in the well-managed garden. There can be no dreariness when a ramble round the garden reveals so many pleasant and interesting sights; for instance, a clump of Stainless Christmas Roses in full beauty, a bright little colony of hardy cyclamen, a glowing patch of scarlet "Winter Gladiolus"; here, peeping above the winter mulching, come the plump, green crowns of hyacinths and early daffodils, crucuses, and many other heralds of the coming spring, and when, in mild spells, flowers appear on the primroses, the winter jasmine, the winter honeysuckle, and the perfumed allspice (Chimonanthes fragrans). There is cheerfulness, too, in the berries of the evergreens. Pleasure is derived from the sight of neatly dug borders, well-staked trees, securely-planted roses, fruit and shrubs, smooth, trim lawns, neatly-trained trees on pergolas, walls, and vineries. All this is possible without glass. But in the greenhouses there can be a glorious mass of flowering plants, an abundance of fragrant flowers. Primulas, cyclamen, arum lilies, star cinerarias, heaths, genistas, geraniums, freesias, camelias, poinsettias, early narcissus, Roman hyacinths, mignonette, forget-me-nots, and, above all, the perpetual flowering carnations.

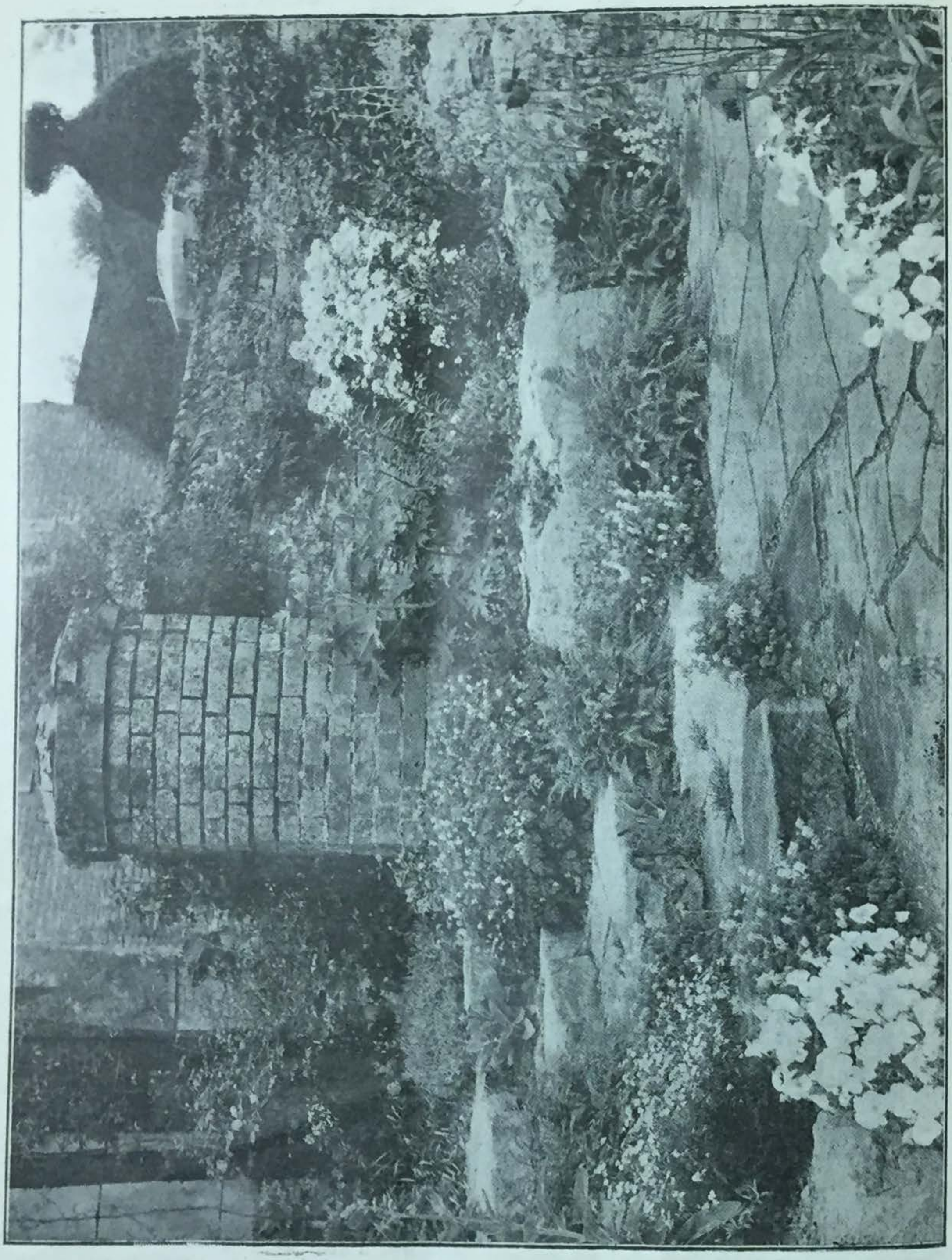
And yet another thought, a thought that makes December so dear to the heart of the gardener, for it was in this last month of the year that the Creator—the Word—the Word was made Flesh and dwelt amongst us, for without Him was not anything made that was made. Not in the spring-time nor in the rose-time did He choose to come, when all the glorious mass of bloom and perfume He had made would be out and bursting to welcome Him, but when all Nature seemed dead and drear, the joys of summer almost forgotten, not a leaf on the trees, the fields covered with snow, no flowers to bring Him joy, no birds to sing to Him; what a desolate time of year to come into His own, and yet how symbolical; and how true it is that in the drear December of so many human lives, when everything around seems dead, and hopes and ideals have fallen to be buried amongst the fallen leaves, suddenly the light streams forth from behind the clouds, and out of the darkness good tidings of great joy are born within the lonely heart, and hope springs eternal once again as it draws near.

To the Feast of the purest Blossom that ever has bloom'd on earth!
An innocent White Star of Heaven bends down to a Human Birth,
With a fragrance of odours celestial in token of measureless worth.
Sweet Flower of the Mother Mary who looks with enraptured face
On her Baby tenderly gathered into earth's most sheltered place.
Sweet Blossom, Thy blooming is short-lived, but radiant with promise and grace.

The flowers dedicated to this month are:—
Christmas Rose.—Anxiety.
Holly.—Foresight.
Mistletoe.—Difficulty surmounted.
Ivy.—Fidelity, friendship, marriage.
Myrrh.—Gladness.

There is a great deal of work to be done in December, both outside and inside the houses. If we have taken advantage of these wonderful autumn days, all planting and transplanting of fruit trees, shrubs, etc., should be nearly finished. It is so much better, when given a fine autumn, to get all the planting done first, and as quickly as possible, so that the trees will settle down comfortably in their new quarters, and with the help of the warm soil and sunny days they will suffer little from the check, and will be ready to stand the cold and wet when it does come. The pruning of climbing roses, etc., although important, can be left until the weather changes and planting becomes impossible, as to tramp about on wet soil is the very worst thing possible, and should be avoided at all costs. Then, with regard to your stored vegetables, are you sure they are all right? Remember, one decaying tuber or root will mean destruction of the whole lot if not removed promptly. Go over your stock of vegetables and remove any showing signs of decay. Potatoes in sacks are especially liable to suffer. It is difficult to detect a bad tuber unless it lies near the outside of the sack, when a wet spot will denote its presence, and the offender can then be easily removed. But potatoes are not often so accommodating, and a rotten potato is to be found more often than not sitting right in the middle of the sack, infecting all the rest, and usually unsuspected. The only proper way of examining a sack of potatoes is by turning the whole lot out, and going over each carefully before returning it to the sack—takes time, means trouble; but here slapdash and careless workers reap their own reward. A rotting potato left in the middle will soon infect the whole sackful, and all will have to be destroyed. With carrots, turnips, and beetroot—especially beets—the same thing is liable to happen.

