

At Home

Come in & Chat Awhile

—Ruth Raeburn.

Adventures in Solitude

(Published by Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., New York)

David Grayson says: "Solitude is not the exceptional state of man; it is the normal. Every man spends most of his time alone with himself; how much more in periods of illness or of sorrow. A whole world, invisible without, a man creates within his own personality. There he lives! There he adventures! There he is happy, if he is happy, there he suffers. If he cannot command this world of his own making he is miserable indeed."

David Grayson spent several months within the walls of a sick room. This was indeed a new experience to him. After days of misery which he claims "is not physical—pain can be borne, hopelessness somehow endured—misery is always mental." This mood of utter wretchedness made him ask himself had he come to such a pass that he had no resources of the spirit? He had to own up that he still possessed his own mind and his own thoughts, his own inner life even if "everything that constituted a pleasant, satisfying life—robust physical health, habitual and interesting work, books, letters and friends all had been stripped away." Then a couplet that had long lain concealed in his memory came to him with fresh significance and extraordinary power:

"Still to ourselves in every place consigned
Our own felicity we make or find."

Then he began searching his memory for other passages tucked away and was surprised how much came back to him once he had fixed his mind upon it, and surprised, too, how the hours slipped away. There was no need to hurry, time was nothing to him. "It was a delight in itself to recover out of the mustiness of things, forgotten thoughts, impressions, beauties that had once interested or thrilled me." Then he found himself thinking of

the books he had read, especially those read in early life and he tried to recall the names of characters and places and make the incidents live again.

This was followed by meditations on men of the past who had profited by solitude—Bunyan, Robert Louis Stevenson and many others who have given of the fruits of solitude to the public and thousands having been helped by them. There were indeed triumphs. "The doctors and nurses, with all their daily tests, their elaborate records, never once probed the real secret of my life, what I had going on deep down within me—the struggles there, the voyages of discovery, the rich treasures I was now finding in forgotten caverns. Neither did the doctors or nurses know anything of the "Adventures abroad in bed! I was in reality often abroad among my own hills, or in my garden, or walking the pleasant elm-shaded streets of the little town I love best of all. I was there to complete absorption, so that I was not conscious for the time being of the gabled room where I lay, nor of the hospital, nor of my own illness."

We follow with interest the path the author trod in making or finding his own felicity and how he learned that "it is only as man comes of his own spirit that he is able to cast out all trouble."

Every chapter has its own interesting story. There isn't a dull moment for the reader from beginning to end. True, this book will most likely appeal more deeply to those who have spent many days confined to a sick room, but all who love looking into problems that confront mankind will turn with pleasure the pages for their contents.

The book is illustrated by David Hendrickson and the sketches are all worth studying.

The reading world is indeed grateful to David Grayson that he kept a little book in the drawer of the desk that stood near his bed and was able and willing to scrawl a few thoughts a day in it. "Adventures in Solitude" is certainly a treasure store.

TIE UP THE CATS TOO

The dogs are conspicuous by their absence from the streets. All the faithful friends of homes and children are supposed to be tied up. It is painful to some people to see the wistful expression in the eyes of a tethered dog. There are citizens who declare, with a good deal of justification, that a curb should be put on cats that wander at will in town. In the west end there is a plethora of these marauders and the nesting season of birds has been made difficult by the depredations of cats. For these animals there is nothing like a .22 rifle in the hands of anyone with a true aim.—Alliston Herald.

A Walk Through Durham

(By RAMBLER)

Well, things are looking some better—in some places. I see where some of the long grass has been cut. It looks cleaner and more civilized at least and is a start in the right direction. But what really should be done is some ploughing and re-seeding. How some people can sit contentedly in the midst of a jungle-like piece of land is more than I can see. It cannot be for lack of time, because all one hears on all sides is unemployment. Yet these same men who stand around at "the corner" yapping about the hard times have weeds a foot high around their homes. It makes one wonder if they would really like to work. It is queer, but a man's property reflects his character and disposition. It shows either his initiative or his entire lack of interest and ambition. For instance, there are two houses on a street just off Lambton where one can see what a little attention will do. One is a large, brick house, with weeds and grass galore, no flowers of any account; a few perennials, but not cultivated; altogether it is a sorry looking home. Next door is a small house, but which looks like a mansion in comparison to its neighbor. The grass is carefully mowed; there are climbers over the veranda, and shrubs, and flowers and a well-kept vegetable garden. THAT looks like a home. It clearly reflects harmony and happiness in the home.

However, I do not want to criticize too much. There are many properties in the town which would be a credit to any city. Bruce street is, perhaps, the prettiest. Flowers are not so profuse, but the lawns are clean and the hedges carefully trimmed. But those boulevards! There they are with the ugly gravel, or long grass and weeds. But owners or tenants do not seem to notice these eyesores. They clash with the beauty of their property and yet are not attended to. I hope this gets a "rise" out of some of our citizens.

