AMERICAN
GARDENS
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Edited by

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NOTE

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INTRODUCTION

The pleasures of gardening and the enjoyment of the beauties of nature have been favorite subjects with the writers of all ages, so that fortunately we have their descriptions by which to trace the history of the art of gardening; for nature, whether uncontrolled, or whether composed and arranged by man, carries within it the elements of constant change. But although gardens themselves are not permanent, may be changed, and must, in time, fall into ruin, each new designer leaves behind him some result as a legacy to those who follow; and because of this constant evolution it is interesting to trace the influences that have affected the art of garden design in America.

The gardens of America necessarily differ from those of other countries, owing to a different climate, and to different manners and customs from those which prevailed when the most famous typical gardens of the Old World were laid out. Indeed the distinctive charm of our native gardens is due to the very fact that they are adapted to our needs and our surroundings. We have given them an American character, and yet have preserved many of the elements and followed many of the principles that have been developed in other lands by centuries of garden building.

In following the history and tracing the origin of these principles and elements we must consider the garden as a work created by man. Much of its charm will always be due to the accidental and the unexpected, but nature must be influenced or controlled, otherwise, though the effect may be artistic, the result is not a work of art. When man first attempted to control natural scenery, to combine flowers, trees, and cultivated fields so as to produce an aesthetic effect, and when he rearranged existing natural forms with a desire to create new beauties, then gardening became an art. Till that time the gardener had not necessarily practised the art of gardening; that is to say, his labors were utilitarian; and it is not utilitarian gardening, except in so far as it may be combined with the decorative, that we have to consider, but that which tends to beautify our surroundings and supplements man’s handiwork by adorning it with the beauties of nature.

Who the first gardener was we do not know, but we can trace the art down through the history of civilization, and follow its development as surely as that of the art of building. The line of descent, if long, is direct, the transition from cause to effect is easy to follow, and the influences of manners, customs,
and climatic conditions are strong and easily determined. Only a few examples are needed to show how the art of gardening has steadily progressed in one direction for centuries, and we shall see at the same time how styles have been influenced by the necessities of life and by surroundings.

It must, however, be remembered that almost no trace is left of the famous gardens of antiquity. We know where many of them were situated, we know the dimensions and some of the details of others, but to gain an idea of their effect we must always draw largely on our imaginations. Contemporaneous literature aids us a little; a knowledge of the flora of the country helps us to finish off the picture; but the whole must in the end be, necessarily, a fabric of the imagination.

The formal garden had its beginning many centuries ago. Owing to the admirable pictorial descriptions of the ancient Egyptians, we have a fairly accurate idea of their gardens six thousand years back. Maspero, in his “Dawn of Civilization,” tells about a garden a description of which is carved on the tomb of Amten, an important Egyptian nobleman who lived four thousand years before Christ. “He built,” says Maspero, “upon the remainder of the land a magnificent villa, of which he has considerably left us the description. The boundary wall formed a square 350 feet on each face, and consequently contained a superficial area of 122,500 square feet. A well-built dwelling-house, furnished with all the necessaries of life, was surrounded by ornamental and fruit-bearing trees,—the common palm, the nebek, fig trees, and acacias,—several ponds, neatly bordered with greenery, afforded a habitat for aquatic birds; trellised vines, according to custom, ran in front of the house, and two plots of ground planted with vines in full bearing supplied the owner with wine every year.”

An interesting drawing, found in a Theban tomb some forty centuries old, shows, in a curiously combined plan, elevation, and section, a garden almost exactly like that described above. We can see not only all the parts mentioned in the earlier account, but can recognize certain trees and plants, see the birds swimming on the ponds, and the vines climbing on the trellises. The whole was laid out with paths and terraces, so as to afford shade from the hot sun and shelter from the burning winds; and is an interesting example of the utilitarian and the decorative garden combined.

The fame of such gardens as these, together with other forms of Egyptian art, traveled to the neighboring Eastern countries. Not only did the conquerors often adopt the artistic traditions of a vanquished nation, but commerce, too, assisted in spreading art. The Assyrians, the Persians, the Phœnicians, and the
Greeks had their gardens also, the building of which increased with the growth of luxury and diminished with the advent of war.

The Greeks, however, were never great gardeners. Though they had a thorough appreciation of the charm of nature, when they undertook to bring order into their landscapes it was always in a formal way; and all their designs showed the predominance of the straight line or geometrical curve.

On the other hand, the Romans, whose art was derived from Greece, paid great attention to their gardens, but, like the Greeks, they kept all their lines geometrical. These Roman gardens, in distinction from the Greek and Egyptian, were often wholly decorative, with the agricultural and economic features left out, but with the addition of sculpture, of clipped hedges and trees, together with greater variety of design. The ellipse and the circle were used in planning, and the differences in level of the Roman hillsides required the frequent use of terraces, which in turn necessitated balustrades and steps. The fashion of trimming trees to make them even more symmetrical than nature had made them, or to make them look like birds and other animals, had already come in; and gradually, as under the Empire life grew more luxurious, Roman gardens became more artificial, larger, and more elaborate, while natural elements disappeared and their place was taken by sculpture and architecture. Pliny, in his letters, describes two of his villas, and many attempts have been made to reproduce the surrounding grounds by means of his descriptions. With the fall of Rome, the art of gardening slumbered, along with all other arts, throughout the Dark Ages.

