

**Only a Cluster of Violets.**  
Only a cluster of violets  
Brought from over the way.  
A gift from my neighbors fair children,  
Merry and happy in play.

Only a cluster of violets,  
White, with a faint tint of blue,  
Gathered in the morning so early,  
Their petals still glisten with dew.

In the midst of my sad desolation,  
And lonely forebodings and fears,  
They came as a gift from the angels,  
Spanning the gulf of the years.

Swiftly my thoughts traveled backward,  
O'er life's dreary pathway of gloom,  
And I thought of my many lost loved ones.

Till they seemed to stand near in the room.  
Oh, dear ones, so long have your faces  
Vanished beyond the dark sea.

Yet this sweet little cluster of violets  
Brings you so near to me.

Only cluster of violets,  
Yet they whispered so soft and low,  
That the ones whom I thought lost forever  
Are near me wherever I go.

Oh dear little blossom so spotless,  
Emblems of purity.  
You are lightening the gloom of existence,  
And giving clear vision to me.

Only a cluster of violets,  
Yet how much they seem to me,  
Messengers sent from heaven.  
Breathing sweet purity.

Only a cluster of violets,  
The fragrance is filling my room,  
The thoughts which their presence awaken  
Are gently dispelling my gloom.

I glance at my neighbor's fair children  
Engaged in their innocent play,  
And invoke choicest blessings from heaven  
On the little heads over the way.

Park's Floral Magazine.

**Handy Flowers for Florida.**  
Hardy in this connection means flowers that will endure the early heats, the drouths, the "rainy season" and the midsummer sunshine on the sandy soil which is so much in evidence in some portions of this state.

No one who has not had a personal experience with these conditions can realize their effects on many of the floral favorites of northern gardens.

One can often accomplish a partial success by carefully shading from the heat and watering the plants, but nothing can forestall the rain and this excess of moisture combined with the heat seads the roots which often die in spite of our efforts.

Hence painful memories of floral disaster haunt many a Florida homesteader who planted with enthusiasm only to reap disappointment. If one could avoid failure he should waste no time with plants unsuited to a semi-tropical climate. An inspection of the native flora might help one to a decision.

Every observing visitor has noted the unusual abundance of many members of the natural order, Compositae. The yellow blossoms of the helianthus are mirrored in the crystal waters of the inland lakes, while in their season, acres of Rudbeckias, Verbenas and host of other composite flowers glorify the flatwoods with their banners of purple and gold.

Many of the composite flowers are co-extensive with the whole United States. The Solidago or golden rod, for instance, which is to be found from our northern borders to the Gulf of Mexico. The Cacalia Coecina is a native of the East Indies, the Marigold of tropical America, and the Dahlia of Mexico.

My first effort at growing annuals in Florida, was in newly cleared ground unfertilized and bordering on the flat woods. It had not been ditched and during the "rainy season" was subject to overflow. In this crude soil I dropped the seeds of about one hundred different packets. Of all this number, but one endured these untoward conditions. A few came up, struggling feebly for some weeks, then died. The Cosmos lived and bloomed emphasizing the survival of the fittest. After several years absence I returned to my home in Orange county. It was late to sow seed for summer bloom. Only one variety survived—the Gaillardia, which flourished in spite of the withering drouth and in soil which burned the hand like hot embers. The ants attacked it, as ants will in Florida, but it defied them all.

I once planted several varieties of annuals, in my city back yard. It was largely made soil of broken bricks, stones, sticks, tin cans, etc., with a small portion of mold and stiff clay. Only one variety lived to bloom. It was the Zinnia. I then decided that the Compositae furnished the hardiest plants in existence.

Leguminous plants are very common in Florida. I once heard a native say that "anything like a pea or a bean would grow," in that state. There are hosts of other kinds which offer themselves to the floriculturist both for botanical study and for ornamental purposes.

Mrs. Jennie S. Perkins,  
Washington, D. C.

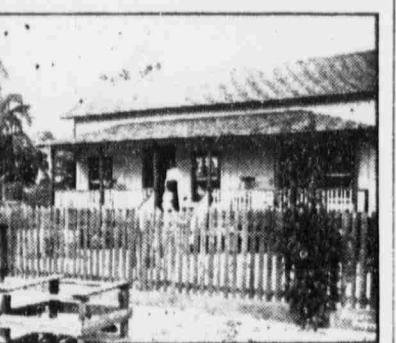
**Escalloped Potatoes.**—Pare and slice thin potatoes enough to fill a medium-sized pudding dish, cover with cold water and let stand three or four hours. Drain, and dry on a linen cloth. Grease the dish and add alternate layers of potatoe and cracker crumbs, butter, pepper and salt and a little sugar; then pour in one pint of milk and bake. Cover the dish for one hour then open it and brown daintily.

By being so devoted to duty that we become by nature dutiful; by nobly following noble examples; by standing as far as mortal may, with a conscience void of offense, will surely afford us that taste of bliss, which hath most joyous need.

#### Valuable Trees and Shrubs.

Mr. Joseph Meehan describes several desirable ornamental trees and shrubs. Arbor Vitae can be grown in Florida and the Golden ferns are more showy than the common. We have no doubt that Mahonia aquifolia could be successfully grown here. In our search for ornamental trees we are too apt to neglect our native species; some of our oaks are very beautiful when grown in the open ground where they have a fair chance to develop.

