

SIT

SCOPE



'And they call us stupid'

You don't have to have greenfingers to root cuttings

THERE are those people, many of whom are so modest that they don't even lay claim to the title of gardeners, who attribute their success with plants because they talk to them. These are the people who, it would often seem, can almost literally root walking-sticks by inoculation. Friends claim for them—they will never do it themselves—the indefinable gift of "greenfingers". There is no doubt that they possess some inner sense of knowing just what's right without knowing why they know it. It is down to an affinity for plants, a feeling for them, a question of timing and all that it means and implies.

Most of us, however, when it comes to horticultural practice, have to follow the rules with thumbs in the text book if we wish to have a similar measure of success. And this certainly applies to propagating shrubs by cuttings.

Shrubs

For the next six to eight weeks or so until September, there are many shrubs which can be rooted easily—and really mean easy—by softwood and semi-ripe cuttings. These cuttings are made from shoots of the present season's growth.

Before you start, have a look at some of the shrubs in your garden and see which are suitable for rooting by cuttings. The original five volume series of the "Birds of Europe" is likely to fetch £600 on today's market.

For most of us this fine quarto edition, while listing some of the greatest and most beautiful birds of the world, is a truly remarkable naturalist's and birdwatcher's book. It is a book which will be treasured by many a birdwatcher and naturalist alike. Altogether, he produced

GARDENING with Craig Wallace

what I mean. You will find along the main branches any amount of young side-shoots, varying in length according to the plant and the time of flowering. This is you cutting material. These young shoots can be gently pulled off with a pair of secateurs, leaving a "heel" of the older wood attached and if the cutting is about one-third of the length of the shoot, it is discarded. The youngest portion which, because it is so young, is the most difficult to root.

The cuttings without a "heel" attached should be cut cleanly at the base just below a leaf. Generally speaking, a cutting three inches to five inches long is easiest to manage. Neatly trim off the lower leaves and your cuttings are ready—about one-third to one-half of the cutting should be inserted into the compost. And get them into the compost as soon as you can; don't leave them lying about to wilt in the sun.

The rooting compost should be free-draining and capable of holding moisture at the same time. The usual ingredients are fine soil, moist peat and coarse gritty sand in various proportions. Or you can use one of the proprietary soilless composts can be used.

Equal parts by bulk is easy to remember and this amount of soil will sustain the young plant after it has rooted. Increasing the proportion of sand will speed up rooting but may involve earlier moving of the plants to open ground.

Seed-box

For a small number of cuttings a deep seed box can be used or clay pots—you don't need anything larger than five inch ones. These should be placed in a shaded part of the greenhouse or into an outside frame screened from the mid-day sun. For larger quantities a cutting can be made on the floor of the frame—this can be used indefinitely, making it up occasionally to make good the material removed when the cuttings are moved on.

The aim is to keep the cuttings fresh; the harder this is to achieve. So keep the surface of the frame—this is the compost nest and moist. Take more cuttings than you need; you will find the surplus plants will always be appreciated by your friends.

Inside "All Kinds of Everything" (Rex BPS 101) is much as you might expect. It is a goodly list of people, institutions and libraries, subscribed to one or more of his folios.

As a field naturalist, Gould relied on the young Prussian-born Joseph Wolf for the identification of the birds he found on his journeys to different parts of the world. Of all his work, Wolf was the most prolific. He has been the finest artist of the 19th century, painting the birds of the world with the possible exception of the 18th century, when he was in Tennessee.

DANA—this is how she won 'Europe'

RECORDS

THE BLURB on the record sleeve is a little embarrassing: "A wonderful girl to work with. A wonderful girl to know. A girl with a wonderful future—Dana (Signed) Tony Johnston."

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She took it into her head that her heart was back!

JOHN PEPPER

"WHAT did I not tell you?" amicably pops up among this week's selection of upside-down Ulsterisms as, from town and country, more examples pour in of our unique approach to speech.

When the doctor arrived he was on his last legs, has an unexpectedness of it. So has the soccer player of whom it was said "One thing about him, he's very wise with his feet" and the young woman who announced "She took it into her head that her heart was back."

More than one reminder comes to me from Co. Down of the girl who was married to a prosperous farmer with three cows and a horse and cart all giving milk.

The Belfastman who commented wonderingly "Look at the few bottles of milk filled with orange juice" earns a niche of her own, as firmly as the one who commented "I only know you wouldn't take a cup of tea only if you had a cup of tea."

There is sure to be a degree of sympathy for the shipyardman who complained "The top's out of the wheel of my sock" and for the woman shopkeeper who returned a check saying "I'm sure I would have liked it if only I could have it on."

Here are this week's winning selections. Those started next night off to make way for, believe it or not, 23 Japanese girls playing Irish harps.

Mary O'Malley heard them play in Dublin this week at the start of a European tour and persuaded them to visit Belfast in their itinerary.

Their ages are between 17 and 21 and are Irish girls of the very first group of players.

* caught

"I CAUGHT the baker in the lane" goes to the top of my list of favourite Ulsterisms. Others are: "Are you up there?" "They're going steady together."

"Come on ahead in through the front door." "Get on to your one end and get on you."

"I'll draw my hand across you if you don't conduct yourself."

"Hurry up and come down." — W.M. Newton-Abey.