If you have a greenhouse or conservatory where you have roses or other climbers, and you have not already thinned their surplus amount of growths, do so without delay. These growths should be thinned out to a few strong, well-placed shoots; at the same time it is a good plan to unfasten the shoots from the rafters, and thoroughly cleanse the roof of the



A Delightful Corner in a Cambridgeshire Garden.

["Gardening Illustrated."]

house. Cleanliness in your greenhouses is one of the most important points to be observed. At Glynde my greenhouses are swept and cleaned, cobwebs removed, etc., *every day*, and before a change of crops the stagings and windows are always thoroughly scrubbed with soft soap and a little disinfectant put into the water. Plants dislike dirty houses, as much as people should dislike their rooms being dirty. Cleanliness and proper ventilation are the secrets of good health. If a plant is not healthy it cannot possibly produce good results. I cannot impress this point too strongly upon readers of THE LANDSWOMAN who have greenhouses. Do insist upon your houses being kept *spotlessly* clean.

Before giving further hints upon the December work, just one or two more points to be observed by those who are lucky enough to have a greenhouse or conservatory. Don't let the glass get dirty. Dirt keeps out light, and all the light possible is needed for the plants during the dark days. Wipe down the panes with a cloth—and those out of reach, tie a cloth round the top of a stick and rub gently up and down the panes.

Don't leave broken panes, get same repaired as soon as possible, as the damp, cold air gets in, causing chills, and the mildew, and any amount of harm to the plants results from having broken panes. Don't water too frequently during the winter months, tap your pots carefully, and only water when the tap sounds hollow, then you will know your plant requires water because it tells you so. Fill the pot up to the brim, avoid giving a little—if a plant wants watering it wants a good meal, just a drop here and there is so old-maidish and stupid, you might as well give half a biscuit to a hungry man; on the other hand, avoid slopping the water all over the pot down on to the staging and then on to the floor. During the winter keep your houses as dry as possible; a damp, moist atmosphere arising from careless watering and wet floors is most injurious. Your blooms will all damp off and leaves turn brown at the edges. Believe me, this is so important, it is not the cold that is injurious, but the damp. Surely this is so with ourselves. If you would only learn to treat your plants as *human* and just like yourselves, you would always be successful in whatever you grew. Don't try and grow carnations in winter unless you can keep a temperature of 50 degrees in your house.

Don't put ferns in the sun. Ferns come naturally from the shade. You will never find ferns on the sunny side of the road. Don't have a smoky lamp or oil-stove inside your greenhouse, rather have no heat there at all. Oil fumes are so harmful to plants, seal up the pores of their leaves and prevent their breathing. If you do happen to have a reliable oil-stove, all well and good; place a brick on top, this radiates the heat and helps to warm the house beautifully. One last thing—when covering your frames with mats or covering on a frosty night, do be careful to see coverings are DRY. Don't imagine that a wet covering of mats or straw will keep out the cold and damp, rather it *creates* a damp atmosphere and chills the plants, doing more harm than good. A covering to be of any use must always be dry.

Dirty pots are not only unsightly, but by filling up the pores of the pots the dirt prevents air reaching the roots. Never put a plant into a dirty pot. Plants hate dirt; they are most fastidious in all their habits, only so few realize this and simply wonder why such and such a plant "never does well for them."

If you will just remember and observe these few hints, I am sure you will be delighted at the results in the bloom, scent, health, and duration of plants living in your greenhouses. It is on these seemingly *small* things that real success hangs.

For the rest of the work :—

VEGETABLES.

ASPARAGUS, RHUBARB, and SEAKALE may be forced if there are conveniences for forcing.

CELERY.—In exposed places should be covered in case of hard frost.

LEEKS AND ONIONS.—The first batches of these can now be sown. If there is a greenhouse, use deep boxes, and over the crocks put just a sifting of rot manure. Sow *thinly* and cover with fine soil. Cover box with sheet of glass and brown paper. Put on shelf in greenhouse over the pipes. Remove glass and paper the very instant the little seeds appear pushing up from the soil. Give all the light possible. Keep seedlings sturdy; if allowed to get weak in the early stages by being kept covered too long, failure will result. You can draw a seed up but you can never push it back. This applies *always* to all seeds. The greatest care is needed in the early stages when they first come into the world, until they have strength and intuition to fight for themselves.

The best onions to sow :—Ailsa Craig, Bedfordshire Champion, Cranston's Excelsior.

LEEKS, the best varieties :—Lyon, Musselburgh, Prizetaker.

LETTUCES.—Sow first batches in shallow boxes, treat and cover in the same way as onions, only germination will be quicker with the lettuce. Uncover immediately the little seed breaks through the soil. Best varieties for early sowing :—Early Paris Market, Tom Thumb, All the Year Round. Early Paris is particularly good for forcing.

BROAD BEANS.—Sow in warm soils and south borders.

CARROTS.—Sow seed on hot bed.

CHICORY.—Place roots in heat and cover with inverted pot; put crock over hole so as to exclude all light.

DANDELION.—Introduce roots into heat to supply a succession of salading. Treat in the same way as chicory.

MUSTARD AND CRESS.—Sow under glass.

MINT.—Lift and box and put in greenhouse if early sprigs are required.

FRUIT.

GOOSEBERRIES should be bunched up as much as possible to keep the soil from the buds, and may be drenched with soapsuds, afterwards being dusted with lime.

PRUNING OF APPLES AND PEARS.—All fruit trees may be proceeded with in many districts. Great care must be taken with regard to the pruning of all fruit trees, and should only be undertaken by those who thoroughly understand the work; it is so easy to cut off, but so impossible to *glue* on again when once the limb has been cut away. Keep and sort into different lengths all possible apple pruning; they come in so useful afterwards for staking—either freesias or greenhouse plants needing support—or the

(*Continued on Page 281.*)

'He did It.'

