

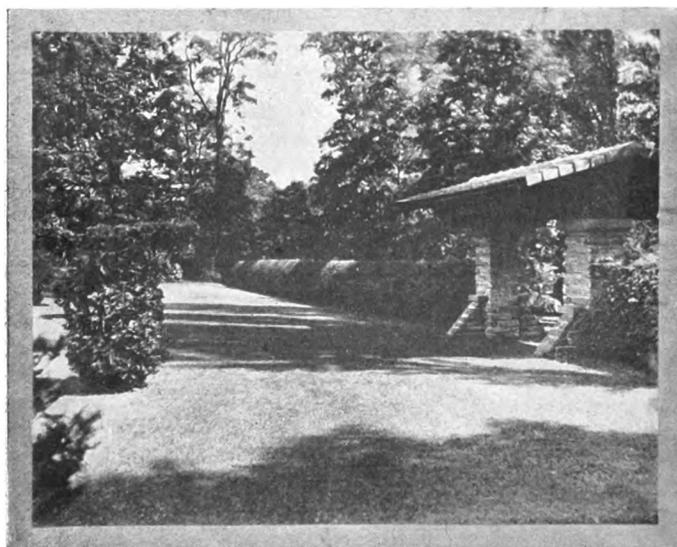
Stoneleigh

DOROTHY EBEL



The path between two wonderful Austrian Pines, leading to the lawn before the mansion

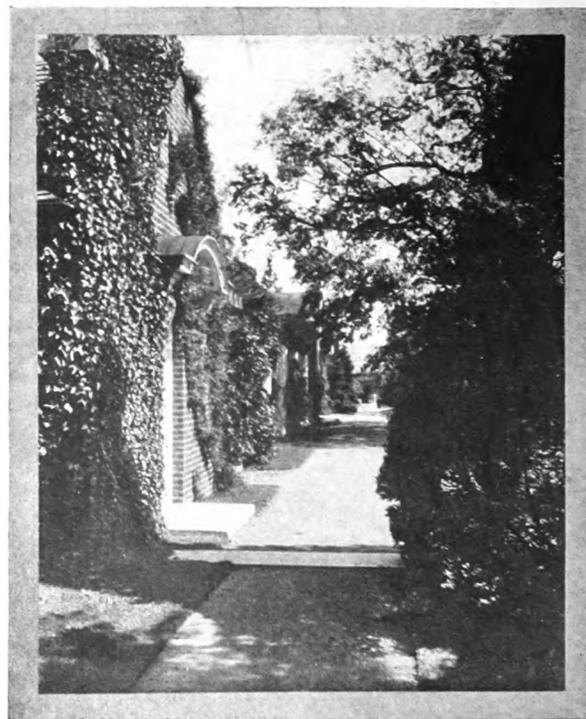
SO often nowadays, greenhouses are filled only with Roses, Carnation, Snapdragons, Sweet Peas, and beautiful as those flowers are, it is a joy to step within a range of glass and find that the benches also contain the less widely grown indoor stock. In the greenhouses of Stoneleigh, the country estate of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel T. Bodine at Villanova, Pennsylvania, which is under the supervision of Alexander MacLeod, the vice-president of the National Association of Gardeners, there is an interesting array of plants. I saw there an old-time favorite, Curly Begonia (*B. manicata*); Choryzima, light and graceful for table decoration; the brilliant Chenille Copperleaf (*Acalypha hispida*), which is very ornamental as a pot plant in the mansion, where, so Mr. MacLeod told me, it has lasted from Christmas until after Washington's birthday; *Isoloma bogotense*, old and seldom seen today, yet a stunning plant with its scarlet nodding flowers; African Beebalm (*Pycnostachys dawei*), a unique Winter-flowering plant and most welcome as it blooms during



The Hemlock hedge extending along the garden proper

the season when blue plants are not plentiful.

Pot plants are more in favor at Stoneleigh than cut flowers, and Mr. MacLeod raises a considerable number of Clarkias, Chinese and Fairy Primroses (*Primula sinensis* and *malacoides*), Pelargoniums, Stewart, Voss, and Bush Calceolarias (*C. stewarti*, *hybrida*, and *integrifolia*), Cinerarias, Schizanthus whose dainty flowers have won for it the name of "Poor Man's Orchid," Jerusalem Cherry, Browallias, Fuchsias, Calla Lilies, Ferns, *Buddleia asiatica* and *farquhari*—the latter is said to be the first hybrid of the genus. *Buddleia*, of course, is used for cut flower arrangements to which it gives a soft and artistic touch. The Camellias are heavily budded—they had been outdoors throughout the Summer. I learned that at Stoneleigh no difficulty is experienced in rooting *Camellia* cuttings. Carnations—all Laddie,—Roses, Stock, Sweet Peas, Snapdragons, Calendulas—The Ball which, in Mr. MacLeod's opinion, is by far the best—



The pergola trailed with Kudzu-Bean, Wisteria, and Clematis

and such bulbous subjects as Freesias, Narcissi, and Tulips are well grown.

