

BOOK RECORD

Two Humorists Ask How Does Your Garden Grow

Dedication To Gardeners With Relatives Out In New Zealand

ARTIST Heath Robinson and writer K. R. G. Browne have got together once again, and although I am inclined to suspect that they are exploiting the gift of humour common to them both to the point of boiling pots, there's a good deal of fun in their latest effort.

"How to Make a Garden Grow" is what they call it, and if you know your Heath Robinson and your K. R. G. Browne, there's really no need to say any more about it.

Quaint Gadgets

However, for the benefit of those who haven't seen Mr. Robinson lately (he doesn't seem to be enjoying the vogue he once did) it should be mentioned that he is as full of quaint gadgets as ever.

There is the Handy Device for De-spiking Cacti, the Fowl-operated Kwiksplasche Bird Bath, patent Magnetic Braces for Corpulent Gardeners whose braces strangle them when they bend down, an extension pump for those who are forced

through climatic conditions to hose their garden with their bath-water, and, most delightful of all, a gadget for Reviving Wilted Plants, which I am afraid is usually used for reviving wilted gardeners. It consists of a whisky bottle and soda syphon, superimposed and ingeniously controlled by the same trigger release.

As for what Mr. Browne has to say about all this, well, although he did not rouse me to many of those expressions of mirth which Americans so picturesquely describe as "belly laughs," he brought me many chuckles and even a few titters.

Observing self-righteously "Two dedications for the price of one! What more could the heart desire?" Mr. Browne has written precisely two dedications.

Dedication

The first dedication is a very general one, "To young gardeners, old gardeners (I am quoting it for a purpose) gardeners in their second or third childhood . . . gardeners bald, gardeners hirsute . . . gardeners named Popjoy or Snaflethwaite, gardeners who believe

that the earth is flat . . . gardeners with double-jointed thumbs or relatives in New Zealand."

Now, over the phrase, "or relatives in New Zealand" I would like to pick a bone with Mr. Browne. Why does he couple that sort of gardener with gardeners with double-jointed thumbs?

For all Mr. Browne knows, there may be some horticultural circles in which "double-jointed thumb" is a term of reproach.

But I suspect the only reason he mentioned New Zealand is that he very astutely knows that a New Zealand reviewer has only to see the two words New Zealand mentioned in an overseas publication to start off on a long historical and/or geographical dissertation very distantly connected with the subject in hand. And that's the sort of thing Mr. Browne evidently feels will sell hundreds of copies of his book out here.

However, that's by the way. As I have indicated, "How to Make a Garden Grow" is very good fun and I am glad to have read it, if only to remark and sympathize with the regret with which Mr. Browne observes, "In recent years the fair face of England has broken out in a horrid rash of little model gnomes, dwarfs, elves and similar whimsicalities in terracotta."

Mr. Browne should know that they have broken out in suburban gardens in New Zealand, too. Also that in the New Zealand variety of the rash, "similar whimsicalities" include dwellings erected by the State and adorned with bright red, blue and green tile roofs.—J.G.M.

"How to Make a Garden Grow." Heath Robinson and K. R. G. Browne. Hutchinson, London. Our copy from the publisher.

Cats Are Rather High-Hat Creatures

CATS are much more controversial animals than dogs. Dogs, lovable though they are, always give men the gratifying feeling of being superior beasts. Cats, on the contrary, after they have yawned in his face and stalked off regardless of anything but food, often give him an inferiority complex.

They are proud. They always remember perhaps that a cat is said to have sent soldier Lord Roberts tottering and shivering off parade.

But cat-lovers will delight in "Lords of the Household," by Henry Savage. It is all about the life of his cats and himself (in that order) in an English cottage.

It abounds in little wise sayings, human touches, questionings, dialogue with the cats (neatly done) and pleasant wayside adventures. He explores extremely well the complex mind of the cat, and finds as much fascination in it as in Mona Lisa's inscrutable eyes.