It is an interesting fact that these classic gardens which we have been considering—and, indeed, nearly all the gardens of which we have any record that were built before the middle of the eighteenth century—were "formal," with their boundaries and principal features laid out along straight lines. The "natural" style in gardening, which came in later, leaves nature much as it is, or else attempts to reproduce nature as it exists in some other spot. The principle is, that, if possible, no sign of the work of man should appear, or that if it does of necessity appear it should obtrude itself as little as possible. Therein lies the radical difference between formal and natural gardening. In a natural scene the road or path is hidden or planted out, whereas in the formal garden paths are an important element in the design, and by their contrast with the vegetation form part of the decorative composition. Each style has had its advocates.

It was at the time of the Italian Renaissance, that the gardens which have most influenced our modern designs were first built. During the Middle Ages the European nations were too busy making war, or were too poor to be able to afford
the luxury of garden building. A few orchards and a few patches of herbs or vegetables were cultivated by monks, but nothing was contributed to the art of garden design until the beginning of the Renaissance, when the Italians began to study the classics and the classic form of art. Lorenzo de Medici, as patron of all the arts in Florence, first gave the impetus to the revival of the classic style. He made his garden a museum of sculpture and decoration, so that gradually the grounds became a decorative adjunct to the house; and the great artists of his time, such as Michelangelo, Giulio Romano, and Raphael, were not satisfied with designing palaces and decorating them with frescos and carving, but must needs design the gardens too. In the beginning the gardens they created were like those of classic Rome, but gradually the greater freedom of the Renaissance manifested itself, and the villa gardens of Rome and Northern Italy which we know to-day were the result.

In common with all other great periods of artistic activity, the Italian Renaissance reached a climax, followed by a swift degeneration during which exaggeration became the keynote of all designing. In the gardens trees were no longer allowed to grow in their natural forms, and, as had been the case in the latter period of Roman art when artistic ideals had degenerated, the architecture became more important than the vegetation. But fortunately, long before the baroque period, the art of garden building, together with the other arts, had crossed the Alps to take a new start, under new conditions and amid different surroundings, in France.

One important feature of the Italian gardens had been the terraces, steps, and ramps, which were necessary in Italy because of the hills on which the villas were generally built; another had been the ease with which water could be introduced as an important feature. In France the natural conditions were no longer the same, and the gardens in consequence were different. The land was more commonly level, and it became necessary to sink the parterres in order to get an effect of relief and to have an excuse for terracing, nor could the architects, for the same reason, use cascades and grottoes in their designs as easily as fountains and basins. Many of the important estates bordered on forests, and a forest background demanded different treatment from that required when the Roman Campagna formed the setting. The trees and flowers, as well as the building materials and incidental architecture, too, were different, so that the French soon developed a distinct style in garden design.

It was André le Nôtre, the designer of the park at Versailles and the favorite landscape gardener of Louis XIV., who, more than any other, was the cause of the
development of a new style. The earlier plans had been, in general, attempts at direct copies of Italian examples. But the festivities and ceremonies of the court of Louis XIV. required a magnificence and grandeur in the laying out of grounds that had not been equaled in Italy, and breadth and magnificence became the leading characteristics of Le Nôtre's work. He tried, wherever possible, to tie his garden to the surrounding landscape, and to give the impression that the forces of nature had been marshaled and arrayed with ruler and compass rather than that trees and flowers, sunshine and shade, were elements with which to design. His work may be classed as half-way between the extremely formal and the landscape garden.

It was natural that wherever the fashions of the French Court went, there Le Nôtre should be called to lay out gardens. Consequently the French style spread to England, to Germany, and to the Netherlands, only to become everywhere modified or altered to suit local conditions. New motives of all kinds were invented, and formality, pushed to the extreme limits of artificiality, became the fashion.

It was not many years before a reaction naturally set in. Addison and Pope in their writings had already sounded the warning note, and the plea for a more natural treatment was made. But as the advocates of the natural method in England gathered force, a bitter discussion arose concerning the respective merits of the two styles. Many of the really fine old formal gardens were destroyed, and much was done in the name of naturalness that was highly artificial. But the new school of "landscape gardeners" flourished, and has produced many of the finest places in England; while the discussion of the respective merits of the two styles has continued to the present day.

In this country, the earlier or Colonial gardens were, like the Colonial architecture, inspired by contemporaneous European examples, although the scale was smaller, and the results, modified by the social requirements of the people, were simpler. We know a good deal about the flowers grown, and some of the seedsmen's catalogues of the early days of the nineteenth century show what a great variety was cultivated. We cultivate the same ones to-day, only in more beautiful and more numerous varieties. The charm of some of these old gardens which our grandmothers loved to tend can be seen in the now overgrown gardens of New England and the South, shown in the following pages. Perhaps the most charming quality of such old gardens is their power to call up reminiscences and pictures of other days.

