THE SCABIOUS.

By C. WOLLEY DOD, in the Gardener's Magazine.

THE accompanying illustration represents a white variety of *Scabiosa caucasica*. This variety came, we believe, accidentally a few years ago from seed in the

nassi; a very neat rock plant in habit, three or four inches high, with large flowers of a pale dull blue. Unlike many Greek plants, it is quite hardy. Yellow scabiouses are offered in catalogues, but all of these I have seen have been disappointing, mostly of a dull ochreous color, rather than clear yellow. The coarse

fund. Besides the statue for the National History Museum, the committee hope to found exhibitions, scholarships and medals for biological research and lectureships, and possibly assist the republication of Mr. Huxley's scientific works. The treasurer is Sir John Lubbock, 15 Lombard Street, E. C., London.

SCABIOSA CAUCASICA ALBA.

nursery of Mr. Prichard, of Christchurch, in the unaccountable way in which one plant out of a sowing becomes white when the normal color is blue. It often happens that these albino flowers are of a dull white, and are far from being an improvement on the ordinary color of the species; but this has the merit of being a clear and pure white, and is a welcome novelty, though the soft and pleasing lilac blue of the type will never allow its white rival to supersede it. I have not yet proved how this variety comes from seed, but Mr. W. Thompson, of Ipswich, who is a trustworthy authority on these matters, assures us that a large proportion of the seedlings come true.

The species *S. caucasica*, which is the handsomest and has the largest flowers of the whole genus, was first introduced into English gardens just ninety years ago by those eminent and excellent gardeners, Messrs. Loddiges, of Hackney, whose skill and enterprise in introducing and cultivating hardy plants has never been equaled since their time. It is native of several parts of the Caucasus, and has also been found on that unexhausted treasury of choice hardy plants the region of the lower Amoor River. It is sometimes called var. *connata*—a superfluous epithet, as the whole species has connate leaves, that is, in pairs joined at the base. In fact, the name *connata* was given to the species by a Danish botanist about the same time as the name *caucasica* was sanctioned by botanists generally. The plant was figured and described by Sims in the Botanical Magazine, t. 886, 1806, under the name of *S. caucasea*. Why was the name changed to *caucasica*? Both *caucasea* and *caucasia* are good classical words, while *caucasica* is a modern coinage; and the description by Sims in the Botanical Magazine was published several years before Bieberstein, in his "Flora Caucasica," gave the plant its present less correct form of name. It is an excellent border plant, liking full sun and light, rich soil, in which it flowers from the end of June quite on to November. On October 20, after three nights of sharp frost, several clumps in my garden were as full of flowers and buds as they had been at any time during the summer, and the flowers are better in form and fresher in color. A supply is easily raised from seed, which is ripened in abundance, if not eaten prematurely by finches, which are very fond of it. Seedlings flower the second season, and continue in their prime for several years, but I have never found divisions or pieces do well.

Very few other members of the large genus *Scabiosa* find favor in English gardens. It is hardly needful to mention the well known *S. maritima*, often called *S. atro-purpurea*, except to say that though generally said by botanists to be an annual, and cultivated as an annual, it is really perennial; as I have flowered the same plants for two years without their growth being exhausted. The only advantage of keeping the old plants in a frame through the winter being the earlier date at which they begin to flower. The species has a curious viviparous habit; the seeds often sprout and show leaves while still attached to the head. It is a native of the warmest parts of France and Southern Europe, and extends into Western Asia.

The native *S. columbaria* is a neat and pretty plant to grow on limestone rockeries and chalky soils. White varieties of this may be sometimes found, and are offered in catalogues. I recollect seeing one with very pure white flowers on the face of a rock near Llandudno; but as it could not be reached without the risk of a broken neck, I hope it is there still.

The dwarfest of the genus I have seen in cultivation is *S. pteroccephala*, formerly called *Pteroccephalus par-*

plant *Cephalaria tabarica* also often poses as a scabious under two or three different specific names. But I am far from asserting that, among so large a genus, there may not be many species besides those I have mentioned well worthy of a place in gardens.

THE HUXLEY MEMORIAL.—At a meeting of the Huxley Memorial Committee recently it was reported that the subscriptions now amounted to £1,400, and it was resolved that a wider appeal for subscriptions should now be made. In America committees are being formed to promote the realization of an adequate

THE PRESENT STANDING OF THE FLORIDA MANATEE, *TRICHECHUS LATIROSTRIS* (HARLAN), IN THE INDIAN RIVER WATERS.

By OUTRAM BANGS, in the American Naturalist.

THE last two generations have witnessed such a destruction of animal life in this country that it is appalling to look ahead and see what the future has in store for us. Our larger animals and birds are going with such rapidity, and the wilder parts of the country to which they have been driven are being cleared and settled so fast, that the end of many species still common in places is already plainly in sight.

Man is, of course, the real cause in almost every case of the extermination of a species, although often the end comes by some natural calamity, as, for example, the tragic end of the great auk.

When a species has become, through the persecution of man, reduced to a mere remnant that persists either from the inaccessible nature of the country to which it has taken refuge, or from the wariness the few surviving individuals have developed, it takes but a small change in its surroundings to wipe it forever from the face of the earth.

The winter of 1894-1895 has been a most disastrous one, and has shown us on how slight a change in temperature the life or death of a whole species depends. Two such winters in succession would in all probability exterminate the bluebird, the snowbird and many others that winter in the Carolinian zone. These birds went into the winter in their full numbers and strength, and yet last summer they were so rare that I did not see a single bluebird in the Plymouth County, Massachusetts, country, where usually they are one of the common breeding birds. Think what a proportionate reduction in numbers must mean then to a species already on the verge of extinction!

The cold in Florida of the last winter was unprecedented, and the mortality among the fish in the shallow water was such as I never thought to witness. The birds suffered very much, but as far as I could tell few died as far south as where I was, Oak Lodge, on the East Peninsula, opposite Micco. Here at five o'clock on the morning of February 12 the thermometer registered 20° F., and on the next morning at the same hour only 23°. It was a strange experience to walk over the frozen sand and see every little puddle covered with ice on a trail overhung by the subtropical vegetation of a Florida hummock with a north wind blowing in my face that chilled me to the bones. The cold of these two days and nights was intense.

On February 19 Mr. Walter L. Gibson came across the river to tell me he had found two manatees that had been killed by the "freeze," and the next day I went over to take possession of them. They were both found where they had floated ashore on the bank of the Sebastian River, one about four and the other two miles from its confluence with the Indian River. I found to my great regret that both were too far gone to hope to save the skins, and the only thing to be done was to save the skeletons, which we began to

THE MANATEE, OR SEA COW.