Our native trees are attracting atten-



THE HOME OF MR. J. B. WINN,  
Crystal River.

tion elsewhere. In some situations a deciduous tree is preferable to an evergreen. The Nyssas or Sour Gum are very handsome symmetrical trees.

#### MEEHAN'S GOLDEN ARBOR VITAE.

What is known as Meehan's golden Arbor vitae is a golden-tipped variety, found in a bed of seedlings, many years ago. The extreme tips of the shoots are golden. On the whole, it is not as good a golden color as that of the George Peabody, another golden form of this Arbor vitae. But it differs in this, that whereas the George Peabody has the same upright habit of growth that the typical one has, the Meehan's golden is of a far more bushy character. It is much broader in proportion to its height than is the Peabody.

These golden forms are particularly beautiful at all seasons of the year. Reference has been made before to their beauty in early summer, when the new growth is well advanced. Even now, in the depth of winter their golden yellow foliage is very pleasant; and were I asked, I would advise those who are contemplating

#### FURTHER NOTES ON MAHONIA AQUIFOLIA.

My notes on Mahonia aquifolia, which appeared in The Florist's Exchange a short time ago, have attracted much attention. In addition to what other correspondents have said, J. Hetherington, Portland, Ore., now writes:

"You are doubtless aware that large numbers of Mahonia aquifolia grow wild in these parts. If there is anything you should wish to know as to its habits, etc., in western Oregon, I should be pleased to inform you. It is a beautiful thing at this time of the year, and is almost universally used at Christmas for decorative purposes. Do you consider it would stand the climate of the East?"

As I have before said, this evergreen shrub does very well here, and is much valued; and it is worth all the good words these correspondents have to say for it. When in a sheltered place its bronze-colored leaves of Winter remain unburned all through our Winters, but when exposed to much sun and wind the leaves become brown and disfigured. But the wood is seldom injured, no matter how low the thermometer registers. In many of our public grounds and our private places large numbers of it are used, often in masses and when in flower, in early Spring, the show of yellow is greatly admired.

As already mentioned by correspondents and by myself, Mahonia aquifolia is very useful for Christmas work by florists and this suggests the making of a note of those who can furnish it, for reference when the proper time comes. And it should serve, too, to remind those who can sell the sprays, to advertise the fact when next winter approaches. Many florists would be glad to get hold of a lot of it then.

#### SOUTHERN OAKS IN ENGLAND.

One of our nurseries recently received an order for a collection of oaks for England, coupled with the request that Southern sorts were not to be included, it being feared they would not live outdoors there. The fact is probably every one of the strictly Southern oaks would live there, for all but two or three of them get through the winter at Philadelphia. There

come to mind only those that are not hardy in that city: Virens, laurifolia, Catesbeii and cineraria, others which, if not strictly Southern or more so than they are Northern, and which do not live outdoors there. The fact is probably every one of the strictly Southern oaks would live there, for all but two or three of them get through the winter at Philadelphia. There

but the one species of sour gum in the North, the multiflora. Getting South, the Nyssa aquatica takes the place of the Northern one, and disappears and in its seeds it differs but little from multiflora. Experts can tell the seeds apart; those of the Northern one being less flattened than those of the Southern species.

Besides these two, there are two others in the South, Nyssa elata and Nyssa uniformis; and in foliage and fruit these differ very much from the others. The leaves are large, and the fruit of both is as large as a small plum; that of N. uniformis particularly

looks like it. Both of these are swamp-loving trees; and for the matter of that, our Northern one, already mentioned, delights in low ground.

The way to propagate these sour gums is to procure the seeds in autumn, clean them of pulp and sow them outdoors at once. Failing this, preserve them over winter in damp soil, sowing them early in spring. There is a weeping form of the Northern N. multiflora, which is increased by budding.

The following are some more notes by Mr. Joseph Meehan in another number of The Florist's Exchange. Japanese maples are very beautiful; we think that a lath shelter would probably be all that would be needed in this State.

The Tulip tree is a native of Florida and a very beautiful tree when not in bloom. The only objection to it is that it is deciduous.

#### SITUATION FOR JAPANESE MAPLES.

It is puzzling to find just the right place to plant a Japanese maple, if in a fully exposed place, the leaves

scorch in summer. If in a

shady place, the rich colors fail to develop.

If possible to plant them where they escape two or three hours of the noonday sun, it will suit them better than any other place. Besides this, they need a good lot of moisture in the soil.

Not a wet place, but where the roots will be in moist soil,

as this will insure some coolness of the roots as well.

Those who grow the stock for sale will find it a paying business to plunge the pots in the sun.

In a bed of leaves, sand, or some

other material easily handled; and if

suspects are not expected the same season, place them in a spot almost entirely in the sun if not so well colored.

Or all the sorts in cultivation, the

blood-leaved A. polymorpha atropurpureum is the most esteemed.

Just when the leaves are fully expanded in spring, the red color is intense.

It is then that the florist who has a lot of this maple in pots finds a great demand for them, for it is at this period of the plant's development one of the most striking features on a lawn.

It is a mass of red color, just like a bed of red flowers. The sort mentioned is

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