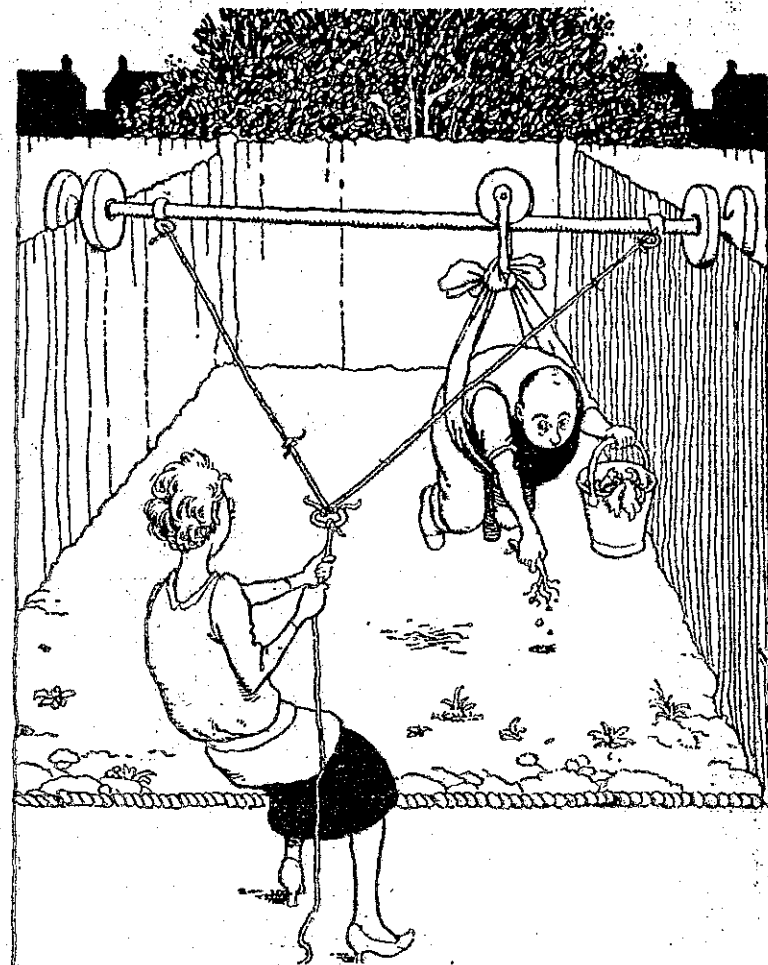
I think anyone could enjoy this book—even a dog-lover.—J.B.

"Lords of the Household." Henry Savage. Hutchinson, London. Our copy from the publisher.

Eurasian Theme In Sincere Tale

THE Eurasian theme in fiction is old. It has been exploited in various ways, sometimes effectively, sometimes shoddily. It is used again, very sincerely, in "Like Water Flowing," a first-novel by Margaret Mackay, who has been in China since 1931, and is the wife of the manager of the Imperial Hotel at Tientsin.

The heroine of the story is a Eurasian, not of the lower order,



★ WEEDING WITHOUT TREADING ON THE BEDS.—★
Interesting suggestion by artist Heath Robinson in gardening book reviewed on this page today.

Supermen Who Went Out To Explore The Wilds

Stories Of Heroes Now Forgotten

"GIVE honour to whom honour is due" is a noble saying, but unfortunately in our quick-lived age we forget so often who deserved preservation in the minds of people.

We admire explorers who open up new country, brave men who do memorable deeds, reckless fellows who laugh at danger.

Something is always happening nowadays, and if some time should really go by without a startling expedition to some wild part of the wilds, well, then the newspapers have to "boost" some second-rate adventure.

Of the nineteenth century, the only great explorers that are universally still remembered are Livingstone and Stanley, but there were a host of others that did the most unbelievable things at that time. "Honour is due" to Mr. Bridges for bringing those great adventurers of that century from

apparent oblivion, people who travelled then the length and breadth of America and Asia, of Australia and Africa.