I was going to give a "rub" about a certain rectory in town, but after the daily ramble on Monday, see that the grass has been cut. It is quite an improvement. That is a very conspicuous corner, which could be such a beautiful spot. And then there's the place right on the "main drag" where there is enough pasture for a herd of cows. But I must say that the tennis courts are splendid. The bowling green also looks well. While we're down in that section, some time take notice of the High School property. I think it looks a little rough. There are pretty shrubs along the sidewalk but they need some cleaning and trimming and the grass needs cutting. That would be good exercise for the Students when in training for softball playing.

Do you see what I mean? We all know that the majority of the people cannot afford to spend much in improvements, but there are so many things that can be done without expense. Most town people have lawn mowers. If you haven't one, I'm sure John next door will loan you his. And then do not mow your lawn like a school boy washes his face—leaving a "high water mark."

FLOWERS MUCH ADMIRER

(Dundalk Herald)

Tulip beds planted by the local Horticultural Society and by private individuals have been much admired of late, these flowers making a splendid showing this year. The two new beds planted by the Society at the corner opposite the Queen's Hotel and at the highway corner will be decided acquisitions, and the Society is to be heartily commended for this work of beautification.

BASKET BEGONIAS

There is a lovely strain of Tuberous Begonias, which, having pendulous stems and branches, are ideally adapted to grow in hanging baskets on the north or east side of the residence or other shaded positions, and also in window and verandah boxes with the same aspect. They have a considerable range in color and the flowers are more numerous (though not so large) as those of the commonly-known kinds. Where used they impart a beauty all their own and are becoming popular. They may also, like the common ones, be grown in pots and in the same way.

TOO WELL ADVERTISED

"Herbert N. Casson, editor of the Efficiency Magazine, says this depression has stayed around a good while "because it is so well advertised." He estimates that newspapers have given it about \$50,000,000 worth of space for nothing.

She—"Do you believe kissing is really dangerous?"
He—"Yes, it often brings on marriage."

THE TUBEROUS ROOTED BEGONIA

(By Henry J. Moore in Mail & Empire)

The Tuberous Rooted Begonia of our gardens is a tender tuberous perennial. For the many beautiful varieties we are indebted to the Andean species of South America, such as B. Pearcei, B. Veitchii and probably B. Davisii. These were the first tuberous species introduced and as they cross (hybrids) readily became the progenitors of our magnificent garden types.

Who would not grow the Tuberous Begonia? The flowers are gorgeous and range in color through all the shades from white to intense crimson, some of the singles have flowers five to seven inches in diameter, while the wonderful doubles, many of them resembling roses, are equally as varied in color.

Culture

The most important essentials to successful cultivation of our subject, outdoor are shade, moisture, and a soil of light texture; these are as necessary as air and light to human beings. Tuberous begonias will not do well if excessively high Summer temperatures prevail and where the atmosphere is abnormally dry as under these conditions the leaves and flowers become scorched. In shade they do moderately well. In localities, however, where the average temperature is around 75 degrees such as happily prevail in the northern United States and Canada, and also on the west coast and where the atmosphere is humid they grow well in shade, and are splendidly adapted for planting on the north or east side of the residence but should be kept at least a foot from any structure. They also do well in light shade cast by trees, but in beds removed from the influence of their roots.

Tuberous Begonias grow splendidly in a light, well-drained soil enriched preferably with manure from the cattle stalls or well-decayed leaf soil, coarse undecayed strawy manure will prove harmful. Heavy clay soils are not satisfactory, but if unfortunately they exist may be so improved by the addition of the organic matter previously mentioned and quantities of sand and finely-broken charcoal as to produce fine plants. Good drainage is, however, essential. It is best to prepare such a soil in late Autumn and to dig it fairly deep, and in Spring prior to planting, fork it lightly and level the surface with the rake.

The Tuberous Begonia is usually raised from seeds sown in the warm greenhouse or sunroom during late Winter and Spring. It is also possible to raise them during early Summer in a shaded garden frame. If seeds are sown during January or early February plants should be produced to set out during early June, and should flower in the Autumn. If sown later in March or April the seedlings may be grown in pots the first year or where large numbers are raised in flats.

When preparing the seed pans, place crocks in the bottom and on these a layer of fibrous material and fill to within an inch of the top with a soil mixture composed of leaf soil with a little sand, two parts, and loam, one part, somewhat finely screened. To the mixture, may to advantage be added a small quantity of finely broken and screened crocks and charcoal, the latter tending to keep the soil sweet. Press the layer down lightly and upon it, to the depth of about one half inch, screen the soil mixture through a very fine screen and have the surface slightly convex so that superfluous moisture will run to the sides and so preclude the "damping off" of the seedlings. Begonias are especially susceptible to the attacks of the fungus which causes this—Pythium.