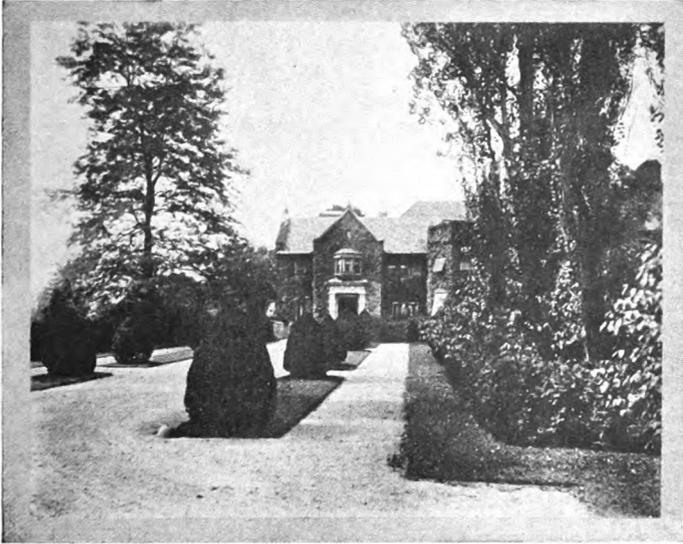
The benches in several houses are devoted to vegetables including cauliflower, Swiss chard, spinach, endive, string beans, Marshall's Matchless lettuce, which is crisp and delicious, and tomatoes—Bide's Recruit, an English variety and one of the finest. The fruit is uniform in size and appetizing in color and flavor.

Plants are being propagated for bedding out later in the season and English Ivy, already well rooted, to serve as a ground cover. It has proven hardy at Villanova and not subject to Winter kill.

What was at one time the Palm house is now the potting shed, for during the war it seemed advisable to make this change. A portion of the glass was removed from the roof and asbestos shingles substituted—to have simply covered the glass would not have made it a comfortable workshop in the warm Summer months. I was also told

that in those days of war the lawn was turned into a large vegetable tract from which the poor people in the neighborhood received their supply of fresh vegetables, and that eight or nine girls were employed as assistants in the gardens. They were housed in a building originally intended for four horses and toolsheds, but suitably refitted for them. One of the girls who possessed a keen sense of humor, named the abode "Squirrel Inn." The sobriquet still clings to it.

The greenhouse yard, in which are the frames filled with Pansies, Violets, and herbaceous perennials, is enclosed by a high brick wall except on the southern side. In Summer, the walls are mantled with Virginia Creeper (*Ampelopsis*). Northeast is a four acre orchard and a



The main approach to Stoneleigh

nursery of some thousand Red and White Pines, four-year-old stock, sheltered from the north by the woodland.

Vegetables in limited quantities—the truck plot for the larger crops is across the estate proper on Spring Mill Road—are raised in the garden adjacent to the greenhouses. At one corner the Privet hedge which completely surrounds the garden, measures no less than twelve feet high. Through it an arched entrance has been cut. A path lined by dwarf Pear trees and borders of Irises, Peonies, Phlox, Pinks, Poppies, Campanulas, False-Dragonhead, and Foxgloves, divides the garden. Standing proudly as though they were sentinels on guard, are two magnificent trees, a Hickory and a White Oak.

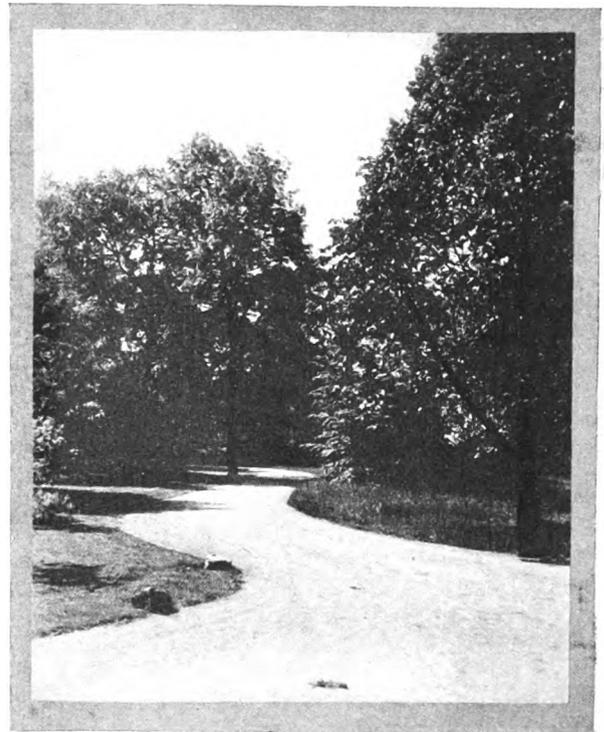
Specimens of Box, taken from the foundation planting around the mansion are now recuperating on the ground which lies between the vegetable garden and the glass range, and will be replanted when they have fully recovered. In front of the greenhouses, beds are devoted to Dahlias, and last year twenty-five plants of Jersey's Beauty reached a height of eight to ten feet—they were sturdy and well flowered.

