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Whatever the Weather May Be!

"Supposin' today was the winterest day,
Wud the weather be changin' 'cause you cried,
Or the snow be grass, were you crucified?
The best is to make your own summer, says he,
Whatever the weather may be!
Ye can bring the Spring, wid its green and gold,
An' the grass in the grove where the snow lies cold;
It's the songs ye sing, and the smile ye wear,
That's a-makin' the sun shine everywhere."

I believe Riley had the gardener in mind when he composed these lines, and I do not think there has ever been a time when they were more applicable than now. We gardeners in this locality certainly need all the solace that literature, good fellowship, faith and hope can give us,—for the weather man has been most unkind.

Rain has been the order of the day for a major part of the spring, and it took real patience and concentrated effort to get the necessary work completed to put the garden in shape. But my force made the most of every opportunity and the latter part of last week saw everything in ship-shape for a splendid blooming season, and the plants in my European Iris Garden seemed to be vying with each other to throw promising bloom stalks, and as I watched the development I could not help but have the thrill of approaching the greatest Iris blooming season my garden has ever had.

But the weather man changed it all.

Thursday of last week, it began to get cooler, and the temperature fell to 30 degrees during the night. Friday showed no improvement as the thermometer registered a further drop to 26 degrees. The weather man seemed to have fallen into the habit of serving cold weather, for Saturday and Sunday followed with freezing
temperatures. The chill is still very much in evidence; and the constant patter of the rain keeps me company as I write.

And O, what a change it made in the garden! Alcazar, with its sturdy, splendid bloom stalks and well developed buds, now stands with bowed head and blighted buds. Miranda, who last year gave us a profusion of bloom on her tall stiff bloom stalks, is trying her best to overcome the effects of the freeze and mature blooms from crooked, sprawling stems that are not at all characteristic. Yellow Hammer (Dykes), which had been giving us such a splendid display of yellow bloom, has not yet gathered courage enough to open another bud. Zwanenburg, which has delighted us the past week with its mass of tan blooms, now shows no color and the frozen blooms only emphasize the bright spot it did display in the garden. The dwarf section, which was a mass of color, is now a cemetery of inactivity. In fact, the entire garden seems to have lost the spirit of competition, and the dormant stillness of undeveloped buds has settled there. I can't quite describe my feelings when I found the most promising bud on Swazi hanging down from a frozen bloom stalk, and that the several buds on Aphrodite had lost their vigor. The keen loss and disappointment here was soon followed by a great hope.

Kurdistan opened yesterday, displaying a rich reddish-purple bloom of splendid size and quality, and Osiris, a regelio-cyclus variety opened a splendid bloom, beautifully veined and marked like Susiana, Una and others in that class. The plants in my entire garden are all vigorous and healthy as the freeze damaged only the bloom stalks and the developed buds, and I am hoping that many of the buds are still uninjured, and will, like Kurdistan and Osiris, still show good bloom. I know that I will not enjoy the great wealth of bloom that my garden had in store for me, but I am going to smile and "make my own summer", until the buds do develop as I hope they will if the weather man gets back to anything like a regular and seasonable schedule. The following varieties do not appear to be injured and may show bloom. If you are interested in seeing any of them in bloom and will write or wire me, I will be glad to tell you promptly just what progress the plants are making.
Pont-a-Mousson  Rosalba  Susan Bliss
Porcelain  Rosalind  Suzanne Autissier
Princess Royal  Rose Salterne  Syphax
Prosper  Ruby  Tamar
Prosper Laugier  Salonique  Tenebrae
Queen Elinor  Sapphire  Titan
Queen Flavia  Saracen  Troost
Queen Mary  Shiraz  Turco
Rheintraube  Silvia  William Marshall
Ring Dove  Solfatare  Yeoman
Rodney  Squalen’s Viel Or  Zouave
Romeo  Sunshine

It adds strength to my hope and expectation to note that Citronella, Cardinal, Duke of Bedford, Bruno, Titan, Tenebrae, Moa and Dominion are listed with the "possible comers". While I cannot promise the wonderful treat which my garden had in store for visitors, yet you are still invited to enjoy the varieties that show bloom.

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P. S.—I am glad to add that my Peonies do not seem to be hurt at all. The blooming season will be late but I am looking for splendid blooms when the weather man is kind enough to allow them to develop.