

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 smacks 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 thus 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 stage 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 floor. 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 me since 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 love-making? 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.

A Little Lesson in Lawn Mowing.
Grass should never be cut shorter than two inches on either new or old lawns, for its roots are left unprotected from the scorching sun when it is shorter, and this means that dry or very hot weather will burn it near and brown. Mow often, even as often as every fourth or fifth day, if necessary to keep it at this height, especially on a new lawn, and never rake away the clippings. They form the best possible mulch and fertilizer, and are so short when mowing is done as often and as regularly as it should be that they lie down among the standing grass immediately and are lost to sight. Mow all bare spots every spring and take out weeds as fast as they appear, peppering the space which is thus left bare with seed, whatever the season. This is the sort of care and watchfulness that achieve perfection with the minimum of labor, promptness being its chief feature.—From "Suburban Gardens," by Grace Tabor.

Stars and Stripes in the Flag.
The flag of thirteen stars and thirteen stripes was adopted by congress on June 14, 1777. The stars were at first arranged in a circle, but a few years later were placed in rows. After the admission of Vermont and Kentucky to the Union the number of stars and stripes was increased to fifteen each on May 1, 1795, the law to that effect being signed by President Washington Jan. 13, 1794. The flag remained in that form through our wars with France, with Tripoli and with England, on the first voyage of an American warship around Cape Horn and the Cape of Good Hope and in the writing of Key's "Star Spangled Banner." On April 4, 1818, President Monroe signed the present flag law, and on July 4, 1818, the national ensign was made to consist, as at present, of thirteen stripes and of a number of stars equal to the number of states.—New York Tribune.

Tanbark as a Fuel.
Perhaps the most important of waste fuels in the United States has been spent tanbark. A rough estimate would indicate that this material generated a few years ago an amount of steam that would have otherwise required the yearly consumption of about 2,000,000 tons of high grade coal. Yet this valuable fuel was at one time considered a mere detriment and an expense to the leather industry. It was disposed of by dumping it into rivers, filling in waste ground and by making roads with it, often necessitating the paying out of large sums for its disposition. This strikingly illustrates a case of how the improvement of a furnace converted a hitherto supposed combustible into a valuable waste fuel of the autocombustible class and shows how an enormous waste was converted into an equally great economy.—Engineering Magazine.

Feeling the Fox.
The expression "as cunning as a fox" has passed into the language, but as in the case with most extra cute gentlemen, there are occasions when Master Reynard overreaches himself. Any visitor to the country who has ever examined a chicken house in the middle of a field has probably noticed two or three short pieces of chain hanging over the hole by which the fowls enter. Although they form no obstacle to the birds, who push their way in without the faintest difficulty, they will infallibly prevent a fox from raiding the house. The latter in his superior wisdom takes them to be a trap for his capture, and although he may sit outside hungrily "licking his chops" nothing will induce him to put his head through the chains. Truly a case of a little learning being a dangerous thing.—Pearson's Weekly.

Caesaria, or New Jersey.
What is now the state of New Jersey was part of the territory claimed by the Dutch under the name of New Netherlands. Before the English seized the country something had been done to settle this part, although it had not developed as might have been expected in the fifty years of Dutch occupancy. The Duke of York, as proprietor of the territory newly acquired, ceded in 1664 this southern portion lying between the Delaware river and the sea to Lord John Berkeley and Sir George Carteret. The new province was named Caesaria, or New Jersey, in honor of Carteret, who as governor of the island of Jersey had heroically defended it against the parliamentarians during the great rebellion.

Too Dainty to Wed.
It was a curious reason that moved Beau Brummel to cancel his engagement to marry. A friend asked him why he had broken off the match. "What could I do, my dear fellow," the exquisite replied, "but cut the connection? I discovered that Lady Mary actually ate cabbage."

Not an Added Attraction.
Neither does it make any difference how brilliant a woman may be, she can't make much of a success at entertaining a young man who has come to see her daughter.—Galveston News.

If They Could See It.
If people could see stagnant air as they can see stagnant water, with the slime and disease obvious to the naked eye, the fresh air fad would be universal.—Collier's.

Fine Combination.
The sweetest music in the world is a duet played upon the horn of plenty and the trumpet of fame.—Philadelphia Record.

The events of fortune are unexpected and therefore can never be guarded against by men.—Aristotles.