Words by E. E. GUEST. Music by M. E. HICK

KEY E♭ *Allegro.*

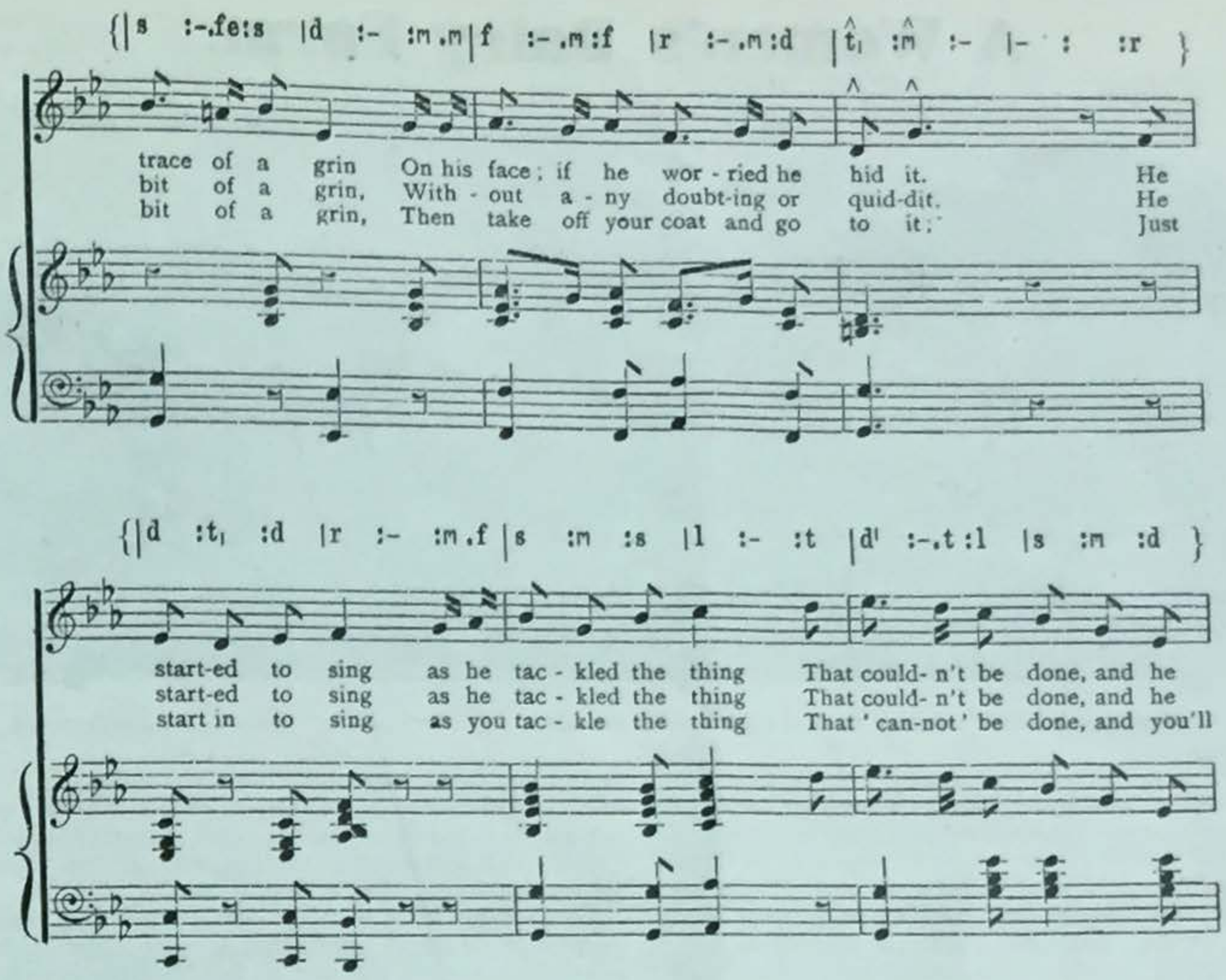
3. There are

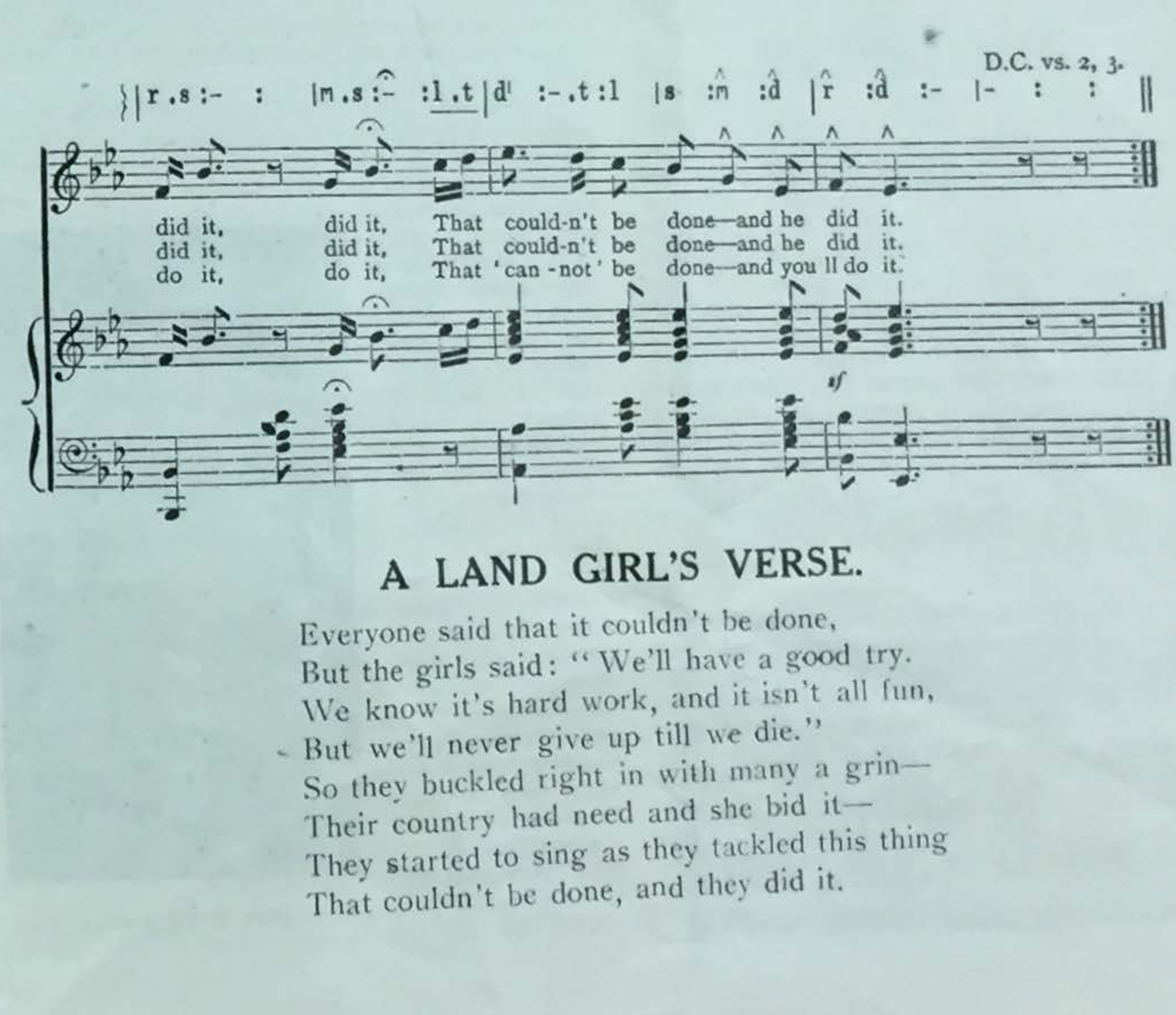
1. Somebo - dy said that it couldn't be done, But he with a chuckle re -
2. Somebo - dy scoffed: 'O you'll nev- er do that: At least, no one ev - er has
(3) thous-ands to tell you it can - not be done, There are thousands to pro - phe - sy

plied: 'That may be it couldn't, but he would be one Who
done it.' But he took off his coat and he took off his hat, And the
fail - ure: There are thousands to point out to you, one by one, The

B♭ t. f. E♭

wouldn't say so till he tried!' So he buc - kled right in with the
first thing we knew he'd be - gun it. With the lift of his chin, and a
dan- gers that wait to as - sail- you. But just buc-kle in with a