Mr. MacLeod and I turned from what might, perhaps, be termed the utilitarian portion of Stoneleigh to the pleasure grounds, and approached a Pergola trailed with Kudzu-Bean (*Pueraria thunbergiana*), Wisteria, and Clematis, and overlooking the son's residence within the shelter of a grove of Tulip trees, Poplars, and Oaks. Sawara Retinosporas of the proportions of fair sized trees and well formed, and Norway Spruces protect the pergola at each end. To the right is an unusual brick tea-house with a brick wall enclosure and marble steps. It faces a group of Poplars rising cool and aloof above Evergreens near the main entrance.

Crossing the lawn, we came upon an interesting plantation of young Red and White Pines, taller Norway Spruces, Flowering Crabs, and White Oaks, and just beyond, Hemlocks interspersed with Dogwoods. No prettier or more appealing combination could be desired in Spring. Opposite a superb group of Rhododendrons presents an equally lovely sight when bearing a wealth of bloom.

The garden proper possesses a character distinct unto itself. Across the rear extends a long arbor over whose stone pillars and rustic beams clamber Wisteria, climbing Roses, and Sweet Autumn Clematis (*C. paniculata*). An herbaceous border stretches the length of the arbor. Occupying the central space of this part of the garden is a semi-circular plot of herbaceous perennials. At each end are triangular beds of Japanese Iris and outer beds of the annuals. Brick walks of herringbone pattern, laid in concrete for permanence and graded, with upright bricks around the edges left open so that excess moisture can drain off, separate the beds. The lower level, circular, perhaps I can more accurately describe it as a bowl, is a croquet ground. A border of perennials six feet wide encircles it.

On the slope opposite the pergola a rockery has been



One of the attractive drives bounded by superb trees

built, which is partially planted with Cotoneasters, dwarf Evergreens, Mountain-Laurel, Azaleas including the rare Royal Azalea (*A. schlippenbachi*), and Rose Daphne (*D. cneorum*). Heather, St. John's Wort, Bleedinghearts, and rock subjects complete the planting. Redcedars, American Pyramidal Arborvitae, and a fine Magnolia are attractive foils for the lower growing plants. At the foot of the rockery, in one corner, are Crocuses, hardy Lilies, Rhododendrons, and evergreen shrubs beneath the shade of an immense White Ash—in the other corner, Mountain-Laurel, native Azaleas, and Red Cedars. Between the crevices of the flag-stone paths Sedums and Thyme are used.

Last to be mentioned, but not least in attraction, is the superb Hemlock hedge along both sides of the entire garden. Through a cut in the hedge we entered the octagon. Then continuing in the direction of the mansion,

Mr. MacLeod and I walked along the path between two wonderful Austrian Pines, beneath which grow Rhododendrons, and as ground cover, Japanese Pachysandra (*P. terminalis*). In Summer, Virginia Cowslip, Bleeding-hearts, Lilies, and native Ferns transform this into a delightful spot.

The oval garden is a paradise of blue, having been planted entirely with Delphiniums, Ageratum, Heliotrope, Browallias, and Lobelias, with a background of Laurel and Evergreens hiding it just enough to make it enchanting.

Upon the gently rolling lawn, which sweeps from the mansion to the County Line, are trees that command the admiration of all visitors—a Linden whose lowest boughs droop gracefully, a broad spreading Beech, splendid White and Douglas Spruces, Ginkgo or Maidenhair-tree, a Kentucky Coffeetree (*Gymnocladus dioica*), which is not often seen, and a Japanese Cherry, very old. But though decrepit and patched, it bears a mass of exquisite blossoms and is one of the glories of Stoneleigh on a balmy Spring day.

My visit ended pleasantly in a delightful half-hour's conversation with Mr. Bodine, and I more fully appreciated that the atmosphere of refinement and dignity in the gardens—without the stiffness of arrangement that frequently, and unfortunately, is regarded as necessary to dignity—is the natural result of the close association between 'the home and the garden, and the owners' sincere interest in both.