Mongolian Lamas.
Every third man in Mongolia is a lama. Some live in tents with and with their relatives, while others live in the temples. The temple lamas are of the lower type. They are coarse and filthy, and much inferior both morally and physically to the tent lamas. They are not unlike those sometimes seen by travelers in the Lama temple at Peking, China. The lama life is a life of luxury and ease, and is much respected and looked up to all over Mongolia. Sumu, which consists of the two temples and their outbuildings, forms one of the largest and most important lamaseries in outer Mongolia. There are about 2,000 lamae living here, some quite young, as Sumu is an important theological school. This lamasery or monastery is a town in itself and very interesting. Lamas may be seen here of all ages and degrees. On the tops and corners of the temples are prayer wheels covered with gold leaf. These contain long prayers written on rolls of script, and the wheels revolve in the wind.—National Geographic Magazine.

Effect of an Explosion.
It seems incredible that an explosion could be of such force as to cause an ordinary steel rail to wrap itself twice round the trunk of a large tree, yet there was just such a result from the discharge of gelignite at Nanaimo, B. C. Twelve workmen lost their lives by this explosion. The rail was lying on the ground fully thirty feet from the spot at which the explosion occurred, yet it was lifted into the air, sent in the direction of the tree and twisted round the trunk thereof, just as if it had been a piece of piano wire. It was so tightly wrapped about the trunk that it cut deeply into the green wood and caused great splinters to start out on all sides. The explosive is responsible for this unique occurrence in one of the most powerful preparations known, composed of nitroglycerin, nitrocellulose, sodium nitrate, sodium carbons and wood pulp.—St. Louis Republic.

Involuntary Fasting.
A remarkable feat of involuntary fasting was performed twelve years ago by a corporal in a regiment of French colonial infantry. On his way to work one morning a man heard cries proceeding from a doused mine near Brest. At the bottom of an excavation nearly 100 feet deep Corporal Andre Desrout was found in so weak a condition that he could scarcely articulate a word. When he recovered his senses he learned that after accidentally falling into the mine Desrout had been imprisoned for twenty-eight days without anything to eat or drink. But a pig can beat a man. Dr. W. B. Carpenter in his "Manual of Physiology" records that a pig weighing 160 pounds was entombed by the fall of a portion of the chalk cliffs at Dover. It was dug out 100 days later and found to be still alive, but reduced in weight to forty pounds.—London Mail.

Smallest Deer in the World.
The "mossdeer" of India and Africa is the chevreuil, one of the smallest hoofed animals. It stands less than twelve inches in height at the shoulder. The prevailing color of the fur is brown, finely speckled with yellow. The spots are large and sometimes run into each other and form stripes. The underparts of the body are white. It possesses the peculiar habit of walking on the tips of its hoofs. This tends to a stiffness to the legs which has gained for the chevreuil the reputation of having no knee joints. It has no horns or antlers. But as in the case of the musk deer, the male is provided with large canine teeth or tusks in the upper jaw. It is of exceedingly timid disposition and lies hidden in the jungle throughout the day and only ventures to feed in the early morning and after dusk in the evening.

Open Spaces in Cities.
Along with the new keenness over social and economic reform England has developed a number of other virtues in the past score of years. One is an appreciation of the value of open spaces in cities, and one is the increased determination to preserve ancient landmarks. Every few months an article appears in the Times or some other influential newspaper acquainting people with the danger that threatens some historical or long cherished spot, and usually the money necessary to save the property has been forthcoming.—Indianapolis News.

Practical Course Coming.
"Father," asked the girl who was going to marry a poor man, "do you think I ought to take a course in household economics? They offer a lovely one at Bryn Moore for \$300."

"No," replied pater grimly. "You will get one for nothing after you are married."—Judge.

The Request.
"Did Baron Fucash ask you for my hand, father?" asked Gwendolin.

"No," replied Mr. Cumrox. "He called to discuss a marriage settlement. He didn't ask for your hand. He asked for my pocketbook."—Washington Star.

Keeping Them Down.
Stenographer—What is wrong, Mrs. Grimbattle? Mrs. Grimbattle—You've spelled Henry with a capital "H." Don't you know that Henry is a mere man's name?—New York Globe.

For the Girls.
The girl who is as pretty as a picture should never allow herself to get in an ugly frame of mind.—Chicago News.

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