

growing is to keep the glass clean, for light is as needful as water to plants, and they rarely get enough of it.

FRUIT GARDEN.

Planting may be carried on as weather permits. It is not too late to put in cuttings of burr knots and bush fruits. Plantations of fruits that have borne well for many years, should now have a thick coat of fat manure spread over.

NEW BOOKS.

DARWIN ON CLIMBING PLANTS.—THE MOVEMENTS AND HABITS OF CLIMBING PLANTS. By CHARLES DARWIN (*Murray*).—The inquiries of Mr. Darwin into the characteristics of climbing plants have in several ways been brought under public notice, but not in the complete and systematic manner in which they are presented in this delightful little volume, of which the second edition is now before us. The lover of plants who needs but casual and accidental observation of their various modes of development cannot attain to anything like a perception of the world of wonders into which such men as Mr. Darwin force their way. Not many, perhaps, are aware that twining and climbing plants revolve with the regularity of clock-work, and indeed would but rarely obtain the support they require, were they not constantly sweeping the air in circles with their slender, lengthening stems or tendrils. An initial movement, consequent, perhaps, on the more rapid growth of one side of the stem than on the other, is combined with a sensitiveness that causes a contraction and thickening of the prehensile parts as soon as contact is established, appear to be the principal characteristics of these plants, considered solely as climbers. Mr. Darwin considers them the most highly-organized members of the vegetable kingdom, and seems inclined to claim for them some higher attribute than what is generally understood as "vegetable instinct." There is always one comfort in reading the books of this earnest philosopher, and that is, that he loves facts, acquires facts by patient labour, relates facts with wonderful clearness and precision, and makes of his well-proven facts the backbone of his treatise, whatever his theories on the subject may be. As a lesson in natural theology, his treatise on climbing plants is invaluable; and although Mr. Darwin nowhere abandons his long-cherished ideas on evolution, we find him here discussing the object of a plant in climbing, its selection of the means whereby to climb, and its capability of varying its mode of procedure to suit variations of conditions. He thus labours with the earnestness proper to a lover of truth to make the climbing plants testify that "the hand that made us is Divine."

FLORAL DECORATIONS FOR THE DWELLING-HOUSE. By ANNIE HASSARD (*Macmillan*).—Our readers have so many times been aided in their employment of floral decorations in the household by the taste and experience of Miss Hassard, that they will not need to be informed of her eminent capacity for the production of a systematic treatise on the subject. The truth is, the gifted author of this work stands alone and far in advance of all competitors, whether as an exhibitor or a judge of exhibitions, whether in the preparation of a bouquet for a princess or the decoration of a grand saloon for an important public ceremony. Fortunately Miss Hassard wields the pen with facility, and the result, in the case before us, is a series of descriptions and directions that convey the fullest and clearest information possible by means of writing; and whoever follows faithfully what is here set forth, must soon become proficient in the employment of flowers and fruits for decorative purposes. The low price of the work (5s.) brings it within the range of a large class who cherish refined tastes, but have not the means for extravagant display.

RAMBLES IN SEARCH OF SHELLS—LAND AND FRESHWATER. By T. E. HARTING (*Van Voorst*).—This is a very handy and peculiarly concise guide-book to the shells commonly met with in gardens, fields, woods, and watercourses, and consequently will be of great value to lovers of the country who are not well versed in the humble departments of conchology to which snails, and mussels, and limpets belong. The style is gossipy, but conveys an immense amount of information, and there are some nicely-got-up coloured plates, by the aid of which many of our garden and woodland snails may be identified, and their histories traced with little difficulty. The culture of edible snails is treated of; so those who wish to be epicures in snails may have reason to thank Mr. Harting.