ENCHANTING DAFFODILS

WILLIAM TURNER

BULBS play a very important part in keeping up a supply of cut flowers for private use, and commercial, too, for that matter. What a glorious array of varieties there is at our command! At least such has been the case up to this time. It would be out of the question for me in a short article of this nature to touch upon all the different varieties, therefore I shall confine myself to the Narcissus family. Some may have preference for Tulips and the other classes of bulbs, but the Daffodil family appeals to me more than any. When we take into consideration the wonderful variations and their usefulness as cut flowers or for house decoration, we may well say they are indispensable.

From now on I am living and watching in anticipation! It is not necessary for me to go into the embargo situation. Everyone knows about it and from now on we shall anxiously await the results of the American grown bulbs. Let us hope they will be the equal of the Dutch. However, I have the feeling that here in this country where we experience such erratic changes in temperatures, it will have a tendency to cause premature ripening with a percentage of blind flowers or, in some instances, a very unsatisfactory percentage for forcing purposes, while in Holland there is a more even, moist atmosphere, congenial to the steady growth and full development of bulbs. Still, as I have mentioned in years gone by in my writings, time will tell its own story. I wish the American bulb growers every success in raising products equal to the Holland grown. If they are not Holland's equal, it will not be a question of skill, but of climatic conditions which play queer tricks in the United States. Indeed we had a fair sample of it this past Summer.

In varieties for private use, there is a bewildering selection to choose from and withal interesting from the large trumpet varieties down to the sweet scented Jonquil. Probably six of the most notable in this class are Van Waverns Giant, Mrs. Robert Sydenham, Olympia, Spring

Glory, Tresserve, and King Alfred—to me a collection par excellent. Such varieties, grown in eight or ten inch pots, make a massive display. Then, again, we have a select choice in the short cup section or incomparabilis. Perhaps the variety Great Warley is the most conspicuous, although a bit expensive; also Lucifer and Will Scarlet. Nor should the harri types be forgotten in which there are some very striking and distinct varieties. Masterpiece, Brilliancy, and Red Beacon are good examples.

In the leeds division, which also appeals to me, are Duchess of Wellington, Lord Kitchener, and White Lady. The poetaz division includes varieties that are very attractive both as cut flowers and as pot plants. They may be termed the lunch flowered Narcissi. They are excellent growers, remarkably easy to bring along from early February till they are available in the garden. Admiration, Mignon, and Orange Cup are splendid.

We must not forget the poeticus types for while they are not grown as extensively for forcing purposes as many of the others, still they are delicate and graceful. The flowers in small vases are appropriate for placing in the different parts of the dwellings. They are quite distinct from the other varieties.

Another class comes vividly to mind. Let us suppose that the paper whites and Soleil d'Or were not procurable. What a blank they would cause not only on the private estates but also commercially. Paperwhites are so easily brought along with scarcely any forcing. In fact, we have always called them the reliables in carrying us over the short days—or in other words, the never failing crop. We, as gardeners, appreciate something dependable. Therefore, let us hope there will be abundance of American grown paperwhites and Soleil d'Or with the same high standard and free flowering qualities, and also such other varieties as I have mentioned. We all know this article has just touched the subject lightly. However, I think the varieties named are good or some of the best of the Daffodil family. As stated before, I am living in anticipation of trying out the American grown bulbs. If they prove equal to Holland bulbs, it will be a pleasant surprise to me.

One of a series of articles by the members of the Monmouth and Elberon Branch of the National Association of Gardeners.

RANDOM NOTES FROM A GARDENER'S PEN

DAVID FRASER

IT is a difficult matter to decide upon one subject to write about; hence these random notes.

Dutch Hyacinths for Christmas

For the past few years, I have had the prepared Hyacinths for Christmas use. But I have practised for many years buying a few hundred of the miniature Hyacinths, the varieties La Innocence and Lady Derby, and planting them in a trench about six inches deep in the early Fall. I lift them about June 10 and dry them off in an airy shed, potting them up about August 10. I find Hyacinths treated in this way are easier to get into flower for the holidays than the ones that come to us under the name of prepared Hyacinths. I have tried all the varieties for this purpose, but the two named are the only ones I have been successful with, that is to say, to get them in flower so early.

Speaking of Hyacinths, why don't we see more of the Italian Hyacinths, coming as they do in flower right after the early Romans? I am sure they would be appreciated as they bloom at a season when flowers are very scarce. Strange to say very few of our seedsmen list them. I have had some trouble the past few years in getting them.

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