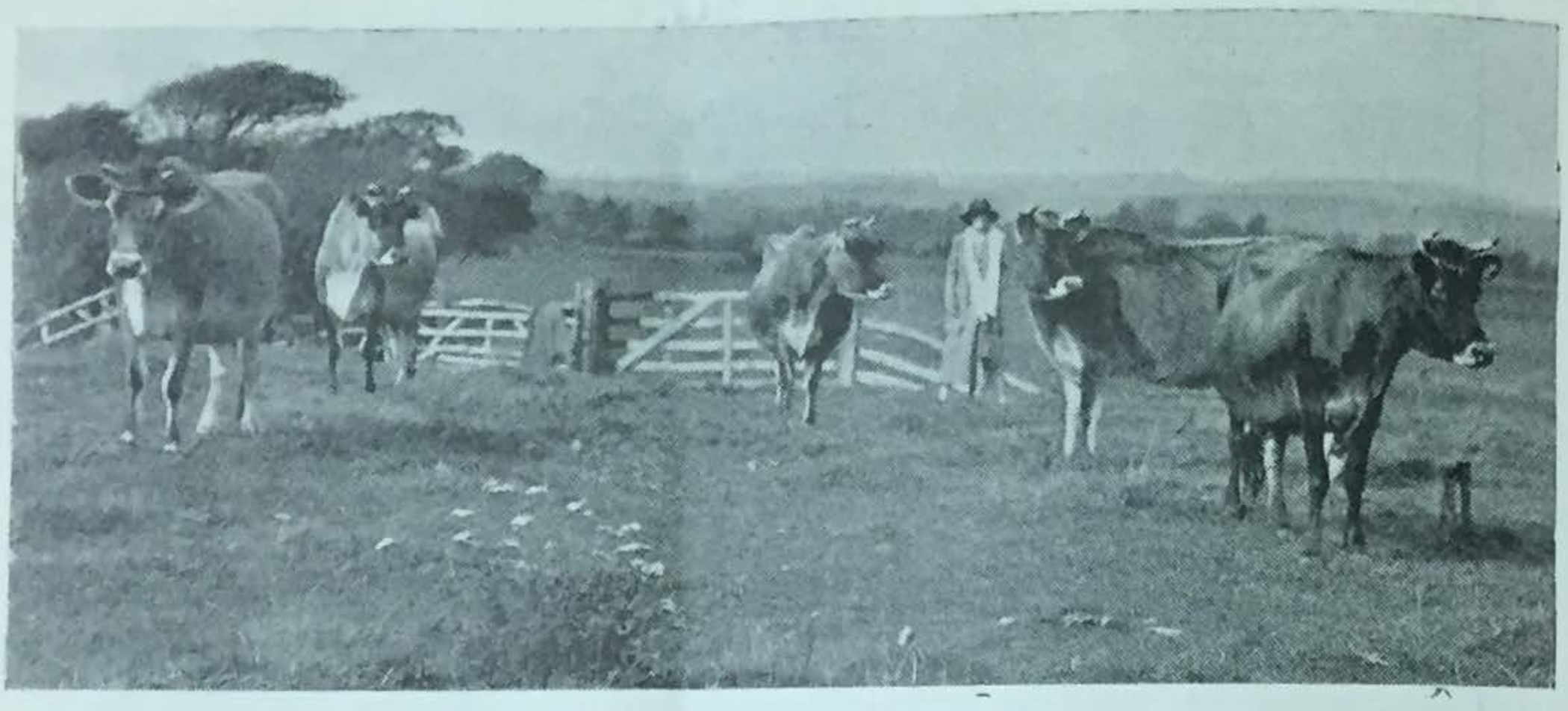




A LAND GIRL'S VERSE.

Everyone said that it couldn't be done,
But the girls said: "We'll have a good try.
We know it's hard work, and it isn't all fun,
But we'll never give up till we die."
So they buckled right in with many a grin—
Their country had need and she bid it—
They started to sing as they tackled this thing
That couldn't be done, and they did it.

A Women's Dairy Farm.



Some of Miss Byng Lucas's Jersey cows on the Sussex marshes. ["*Agricultural Gazette*" *Photograph.*"]

THE large increase of women on the land, not only as employees, but as owners or occupiers of farms, raises the question as to the best breed of cattle for a farm run by women. For a dairy farm, perhaps Jerseys are as suitable as any. They are smaller, more docile, and handier to manage than many breeds, while it is still a debatable point which breed is the most economical producer of milk. Probably no other breed has so large a proportion of its members dotted about in ones, twos and threes throughout the country, and in this way milk records pass unheeded, or are merged with those of other breeds. There are certainly a number of Jersey herds where records are regularly taken and tested by milk-recording societies under the Ministry's scheme; but up to the present, unlike the Shorthorn and the Friesian Breeders' Associations, the Jersey Society does no official work in this direction.

As recently as 1917 Miss Byng Lucas, who was then living at Great Culverden, near Tunbridge Wells, laid the foundation of her select herd of Jersey cows by the purchase of La Sente's Fairy, paying the top price for her at Mr. Carson's sale. This cow had two wins in Jersey to her credit, and was commended at the Manchester Royal. On the other side of the herd, a bull was bought from Mr. Miller Hallett, of Goddington. It was by Pioneers Noble, whose dam, the famous Boutilliere, gave an average of 9,324 lb. of milk in three successive years, and on a one-day test gave 2 lb. 5½ oz. of butter from 39½ lb. of milk.

Early this year Miss Byng Lucas transferred her herd (then consisting of fourteen breeding cows and heifers and the home-bred stock bull, Culverden Pioneer) from Tunbridge Wells to Iford, near Lewes. The bull is black, with the exception of a distinct streak of tan on the top of the back. He is exceptionally deep in the body and well developed for his age, which goes far to account for his show successes. This year, as a two-year-old, he has beaten all older bulls, except his sire, at three of the leading exhibitions. At Darlington he took a first prize, and was reserve for the championship; he also secured first prize and the championship at Tunbridge Wells, and a first at the Royal Counties Show. His most recent success was at the Dairy Show, where he took a first prize.

As the herd is run with the aim of breeding heavy milkers, with sound constitutions, only cows which are eligible for the register of the Ministry of Agriculture will be retained. To this end, daily milk records are taken and supervised by the East Sussex Milk Recording Society.

In addition to the weighing and recording of the milk, weekly valuations of the yields of butter-fat are made by the Gerber test. Work of this kind requires a person to look after it who has some technical knowledge, and Miss Byng Lucas has solved the problem by employing a lady with a Reading training. Miss Hutchings has the whole work of managing the herd, including the calving of the cows, in her hands. Two women provide the labour on the farm, but as latterly butter-making has made great demands on their time a boy is to be added to the staff.

["*Agricultural Gazette.*"]

Miss Byng Lucas.

Garden Notes.—(*Continued from Page 277.*)
longer prunings can be used with great advantage in the herbaceous borders; and they save buying stakes, a great consideration in these days.

BLACK CURRANTS with big buds should be either cut down to the ground if the attack is only a slight one, but if bad root them up, *burn* them, burn every scrap, and thoroughly lime the soil, in the hole and around; do not plant any trees there for some considerable time.

FLOWERS.

BULB PLANTING should be completed.

CAMELLIAS that are showing bloom may have a gentle stimulant, such as ½ oz. superphosphate dissolved in one gallon of water.

CHRYSANTHEMUMS may be propagated by cuttings. The old plants should be cut down after flowering, but should be watered as before and placed in shelter to produce cuttings. Be careful to take cuttings from the base of the plant, and see there is no bud showing, cuttings with a bud and cuttings grown upon the cut-down stem are useless.

FUCHSIAS may now go to rest, and be stowed away for winter.

ROSES.—Roses may be planted. Ramblers and climbing roses pruned and tied in.

CARNATIONS.—The first batch of perpetual flowering carnations may be taken and placed in pure clean sand, in a propagator in greenhouse.

For general work get on with digging and trenching of ground as soon as possible, weather permitting; throw the soil up rough and let the frost break it up and pulverize it. In frosty weather be sure to have manure wheeled on the ground where digging is to be done.

