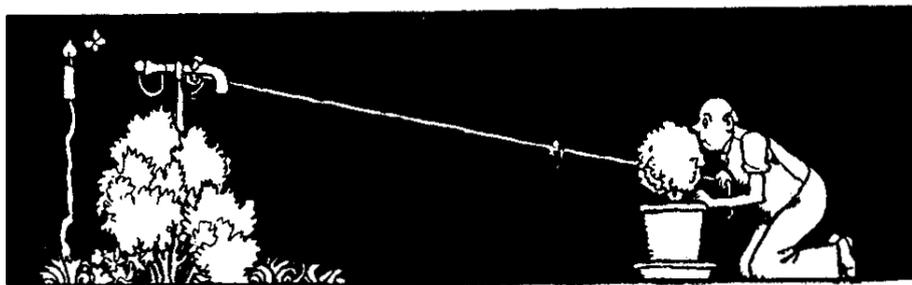
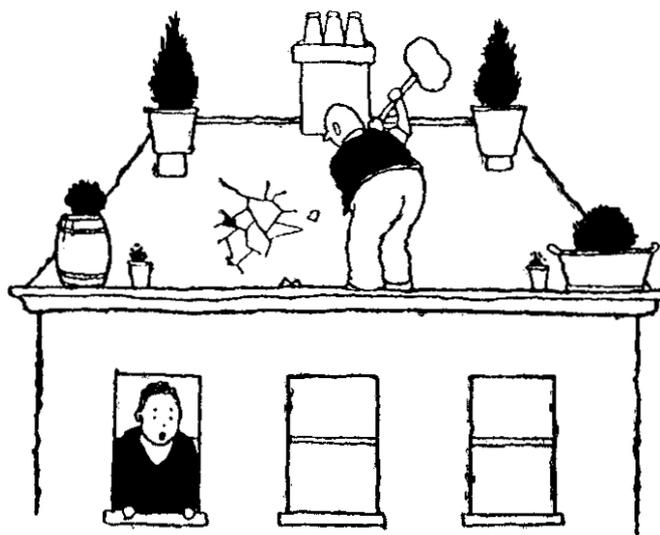


HOW TO
MAKE A
GARDEN
GROW





Crazy pavement for the roof garden

VINTAGE WORDS OF WISDOM

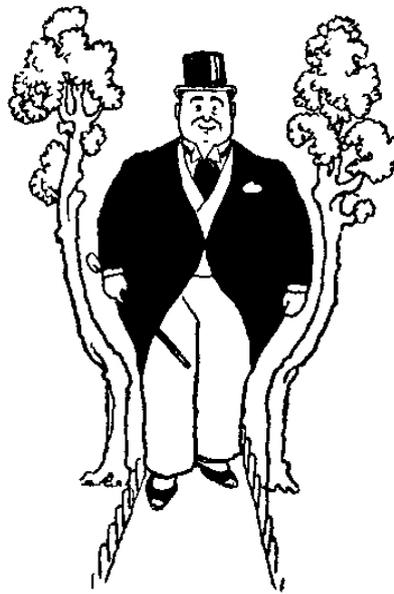
HOW TO MAKE A GARDEN GROW

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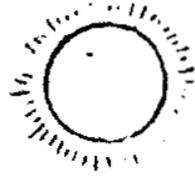
HEATH ROBINSON

and

K. R. G. BROWNE



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A Refresher in the Bird Bath



Curing night starvation

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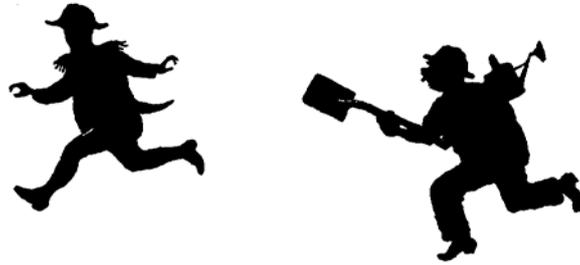
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INTRODUCTION

It was Napoleon, I believe, who once remarked laughingly across the teacups to somebody whose name escapes me for the moment: “These English (*ces anglais et anglaises*) are a nation of gardeners! *Zut, alors!*”

Rather a sweeping statement, but one containing more than a grain of truth. Horticulture does not, of course, play so large a part in Great Britain’s daily life as professional football or the bacon-curing industry; but of every ten Englishmen accosted at random in the street – somewhat to their surprise, no doubt – at least six would prove to be keen amateurs of the trowel, the shears and the twopenny seed-packet. (The other four would probably start nervously and hurry on, suspecting a catch somewhere.)

Affection for flowers of all sorts has been a British characteristic since the dawn of Time. In their earliest forms, presumably, gardens were merely bits of ground on which things either grew or did not. It is likely, indeed, that the Early British caveholder never even realized that he *had* a garden until flowers actually sprouted on his premises. Knowing nothing of the gardener’s art, he had to take what Nature chose to give him in the way of flora; but as he was unable to distinguish an orchid from a dandelion – and, in any case, was far too busy keeping the megatherium from the door – that worried him very little, one imagines.

Nowadays, however, gardening is a highly complicated science, bristling with Latin phrases and giving employment to a large number of deserving workers. The manufacturers of hose-pipery, the designers of garden-rollers, the intrepid experts who insert the essential teeth in rakes, the knitters of netting for nut-trees, the elderly ladies who purvey rich blooms from baskets at street-corners, the distillers of insecticide, the skilled craftsmen who operate the interlocutory bivalvular Hoppskotsch machines which impart the essential rotundity to the ball-bearings of lawn-mowers – all these, and many more, owe their livelihood and an occasional egg with their tea to the unknown genius who first discovered that flowers can be made (or, at any rate, encouraged) to bloom in the Spring, *tra la!*



Affection for flowers

Not everybody, admittedly, can cultivate the type of garden that gets its photograph in the glossier weekly papers and is visited by charabanc-loads of awestruck sightseers during the geranium season. Almost anybody, however, who owns the first British serial rights in a plot of ground, a pair of old trousers, a philosophic disposition and a little spare cash – wherewith to buy fertilizer, wallflower-bulbs, gardening-gloves and embrocation (for aches in the back, without which no gardener can properly discharge his duties) – can devise a modest pleasure in which tea can be taken on summer afternoons and which can be boasted about slightly at the Club.



What nature gave him

Though a lot of Britons now inhabit flats – and many of them pretty comfortably, too, thanks to Mr. Heath Robinson and myself (advt.) – the bulk of the population still prefers to live in houses, each with its allotted ration of this blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England. This is all to the good, in the opinion of authorities on hygiene, because even the smallest garden is a good place to get fresh air and gentle exercise in. The larger the garden, of course, the less gentle the exercise; but quite a lot of healthful stooping can be done in the most restricted of back-yards.

(There is an old Chinese adage to the effect that indifferent stoopers make bad gardeners; but this is only partly true. People who, by reason of their age and/or physical contours, stoop slowly and with reluctance will naturally not get such quick results as those who bend fealty and without discomfort; and, obviously, they will require stouter braces. But to regard gardening, on that account, as a pastime solely for the young and lissome is to turn a blind ear to the evidence. Some of the finest gardeners in History were practically circular, while many of those at large today have not seen their feet for years.)