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TREES AND FLOWERS IN THE CENTRAL PARK.

The long rain having ceased and the chill of winter being gone from the air, there is now a deal of activity in and about the greenhouses of the Central Park. Men are potting plants and setting out daisies and pansies already in bloom; geraniums, violets, mignonettes, are at last getting a breath of fresh air in forcing beds, the frames being raised.

In the lily house, that beautiful purple African water lily, Nympha zanzibarensis, is almost in full bloom, and will be set out toward the last of May in all the city parks. The Nile lotus is sprouting from its tub in the lily pond, 75th Street and Fifth Avenue.

Outside, on the side of a neighboring hill, the writer was shown some snowdrops in bloom, sheltered from the wind by a rift of snow, and crocuses, it is said, are peeping up through the thin layers of snow that here and there speck some of the park hills.

Many of the perennials, put out last autumn, such as tulips, daffodils, scillas, and so on, are beginning to show signs of life—some already above ground.

The dogwood and scarlet maple trees are late in budding this year, for Superintendent-Gardener George Woolson says so severe a winter has not been seen for seventeen years.

Means has yet been found to stop the ravages of the elm beetle, which last year did a great deal of mischief, wholly consuming the leaves of many of the elms, and at times attacking other trees.

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How to Light a Lamp with a Snowball and the Like.

The National Educator gives the following three curious experiments, which may not be new to the professional chemist, but will be of interest to the chemist student.

When a small piece of potassium, the size of half a grain of corn, is dropped into a tumblerful of water, some of the oxygen of the water leaves its hydrogen, owing to the intense heat which the chemical action produces, and combines with the metallic potassium, causing a violet bluish flame.

Fire under water can be produced by placing a small piece of phosphorus in a conically shaped glass filled with water, and some crystals of chlorate of potash covering the phosphorus, and then pouring through a long tube funnel, or a glass tube, a few drops of sulphuric acid down on the mixture at the bottom of the glass.

The force of steam boiler explosions can be illustrated by getting a tube made by a tinsmith, say half an inch in diameter, and closed at one end. Put a piece of ice the size of a cherry, or half a teaspoonful of water, into the tube and cork the open end tightly.

Dangers of Insufficient Ventilation.

One of the great evils of civilization lies in the crowding together of large numbers of persons in confined spaces. This is especially the case with schools and with factories, but is not limited to those instances.

Very recently Brown-Sequard has proved by actual chemical analysis that the air expired by a healthy person contains a poison, not a microbe, but a distinct chemical poison.

In factories, as usually arranged, there must inevitably be much evil done by the breathing of other people's breaths all day long, six days in the week.

The only remedy lies in effectual ventilation, and there can be no doubt that in factories, schools, and all other places in which many persons live and work or study in confined space, the ventilation should be much better than it is.

I would wish, therefore, to appeal urgently to those who have the direction of schools and factories to introduce really effective ventilation. They have the health, even the lives, of large numbers in their charge, and cannot escape this great responsibility.

M. C. L.

Hot Water for Plants.

It is a fortunate circumstance that a plant will endure a scalding heat that is fatal to most of its minute enemies. Water heated to the boiling point, poured copiously over the stem of an enfeebled peach tree, and allowed to stand about its collar, will often have the happiest restorative effects.

The London florists recommend hot water, up to 145° Fah., as a remedy when plants are sickly, owing to the soil souring—the acid absorbed by the roots acting as a poison. The usual resort is to the troublesome job of repotting.

A lady friend had a fine calla in a three-gallon pot, which showed signs of ill health. On examination the outer portion of the filling was found mouldy, it being in large part fresh horse manure.