Prior to sowing the seed immerse the pans in water and sow evenly and thinly upon the moistened surface of the soil. Do not cover with soil. Place the pans in a temperature of 65 degrees F. and cover them with a pane of glass, and shade them from sunlight. Subsequent waterings before and after germination takes place should not be applied overhead. By the partial immersion of the pans the water will readily be absorbed and the seedlings remain undisturbed.

After germination afford light (not direct sunlight), until the plants strengthen and are large enough to transfer singly one-half inch apart into larger pans, when about to crowd each other, pot them singly into two inch pots and finally ere flower buds show, shift into four or five inch pots. Afford liquid or other fertilizer as occasion demands which is necessary if large tubers are to be produced. Maintain a humid atmosphere by dampening the floors and benches on warm days if in the greenhouse or by placing pans of water for evaporation purposes if in the window or sunroom; moisture in the air tends to check the attacks of Red Spider an especial enemy. Shade the plants from intense sunlight and spray them occasionally with pure water, but never in sunlight

or scorching may result.

Propagation of Tubers

The subject may also be propagated by division during the first week in April. Select large tubers which possess at least two crowns. A sharp knife is essential to sever the tubers directly between these, each portion will thus bear buds without which they are useless. Expose the cut surfaces to air for some time until they cease to bleed, after which dip them into slacked or powdered lime, this will act as an antiseptic, and also check the attacks of slugs, grubs and other insects which may prey upon them. Place the tubers on finely screened soil in flats, keep the soil moderately moist, spray them occasionally to encourage growth, and maintain a temperature of at least 60 degrees. When two or three inches of growth has been made pot off into four or five inch pots, and when well rooted remove to a cold frame until inured to out of doors conditions, air well during warm days, but close the frames on cold nights. By the first of June the plants will be sufficiently hardened to allow of the sashes being removed, and after a week's exposure to outdoor temperature, shaded, of course, from direct sunlight, they may be planted in their permanent positions fifteen inches apart.

Arrangement in Beds

Tuberous Begonias when massed are especially effective when the singles and doubles are separated, each are then distinctively beautiful. Effective even to a greater degree are they when arranged in beds of separate colors, the merits of each variety being thus readily seen. Also when so planted and isolated there is little danger of crossing with other kinds and thus possible to obtain seeds which will reproduce true to type. Beds of mixed colors are, however, beautiful and no one should hesitate to so plant if harmonizing colors are chosen. Pretty beds can also be arranged by using the Tuberous Begonia in combination with other flowers, as an example, one in which dark blood red singles or doubles have as a ground work dwarf Sweet Alyssum. Certain old kinds such as B. Bertinianna, B. Count Zeppelin, and B. Lafayette are more greatly admired when so planted. These kinds are not well known to amateurs and not so robust as the ordinary Tuberous Begonias, and may be planted as little as a foot apart with the Alyssum between.

During extremely dry weather the soil in which the Begonias grow should be thoroughly watered as soon as it becomes so dry that the plants are likely to wilt. A light cultivation should, three or four times during the season, be given, and should any leaves fall,

they should be removed. Under some conditions it may be necessary to stake the plants to prevent breakage of the stems, but this is not usually necessary.

Storing the Tubers

When the stems commence to decay or when they are cut down by frost, lift the tubers with the remaining foliage, and if possible with a quantity of soil adhering to them. Pack them in shallow boxes, stems upward, place them on a greenhouse bench or in a shed near a window, so that light, but not sunlight, may have access to them until the growth entirely decays. Remove all decayed stems to facilitate the drying of the tuber, otherwise, they may likewise decay. Carefully remove all soil and spread the tubers on a shelf for a day or so, and finally store them in shallow boxes containing dry sand, an inch of sand or so between each layer of tubers. Place the boxes away for the Winter in a dry place where the temperature hovers around 50. Do not allow it to fall for any length of time below 40 degrees or to rise to 60 degrees. These extremes are deleterious inasmuch as the former will chill and cause the tubers to decay, while the latter will influence growth to start at an unnatural and undesirable time.

Culture Indoors

When the seedling Begonias are large enough to prick off during Spring they should be placed singly in small pots and kept in the greenhouse or warm window. By May they should be ready to transfer to pots of the three or four-inch size and later be potted into the six-inch flowering size. They may be grown during Summer in a shaded garden frame or cool greenhouse and during August or September, according to their stage of growth, be removed where to flower indoors. During Summer ventilation must be afforded and water be properly applied, and the plants be partly or wholly obviated. It may be necessary to stake the growths of the plants indoors, but this may be partly or wholly obviated if they are placed near the window or roof of the greenhouse where short jointed and stocky growth is likely to be made.

After flowering the plants, water should be gradually withheld and finally the pots be laid on their sides as the tubers go to rest after which they may be stored away as advised for the outdoor grown plants.

"If I had three peaches and ate one I'd have two peaches left, wouldn't I?"
"No."
"Well, what would I have left?"
"A pair, of course."

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