A Mediæval London Garden.—(*Cntd. from Page 268.*)
or clove pink, must have been there, for this was the commonest, and to a certain degree the most esteemed, of all the flowers known to our ancestors. A sixteenth century writer, who terms it the king of flowers, except the rose, boasted that he had gilly flowers "of nine or ten severall colours, and divers of them as big as roses. Of all flowers (save the Damask rose) they are the most pleasant to sight and smell. Their use is much in ornament, and comforting the spirites by the sense of smelling." There was a variety of this flower well known in the early times as the wall gilly flower or bee flower, "because growing in walles, even in winter, and good for Bees." Another flower of common growth in mediæval orchards or gardens was the pervinke, or periwinkle. Chaucer wrote:—

"There sprang the violet all newe,
And fresh pervinke, rich of hewe,
And flowris yellow, white and rede;
Such plente grew there nor in the mede."

As the periwinkle will grow under the shade of trees or lofty walls, it was well adapted to ornament the securely enclosed gardens of early times.

There was a pond in the Earl's garden, and the bailiff expended eight shillings in the purchase of small fish, frogs, and eels, to feed the pikes in it. The account further shows that the garden was surrounded by a paling and a ditch. It was managed by a head gardener who had fifty-two shillings and twopence a year with a robe or livery. He seems to have had numerous assistants employed in dressing the vines and manuring the ground. Their collective wage for the year amounted to five pounds.

Poultry Notes.—(*Continued from Page 270.*)
proper grading system, while before mating up the breeding stock the latter should be examined to see that they are in fit condition. The Orpington and Croad Langshan are like table breeds and call for different feeding systems from other birds because of this natural tendency to put on fat internally.

The Stylish Ancona.—The Ancona is a very handsome breed and a splendid layer of large white eggs, although not equalling the Black or White Leghorn. It has two defects, however, since it is not an easy breed to get the colour-points true. Secondly, it is not over-docile. When on the farm the Ancona is in its glory, as it is a wonderfully active bird and a keen forager. But in confinement it is rather wild and not very particular when scattering the dusty litter over the owner as he enters the house. One does, however, get over this latter drawback where the birds are reared in confinement from the shell, a point that also applies to the Black Leghorn, which is similarly high-strung and not so docile as the White Leghorn or the White Wyandotte. We have now exhausted the most popular and most prolific egg-producers that are very extensively kept, and readers will see that there is not a wide range for selection.

Old-Time Breeds.—When selecting a breed the beginner will get a good idea of the merits of these in mind by referring to the performances set up by them in our Laying Trials. There are many varieties which have merely exhibition or "fancy" qualities to recommend them without any utility merits. There are others which completely lack stamina, while there are many old-time breeds which will some day return to claim popularity. The Black Minorca may be quoted as an example of the latter group, and before the present-day varieties came to the front every poultry-keeper seemed to keep the Minorca. It laid the largest white egg of any breed, and holds the same honour to-day, but not having received attention from breeders, its laying merits have not been cultivated like those of the White Leghorn. Still it furnishes the utility breeder with very suitable material, and as many leading breeders are now taking up the Black Minorca and trapnesting their birds, the day for its revival will surely come. Croad Langshans, Buff Rocks, and White Orpingtons are other breeds of decided merit.

Breeding for Eggs.—While therefore we must admit that the most popular breeds are the best layers, it is true that there are many varieties which can be taken up and bred especially for egg-production. But they should not be selected exclusively; rather should the poultry-keeper rely on the proved breeds in the main while working up one of the promising varieties. Looking back I can call to mind several breeds like the Minorca which were wonderful layers, without the best of housing and feeding and without selective breeding. Now that our knowledge has increased I have no doubt some of the "has-beens" could be revived with much profit in the end.

NOTICE.—Mr. Powell-Owen is willing to answer any individual queries. These must be accompanied by a stamped envelope.

There's a paper, it's colour is yellow,
THE LANDSWOMAN—"Bless it!" we bellow.
North, south, east and west,
We proclaim it the best,
For its Editor's *such* a "good fellow."

CECILY PEMBRIDGE, *Ex-L.A.A.S.*

Something that Begins with "T."—(*Continued from Page 274.*)

He came the next evening. He brought with him a mouth organ. He knew three pieces: "Turkey in the Straw," "Good-by, Little Girl, Good-by," and "Nellie Gray." I won't try to describe that evening. Nobody could. The noise was not so terrible, but he did work so hard with his arms and legs and his hands and feet and his forehead! And he thought he was entertaining us, being agreeable. It should have been funny. It wasn't. It was sad. Quite sad. All the while I sat and watched and I had to be so ashamed for him. It is harrowing, being ashamed for folks who are not ashamed for themselves. Distressing. Depressing. I wanted to do something kind for him, to make up to him for himself. I got out the chafing-dish and fixed some fudge. He wouldn't eat it. Said it was "wimmin's truck."

But the great God of music must be a pitiful God because late that evening, nearly neighbour's mouth organ broke with a squeak and a squeal. He told us not to worry, he thought he could fix it; but he couldn't, I suppose, because the next time he came he brought with him a checker board. He had evidently decided that we were the dullest of folks, and that, if there was to be any sort of entertainment, he would have to furnish it.

When he had gone all of my family threw himself in the hammock, rather as I had thrown myself on the occasion of nearly neighbour's first visit: "Oh, what," he demanded, in a tone of utter despair. "What is the matter with everything?"

I knew how he felt. I longed to comfort him as he had comforted me, but it seemed not wise: "I don't believe anything is the matter with everything," I said, "but I do believe that something is much the matter with nearly neighbour.

"What, do you suppose?" questioned all of my family.

"I have no notion."

And I didn't have any notion, and I kept on not having any notion, until last night when nearly neighbour stalked into the room—Pat was out in the garden—handed me a great bunch of clumsy snowballs and said: "Ma'am, I have came to proffer the holy bands of matrimony."

I was dull. I didn't understand, not any. I thought he must mean a book, or a new musical instrument, so: "Thank you," I said, and looked about for it.

"When,' said nearly neighbour, "should it come off?"

"Only," I said, "off—of what?"

"The date," said nearly neighbour, sternly, "name it." Then he smiled that silly, hateful, half-insinuating smile.

I began to back towards the door. For some time I had been mildly suspicious that nearly neighbour was losing his wits.

"Now, now," said he, crossly this time, "no call to be coy. You and me is past shilly-shally. Name the date."

I had heard that it was wise to humour mad people. "The second of May," I said, and kept on backing.

"But," said nearly neighbour, "that's to-day."

"Yes," I agreed, "that is the date."

"Better make it to-morrer," said nearly neighbour.

"Yes," I agreed, trying to back more rapidly without attracting his attention to my manoeuvres, "yes, make it to-morrow."

I can't tell, intelligently, just what did happen next. He smiled again, and started toward me, and then I felt his great paw-like head on my arm, and there was something about "coy," and a "kiss," and then I pulled away and ran out into the garden and grabbed Pat.

"Old scout," he gasped, "what is it? What is it? Your freckles are all sticking out!"

"Nearly neighbour," I managed, "in there. Quite mad. He didn't, but he —"

"I'll fix him," said Pat, seizing the hoe and marching off before I could stop him.

My legs wrinkled right up under me, and I sat down in the radish bed and listened to my own teeth chatter, until all of my family returned, hoeless and very stern.

"Phyl," he accused, "he says that you promised to marry him to-morrow; that you wanted to marry him to-day, but he wouldn't."

"Mad," I groaned, "I told you! Quite mad."