* patient

Since I work in a local hospital I decided to make a note of the crazy sayings I hear every day or two. Very soon after I was getting my patients settled down for the night when one of them inquired: "Nurse, can I get before I lie down?"

A few yards away a patient was telling me about a visitor she'd had earlier in the day and said: "She came up to see me with both arms the one length." How else could she have come?

Next morning another elderly patient looked out at the heavy rain and said: "If it's not raining it's pouring in this place."

Finally there was the old dear who was asked during a discussion on a television show, "And how do you like England?" Her reply: "Me? I like anything eatable." (At my correspondent's request the prize goes to this lady).

legs

RECENT examples of our crazy speech: "I was that tired I had no legs, so my reverence said to me: 'Don't you be walking, wait and I'll run you down.'"

A mother was visiting her daughter, who lived next door to her, and her dog barked and howled when they were out.

Mother was fed-up last night and said to her daughter: "You know those people should be when they're out to be that dog."

Auntie lamenting about nephew's poor appetite: "He just lives on sweet things and never eats the kitchen"—Anne A. Dale Down.

more I WAS convinced that this week there couldn't possibly be any upside down examples of daily speech of which I had not already heard. I was wrong for I have still a good few yet to be published.

More will then appear next week. If you have some of your own which have not yet been quoted send them to John Pepper, Belfast Telegraph, Belfast BT1 1EB, to arrive not later than first post on Wednesday next, July 30.

JAPANESE GIRLS WILL PLAY IRISH HARPS

THEATRE

THE lack of tourists may have hit the summer theatre in Portlough, but indirectly the troubles have benefited the variety show in the Little Theatre, Bangor.

"We've been doing extremely well," says George Johnston, who with his wife, Roma Derry is presenting the show. There may not be as many holidaymakers as usual in the Co. Down town but people from Belfast and Newtownabbey are going along to see Showtime 70, and the result has been full houses.

Main reasons for the success, says George, are the popularity of the Irish harpists and the early closing of pubs and clubs in Belfast. Now that the closing time is once again 10 p.m. people may not be so keen to arrive in Portlough, but so far it's been a case of "an ill wind".

Zarada, who gives readings at £2 a time, in addition to those he does as part of his act, is fully booked until August 31 for these private sessions.

Things are improving in Portlough where there have been more visitors during the latter half of the season. The Bangor Drama Club's production of Crystal Clear by Falkland and Paul King

continues until Wednesday

will be followed on Thursday by the Rosemary Dwyer Group in Eden Phillpotts' comedy The Farmer's Wife a popular play with repertory companies since its first production in 1914.

The Lyric re-opens on Monday with George Shears' The Passing Day but on Tuesday the cast will have an unexpected night off to make way for, believe it or not, 23 Japanese girls playing Irish harps.

Mary O'Malley heard them play in Dublin this week at the start of a European tour and persuaded them to visit Belfast in their itinerary.

Their ages are between 17 and 21 and are Irish girls of the very first group of players.

Other Irish girls to hear these girls are Cork, Limerick and the early closing of pubs and clubs in Belfast. Now that the closing time is once again 10 p.m. people may not be so keen to arrive in Portlough, but so far it's been a case of "an ill wind".

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There's a pool of British comedy at the ABC—All the Way Up—with lots of well-known comedy actors supporting Warren Mitchell in his first Broadway production "Till Death us Do Part".

Warren Mitchell plays Fred Midway whose driving ambition is to climb to the top of the tree but his work. But he has serious setbacks when his son puts a girl in the family way and his daughter is discovered sleeping with her boss.

In Search of the Casavans with Hayley Mills and Maurice Chevalier is the last Beatles film. Let it be at the ABC. The latest and probably the most controversial characters in the informality of musical and songs. In the film, The Secret of Santa Victoria, which is at the ABC, is John Wayne in The Comancheros.

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They said

Man in Commas

You can have a taste of it. This is what it was like in Belfast.

It's like being in Northern Ireland again. It will be marching.

It was with some reluctance that I came to the conclusion that the decision taken by myself and my colleagues was the right one.

This is a real relief of Derry. There is no hope see may enjoy what is left of the summer.

Our hands are tied by the headlines and the events behind them.

Mr. Lynch almost adopts a schoolmaster attitude towards the North, but shows his abject ignorance.

Rathfern tenants demand a big clean-up

THROUGHOUT your paper we would like to make an earnest appeal to our new MP, Mr. J. McNamara, to help the tenants of Rathfern.

W.M. McNamara, who has already appeared unsuccessfully to the Housing Committee of the Rathfern Urban Council about the deplorable condition of our estate. We have lived in this estate since 1945 and never once has there been a road-sweeper working on the estate.

Rathfern tenants of Rathfern pay high rents and rates and are entitled to better conditions. At the back of our houses is an old transformer which is used as a rubbish tip. It is a real nuisance what is in it. We need a clean-up of the estate.

There has been a lot of talk about the neglected state of Rathfern, but we don't think that we can do this with old, broken bricks and rubble and various things littered everywhere.

We have been to the Housing Board and to the Council and Mr. J. McNamara has said something about it. We are suffering from it.

(Mrs. P. McCOLL, 18, Tulleville Drive, Newtownabbey, Co. Antrim.)

Hospitality in Donegal AFTER an enjoyable holiday at Portlough, we would like to say a few words about the hospitality of the people in the surrounding towns which we visited.

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