The "Heroes of Forgotten Adventure" described by Mr. Bridges are veritable heroes. He gives us short narratives of their lives in all parts of the globe, and remember that when those supermen went out to unexplored continents and wild countries, they did not even know quinine to save them from fever, they had no mosquito-nets, and their weapons compared with ours, were toys.

Mr. Bridges, thank you again for reminding us what great fellows our forbears were and thank you for letting us see how rather commonplace are some of our supposedly great adventurers when compared with the already forgotten "heroes of the trail" in the nineteenth century.—S.K.

"Heroes of Forgotten Adventure." T. C. Bridges. Harrap, London. Our copy from the publishers.

About A Man And A Dog

AUSTRALIAN artist, Norman Lindsay, wrote and illustrated this 241 page novel "Age of Consent," and if you like Norman Lindsay's style, you will find the book amusing.

His detailed description of the life and habits of a mongrel dog is true to life; his descriptions of an artist and runaway bank clerk are harder to believe.

But Norman Lindsay, with journalistic licence, goes merrily into his story and reaches a high spot in describing the Australian who regally linked up with the Salvation Army, saved his money and then went "on a binge," only to link up with the "Red Jersies" once he had recovered from his carousal.

"Age of Consent" is not Lindsay's best book; he has done much better.—W.F.I.

"Like Water Flowing." Margaret Mackay. Harrap, London. Our copy from the publisher.

Unfamiliar Lyrics And A Century Of Verse

Three Volumes For Poetry Lovers

THERE is a good deal of pleasure to be derived from a perusal of Mr. Ault's pages. His Unfamiliar Lyrics are, many of them, very good. And it is quite apparent that an enormous amount of work must have been done to produce such a collection.

Work alone could hardly have been enough—a sure and sensitive literary taste has been perhaps a bigger factor. In his introduction, the compiler informs us that he has excluded every poem which appears in the two most widely known poetical collections, The Golden Treasury and The Oxford Book of English Verse.

Discriminating

The list of poems by some of the greater figures in English poetry—poems very frequently which had hitherto escaped every editor of their works—is surprisingly large, and the poems themselves extremely good.

"It has been my endeavour," says the editor, "so to discriminate in my choice of pieces that the great poets shall not be represented yet once more by the same old selection from their works, but wherever possible, poems as beautiful, if less familiar"—and to include "What I believe to be poems of rare and unexpected beauty, though written by poets of little or no fame, and by much unknown anonymous work of exquisite felicity."

Mr. Ault's is probably the first work of this kind of any considerable scope. Its chief value would appear to be in the sudden and unexpected sidelights the reader constantly finds thrown upon poets with whom he has a moderate or only a

little acquaintance—"So he could do this sort of thing—and in this way" is the sort of comment that the reader is passing every few minutes as he turns the pages.

In the two new "Pelicans," Mr. Roberts has, of course, had to apply a rather different criterion. Instead of his personal judgment, he has to a certain extent to take into account public favour.

Trends Of Poetry

But it is a fair claim to make that he has produced a really fine and representative selection which shows within its covers the trends and developments of English poetry during the period.

To the younger generation it may come as a shock to find some of the names so close to ourselves in point of time: The first volume includes poetry by (among others) Hood, Leigh Hunt, Poe (there is a fair American selection) Carlyle, Clough, Dobell, Longfellow, Cory, Gerard, Manley Hopkins, Meredith and Wilde. Among the moderns in the second volume are Stephen Spender, Edmund Blunden, Brooke, Muir, Lascelles, Abercrombie, Grenfell, and the late Professor A. E. Housman—and the selection is an excellent one. For a shillingsworth of poetry—two shillingsworth in New Zealand—it could hardly be bettered.—C.S.P.

A Treasury of Unfamiliar Lyrics, selected largely from rare and forgotten sources. Edited by Norman Ault. Victor Gollancz, London. Our copy from the publisher.

The Century's Poetry, 1837-1937. In two volumes. Compiled by Denys Kilham Roberts. Pelican Book. Allen Lane, London. Our copies from the publisher.