"Well, I should say he is," agreed all of my family, "he is just naturally hopping mad. He says he has no use for such coyness and that if he hadn't thought you were too sensible to act like that he'd never started courting in the first place, and that for half a cent he'd back out of it now, only he has wasted so much time courting."

That one word, courting, was like a loose end sticking out from the tangle of my wits; it seemed to offer at least a possibility of getting things straightened. I seized it and, very slowly, I was able to unravel the mess and get my thoughts wound neatly on a spool. They came out smoothly, right straight through the "holy bands," the setting of the date, and all. I rolled over, down into the radish bed, and gasped and gurgled.

"Don't *do* that way," said all of my family.

I could not answer him.

"Phyl, old sport," and there was a suspicious quaver in his voice, "I—I guess you kind'a scare me. You act—like like a fit—or something. And you're smashing the radishes. And then—marrying nearly neighbour—"

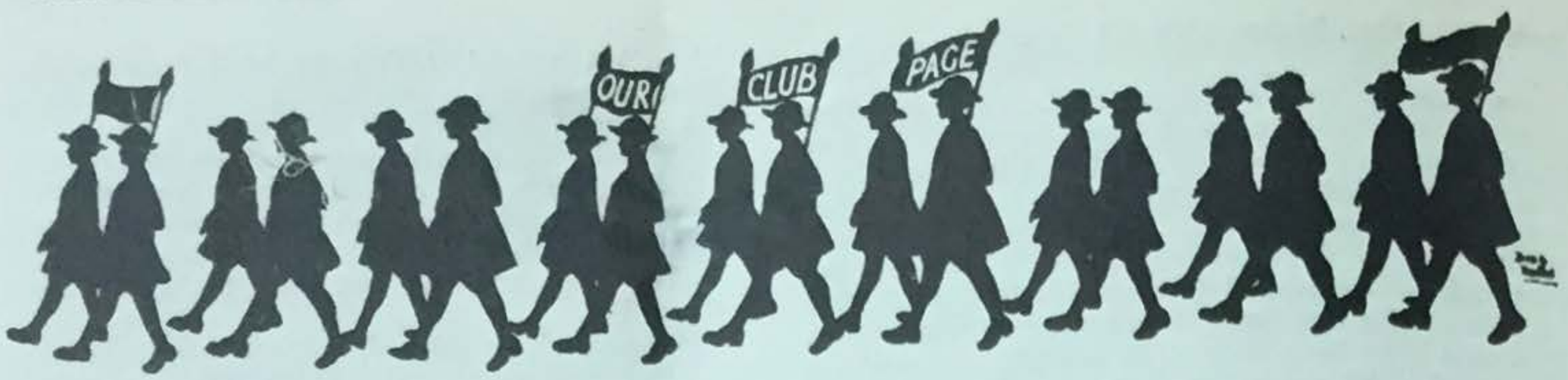
I sat up. "Dear," I said, "it is all a mistake. But we could never in this world explain to nearly neighbour so, I think, we'll have to—lie a little. You go into perch-edifice and tell him that I am a weak hysterical woman. Tell him I have fearful fits, if necessary. Tell him I have thought it over and changed my mind. That I can't marry him. Not possibly."

All of my family was gone a rather long time. When he finally came back: "What did he say?" I questioned.

"I think," answered Pat, with a wrinkle of worry in his nose, "I think he prayed, but I'm not sure. He just naturally did thank God for an awful lot of things, Phyl."

"Such as?" I prompted.

"Such as delivering him from women folks, and I think he thanked God for giving you fits, but I'm not sure about that; but he thanked God for letting him know before it was too late, and then—well, I forget the rest, but he told me to go to the devil and he went home."



Caught!

DEAR GIRLS,—Of course, I must begin my letter by wishing you all a Merry Christmas, and if wishing will do it you will certainly all have the happiest Christmas ever! This is our birthday month, for we are three years old this month, and we have read together thirty-six numbers of our little yellow magazine. When you remember that THE LANDSWOMAN was originally intended to be just a war publication, it is really rather wonderful that we have put up with each other for so long and still seem just as keen as ever to meet in these pages once a month. I rather blushed to publish the limerick about THE LANDSWOMAN, but it seemed hard luck on the writer to omit it; and also it gives one the opportunity, once again, to thank you all for your invariable good temper and keenness, which have made THE LANDSWOMAN the success that it has certainly been. No Editor ever had such delightful readers. I know I have said it before, but I say it again with greater enthusiasm than ever; and I mean it from the bottom of my heart. Thank you, thank you, *thank you* for all your help. And now I expect you are really waiting to get all this preamble over, so that you may grumble because you have not got a double number this year. I am just as sorry about it as you are, but it simply couldn't be done. Not only would the cost of production have been double, but since the postal rates have gone up the postage would have been double, too. So we have tried to do without some of the advertisements and pack the pages as tight as we could with Christmas fare, and we rely on you to forgive our enforced stingyness, for even if this number had been *three* times the size it would not have been big enough to hold all the good wishes which we have in our hearts for you this Christmas.

We are proud indeed to have Christmas greetings from the Minister of Agriculture, and his cheering message of encouragement will make this Christmas number of THE LANDSWOMAN doubly welcome to those of you who are still working on the land. It is good to know that, in the expressed opinion of one who understands, women are essential to the success of rural reconstruction.

* * *

"I thought perhaps you and the readers of THE LANDSWOMAN might be interested to hear about the life in Canada. I came out last May and went right across to Vernon, in the Okanagan Valley, and stayed at the Patricia Ranch. It is all large fruit ranches round there, and we were on our hands and knees weeding onions most of the time. My friend and I had a little wooden shack to ourselves; there was just room to turn round, but no more. Some shack! We had some lovely rides in the evening when our work was done; sometimes we would gallop over the range to the lake and have a swim, but one has to be careful to keep near the horse, for the range cattle will charge anyone on foot, but run from you if you are on horseback. Then there are the rattlesnakes to beware of; their bite is deadly poison, but fortunately they make a curious 'rattling' sound as they move, which gives you time to escape. Once we saw a little black bear, but it ran away, which was just as well, we thought. The ponies expressed a wild desire to round up the cattle whenever we passed any, and sometimes they would get away with us and tear after the herd. We stayed there about two months, then I went to a mixed farm in the Fraser Valley for the rest of the summer; as soon as I got there the Fraser River, which had been rising steadily, burst the dyke, and the water rushed in and flooded the whole place; it kept getting higher and higher, and came half way up the steps to the front door The only pasture left for the cows was the little bit of dyke that was out of water. We had to fasten a rope to their horns, and then I would swim across with the rope and somebody else would 'shoo' the cows on, and the poor things had to swim, too. The only way we could get provisions was by riding; I had to kneel on the saddle and let the horse swim through and carry the things in a sack on my back. And the mosquitoes! The things I should like to say are better left unsaid! When the water went down a bit we had to light fires (commonly called 'making a smudge') before we could do anything; so it was a question of whether you preferred smoke or bites. There is not very much demand for landgirls; at present the farmers don't quite know what to make of them; however, we'll soon show them what English girls can do! Canadian girls would rather die than get sunburnt!

A Mixed Milking Team.

"I feel I must write you what our gardener at my old home calls a 'pleasure' letter to tell you how much I love your description of your ducks in the November LANDSWOMAN. They sound so like mine. I only had three at first, and when I came back from my fortnight's holiday camping in the summer they hurried to meet me, and while I was stroking the ducks the drake kept pulling me gently by the sleeve to be noticed, too! I simply love them and all my animals; they are the best of company. I am most interested to hear of your bulb planting and what a treat you have in store next spring."

* * *

"I simply just love our Mag. this month—so full of brightness to take away the gloom of this horrible month.

"It arrived one morning just as I was starting for business; really, I could hardly wait till I reached the office before I commenced to devour it; however, once there I am afraid my work was pushed into the background and THE LANDSWOMAN with its visions of those days when life was worth living reigned supreme, till I was gently reminded that I had a call to make, so I and my book go out together, on top of a 'bus down the street of its contemporaries—Fleet Street—(yet not one of these could come up to the one I was carrying)—and so on till we reached that musty-fusty place, Somerset House. I am sure my Mag. didn't like being taken inside those gloomy doors, but somehow it seemed to make it brighter—unless it was that I was looking at things through the eyes of the country; anyway, the people seemed to be livelier than usual. I suppose some of these people *do* live in the country, but I wonder if they *ever notice* it; they don't ever seem to do it, anyway."

* * *

"Ever since I had the first copy of THE LANDSWOMAN I have wanted to write and tell you how much I love it; also to thank you for the endless trouble which you must have to go to for us all. How you ever manage to hit upon exactly the things which interest us most remains a mystery to me.

"I joined the L.A. in 1917, when I became 18, and have worked on farms and as a groom. One of the things I liked best was exercising the horses when I was a groom, trotting slowly homewards on an autumn afternoon through the leafy lanes with just the faintest bit of frost in the air and the feel of the horse between your knees. I cannot really explain, but I think you will understand, and the empty feeling you get when alone in the fields watching a particularly lovely sunset.

"Thank you for the glimpse of the land you send me every month."

"I have just come back from a week-end spent amidst my old land army haunts—oh, dear, it was horrible to have to come back at all, and I reluctantly made my way to the station, across fields *being* ploughed, sniffing the dear old familiar smell, watching the same dear old horses going their same old pace; the while the birds called to me to stay; and a flight of wild duck that once used to warn me it was nearing breakfast time went sailing over my head, bringing back to my memory all the dear old priceless scenes of land-army days—from my first day on the land when I was chased round a plum tree by a donkey who in its turn was being chased by a goat—I afterwards discovered that the donkey had once belonged to a circus, and that he and the goat were great pals—to those days when I knew

finally that I had to return to the town—and so thinking of these days I reached the station just in time to see my train steaming down the line—without me. I simply danced with delight—another hour's respite—and then sat me down and had lunch from apples in my case."

* * *

Dorothy Newman wants to thank all those who have so kindly sent her books and magazines, which she has thoroughly enjoyed. She will be glad to have orders for knitting of any description. Her address is c/o Mrs. Sketts, Sand Bank, Wisbech St. Mary, Cambridge.

* * *

Gertrude Lawes, Ardenwood, Congresbury, Somerset, a new reader of THE LANDSWOMAN, is working on an out-of-the-way farm, and is lonely. Will some other lonely reader write letters to her?

Covers.

Covers for the 1920 LANDSWOMAN are now ready. They are the same price as last year, but we must ask you to pay postage this time, so that the complete price will be 1s. 10d. Orders should be received before the end of this month as the supply is limited.

Books to Read.

We are always looking out for useful books for the landgirl, and this month we have come across two more which you will be glad to hear about.

"Practical Cow Keeping" is a simple and useful book to any smallholder or woman dairy farmer, and costs only one shilling. "Principles of Agriculture" touches all sides of farm work, and would be an invaluable reference book for anyone working on the land. It is interesting to find a bookseller who devotes a special catalogue to books on agricultural science, but if any of you will write to Messrs. W. and G. Foyle, 121, Charing Cross Road, they will send you a list of hundreds of books all dealing with some branch of agriculture or horticulture. Many of the books are second-hand, and can be obtained at Foyle's at prices ranging from a shilling upwards. I am always urging you to study and learn and do everything you can to become really efficient, but books on agriculture are generally prohibitive in price. Here, then, is your opportunity, and I know that this information will be a real boon to many of our readers.

I came across the other day, when wading through that somewhat dreary "Proverbial Philosophy" of old Martin Tupper, this rather joyful passage:—

"Then, as I walked upon the mountain clear in
summer's noon . . . . I saw
Courage, struggling through the darkness, stout
of heart and gladsome,

And tripping lightly by his side, a sweet-eyed helpmate with him,
I looked upon her face to welcome pleasant cheerfulness;
And a babe was cradled in her bosom, a laughing little prattler,
The child of Cheerfulness and Courage—could his name be other than Success?"

If Success be the child of Cheerfulness and Courage—as it undoubtedly is—then surely, surely it may come to every one of us; certainly to every landswoman, for without Cheerfulness and Courage, how could it be done? Or, rather, perhaps we should say, that these two virtues, these great gifts, come naturally to all land-workers. It is a good thing to remember, a good thing never to forget, that success will be—indeed *is* ours—provided always that we are cheerful and brave. This same old philosopher also asserts that—

"A wise traveller goeth on cheerily, through fair weather or foul;
He knoweth that his journey must be sped, so he carrieth his sunshine with him."

Which is, of course, the secret of the whole matter.

Christmas Pudding.

It is difficult to say when Christmas pudding was first regarded as an essential item of the Christmas menu, but it existed in various forms before it arrived at the standard Association football shape with which we are all familiar. Samuel Pepys, in 1661, has a Christmas entry in his diary as follows: "I dined by my wife's bedside with great content, having a mess of brave plum porridge and a roasted pullet for dinner, and I sent for a mince pie abroad—my wife not being well enough to make any herself yet." Plum porridge, according to an old cookery book dated 1770, was made as follows:—"Take a Leg and Shin of Beef to ten gallons of Water, boil it very tender, and when the Broth is strong, strain it out, wipe the Pot, and put in the Broth again; slice six Penny loaves thin, cutting off the top and bottom; put some of the liquor to it, cover it up, and let it stand a quarter of an hour, then put in five pounds of Currants, let them boil a little, and put in five pounds of Raisins, and two pounds of Prunes, and let them boil till they swell; then put in three quarters of an ounce of Mace, half an ounce of Cloves, two Nutmegs, all of them beat fine, and mix it with a little liquor cold, and put them in a very little while, and take off the Pot, and put in three pounds of Sugar, a little salt, a quart of sack, a quart of Claret, the juice of two or three lemons; pour them into earthen pans and keep for use."

Mince pies—a compound of the choicest productions of the East—were supposed to be held typical of the offerings made by wise men, who came from afar to worship, bringing with them spices, etc. In the old days the Christmas pie was considered to be of far greater importance than the Christmas pudding, and some idea of its size may be gathered from a record of one to be found in the "Newcastle Chronicle" of January 6, 1770:—"Monday last was brought from Howich to Berwick, to be shipped for London for Sir Henry Grey, Bart., a pie, the contents whereof were as follows, viz.:—2 bushels of flour, 20 lb. of butter, 4 geese, 2 turkeys, 2 rabbits, 4 wild ducks, 2 woodcocks, 6 snipes, and 4 partridges; 2 neat's tongues, 2 curlews, 7 blackbirds, and 6 pigeons. It was nine feet in circumference at bottom, weighed about 12 stone, and will take two men to present it at table. It was neatly fitted with a case, and four wheels to facilitate its use to every guest that inclines to partake of its contents."

The Land Army at the Cenotaph.

Armistice Day, November 11, was full of memories for all of us—glorious memories even when they were sad; and I suppose no one who was present will ever forget that wonderful scene at the Cenotaph in Whitehall. It is nice to know that the Land Army was represented in that great procession, and that a wreath in the Land Army colours—laurel and scarlet carnations—was laid there as a silent tribute from all of us to the memory of the Glorious Dead. Our dear old uniform is always conspicuous in a London crowd, and I suppose that was why our name came first in the list of women's services in the account of the day's happenings by one of our most illustrious journalists. Some of us are hoping, very sincerely indeed, that the spirit of remembrance which was so evident everywhere on that day—remembrance of our brave men who have gone and of the great cause for which they gave up their lives—may help us *all* to pull together in this gigantic job of reconstruction, so that their sacrifice may not have been in vain. We have, all of us, rich and poor, owners and workers, to put our shoulders to the same wheel, the great wheel of Production. Everyone, without any exception, must work and produce something, if England is ever to recover from the staggering blow dealt to her commerce by the war and the after effects of the war. And apart altogether from the nation's crying need for help, we know so well that work is the only cure for that spirit of discontent and grumbling which is doing such irreparable harm just now. "Dig till you gently perspire"—Kipling's cure for all ills—at whatever work there is to do, is the only way to get rid of this national "hump" which is ruining us. Little Belgium has found herself again, and even Germany has done wonders, because everyone there is *striving*. It was only the other day that I discovered that the word "strive," with which we are all familiar in the New Testament, is the same word as is used in the original text for *agony*—and it set me thinking. If only our striving were so keen as to reach the agonising stage, how much greater things we might achieve! Next time you are up against a difficult job, instead of just trying to do it, *strive* to do it, remembering the real meaning of the word, and you will surely win through.

The nation needs each one of us at this moment, and needs us badly, and in the spirit of our national poet we must work hand in hand to "strive with things impossible. Yea, get the better of them." Don't forget to have a Happy Christmas.

Your sincere friend,
THE EDITOR.

First Prize Limerick.

I asked a young lady at plough
What scent made her happiest now,
Pinks, lavender, hay,
Toast, clover or may?
She replied, "I prefer my old cow!"

ELSIE STEARN.

Posts—Vacant and Wanted.

Vacant.

The Editor has vacancies for two gardeners, preferably friends, to live together. Some knowledge of vegetable and fruit-growing essential.—Write, stating experience and wages required, to The Editor at The Priory, Orpington, Kent.

Cook wanted December 13, house-parlourmaid, Ex-L.A.A.S.; two in family; wages £30; very happy home. Interviews, Ware or Hertford station any time.—Medlicott, Sacombe Bury, Ware, Herts.

Wanted, Ex-Land Girl, for household duties, also to help in garden and with poultry; three in family. Comfortable home. —Apply to Mrs. Geden, Burrough Rectory, Melton Mowbray.

Wanted, Ex-Land Girl, to assist with milk round, help with cows, etc., good milker; as family; another one kept.—Apply F. Chapman, Moor Farm, Loughborough, Leicestershire.

Wanted, Land Girl, experienced in milking and general farm work.—"Gosling," Barlborough, Chesterfield.

Wanted, Land Girl, good milker, work in home yard, groom and feed two hackneys.—Apply J. F. Chapman, Friesthorpe, Wickenby, Lincoln.

Wanted.

Two Land Girls, educated, require post, preferably together. Over 4 years' experience of general farm work; one would like charge of poultry.—Florence Clark, 9, Strathmore Road, Newsham Park, Liverpool.

Ex-L.A.A.S. desires post. Three and a-half years' experience with pigs.—E. J., 10, Rosseth Avenue, Toxteth Park, Liverpool.

Two sisters, Ex-L.A.A.S., require posts together if possible. Three years' experience in milking and general farm work.—C. Daw, Wood Croft, Brandon, nr. Coventry.

Exchange Column.

For Sale, 4 Land Army overalls, second hand, good condition, 4s. each.—C. H., Editorial Office.

For Sale, 3 worn hats, medium, 3s.; 1 pair cord, 1 pair cotton breeches worn, 10s.; and overalls, worn, med., £1 12s.; 1 pair brown leather, 1 pair black leather gaiters, worn, 8s.; 1 worn jersey, 4s.; 1 brown macintosh, 2 oilskins, worn, £1 5s.; 1 pair boots, worn, 10s.; 4 new overalls, £1 12s.; 1 pair cord, 2 pairs gabardine breeches, new, £1 10s.; 2 new hats, 2s. 6d.; 1 pair new canvas gaiters, 1 pair new black leather gaiters, 12s.; 1 new jersey, 6s.

Very useful presents for Xmas. All colours children's hand knitted wool socks and baby gloves, all sizes, from 2s. to 5s. per pair; bed socks for adults or children, in white and rose and white and blue, from 4s. per pair; also children's knitted bonnets. Order at once from F. Cartwright, Buglegate, Lincombe, Stourport.

Saxe blue all-wool jumper, V neck and pockets, fit medium or large figure, not worn much, 15s.—G. H., Treeberth Lodge, Chepstow Road, Christchurch, Newport, Mon.

Pair of Mayflowa land boots for sale, size 6½, only worn once; cost £2, will take 30s.—M. Walton, Gedney Hill, nr. Wisbech.

1 pair new clogs for sale, 4s. Wanted, Corduroy or Bedford cord smock, medium size.—V. Hodges, Oxhey Lane Farm Dairy, Hatch End Middlesex.

Smocking. Children's frocks smocked at moderate charges. —E. Robertson, Shoreham, Sevenoaks, Kent.

For Sale, White Angora buck rabbit, 4 months, 7s. 6d. Father "very highly commended" only time shown. Mother equally good. Breeding Pen of 5 Light Sussex hens (Rev. Crayshay), Feb., 1919, and cockerel (W. Cook and Sons), March, 1920. Beautiful birds, over moult, near laying. £6 10s. Carriage paid. Wanted: Set of goat harness and small light goat cart for working.—Miss M. F. Dodgson, Sunny Cliff, Morte Hoe, N. Devon.

For sale, fawn showerproof trench coat, lined throughout, length 45 inches. £1.—D. P. Spencer, 33, Bell Street, Reigate, Surrey.

For sale, 1 pair corduroy breeches, medium size, new, 8s.; 1 pair gab. breeches, medium size, new, 7s. 6d.; 1 pair canvas leggings, new, 3s.—Apply F. Fisk, The Lodge, Caister-on-Sea, Norfolk

For Sale, Riding habit, £2 12s. 6d. or reasonable offer, splendid condition, safety skirt, chest measurement 35 inches, waist 25, no breeches. Also nigger brown overcoat, small size practically new, £2. Also hockey stick, 26oz., 5s. 6d.—G. R. G., 41, South Parade, Southsea.

Wanted.

Wanted, a leather motoring coat by ex-service girl, height 5ft. 7in., chest 38ins.; reasonable price—Apply E. McC., 16, Campbell Road, Boscombe, Hants.

Wanted, one second-hand overall, large; 2 pairs breeches, second-hand, large; one pair boots, 7's; one pair second-hand leggings.—Miss Payne, Fosse Bank, Tonbridge.

Wanted, second-hand L.A. smock, breeches, leggings, medium size, and brown boots, size 5 and 6. For sale, smart mauve gabardine costume, cost 10 gns., Dickins and Jones, take £3; suit tall lady.—Write Temple, 31, Woolwich Common, London, S.E.18.

NOTICE.—The Price of "The Landswoman" is 7d. post free. Orders may be sent to the Editorial Office, Priory Lodge, Orpington, Kent.

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KILMARNOCK.....4th March.....1920

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I can only add that we are very much pleased with the "Diabolo" Separator and I have much pleasure in recommending it to farmers and others interested in dairying.

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For Particulars write

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