The landscape of America is, however, so especially well adapted to the
natural style of treatment, that for many years the formal garden was forgotten, though many beautiful country places and parks were laid out. In consequence there are in America many superb old places that, having had the benefit of good designing to begin with, have to-day a finished appearance, owing to fine trees and perfected details.

In recent years there has been a revival of interest in the formal garden in this country. Foreign travel may in part account for this, but still more important factors are the interest that has sprung up in all that relates to outdoor life, and the increased desire to improve the outdoor part of the house. As a consequence formal gardens have been created side by side with the natural, and the discussion of the relative merits of the two styles has been revived on this side of the Atlantic.

It is a mistake to go so far as to say that but one type of garden, either the formal or the natural, can be correct, satisfactory, or beautiful. The arguments of the advocates of either kind for their own favorite style, and their contempt for the claims of their opponents, seem often like an attempt to bring the principles of art under the rulings of a well defined code. The contention of the formalist, that man cannot imitate nature and therefore should not inspire himself from nature, but should have all his gardens balanced, formal, and symmetrical, is as unjust as is the dictum of the landscape gardener that nature abhors a straight line, and that, therefore, straight lines should be avoided or broken. We are given certain elements with which to deal, certain materials to handle, and there should be no law to ordain that either every line must be straight and formal or else that every form should be broken or at least unsymmetrical. It is wholly a question of appropriateness and of personal and individual art. Which is the more beautiful, a Greek temple standing out white and calm against the deep blue of the Mediterranean sky, or a lofty French cathedral with its rich detail and wonderful fabric of flying buttresses silhouetted against the cooler and grayer skies of the North of France? Each represents a style perfect in itself, yet totally different. There is no need of condemning one in favor of the other; each is appropriate in its place. It is the appropriate adaptation of the established European principles of gardening to American surroundings that will perfect an American style.

One of these principles, as we saw in the case of the gardens of the Renaissance, was to continue the lines of the house out into the grounds, and thus to make the garden, as it were, an outdoor room, bounded by hedge and wall in such a way as to make its proportions pleasing, and decorated not only with trees, shrubs, and flowers, but with fountains, statues, and vases, which offer a pleasing
contrast to the vegetation. A principle like this is easily transplanted to this country, for it is so easy to cross the Atlantic nowadays that the influence of foreign art can be seen at every turn. Our architecture has heretofore been a copy of some European style; our painters, sculptors, and musicians study abroad. But as a nation we have strong individuality, and differences in requirements and in local characteristics have modified the ideas on garden design which we have imported from Europe. It is interesting to analyze how this assimilation of ideas has taken place.

An American traveling abroad is sure, after seeing the formal gardens of Rome and of Northern Italy, to wish to reproduce them in some form in his own country. He does not always remember that climatic conditions are not the same, and that unless entirely different materials are used and different trees and flowers planted the result will be a failure. American winters are too severe, at least in our Northern States, to allow the free use of marbles; delicate carving and soft stones have either to be protected in winter or must be left out of the design. Moreover, different flowers, trees, and hedges have to be used in attempting to produce effects similar to those in Italy, for it is impossible to grow here many of the broad-leaved evergreens which give so much character to the villa gardens of Rome. The lines and masses may be similar, the principles of design may be the same, but the effect in detail is different, for different elements must be used, or must needs be changed to meet new conditions. When Italian artists came to France at the time of the French Renaissance they, in the same way, had to adapt their work to the conditions of climate,—though it does not follow that because the French and the American formal gardens are the development of the Italian style in a northern climate, they are or can be similar.

The magnificence and grandeur of the French parks are sure to interest all students of the art of gardening, and several places in this country have been laid out in imitation of the French style. But we have already seen that the gardens of Le Nôtre belonged to a period of highly elaborate court life, and were inspired by the fêtes and ceremonies of the Grand Monarque. That style of life has died out in France, and never existed in this country, so that any attempt to imitate the gardens of Versailles or Saint Cloud would be due to a desire to copy, rather than to any real social or artistic need for such a garden. Even did the desire to copy exist, no one who appreciates and enjoys the charm of our American scenery should ever attempt to lay out his grounds like the park at Versailles unless there were enough acres of natural scenery beyond to make one feel the dominant note of the American landscape.
The English had their big ceremonial gardens, too, but when the social life in England became simpler they still kept up their gardening, modifying the details to suit circumstances and space. It is from England that we get our best examples, for the conditions there, social and climatic, are more like those in this country. But even when we draw inspirations from England we must modify the planting, for our summer season is shorter, and many of the most useful trees and shrubs used in England are not hardy throughout this country.

We may borrow, then, details and ideas from Italy, France, and England, but we must adapt them skilfully to our own needs, and give them the setting which they require. Our gardens need not, when adapted to this country, follow any recognized style. In the first place we are not yet hampered by national traditions and may take only as much of any one style as happens to please us; secondly, American vegetation is very different from that of other countries. In spite of the fact that the same flowers sometimes grow in the American garden as in those abroad, they seem to grow differently,—less formally, perhaps,—and we, as a nation, prefer a freedom which to the English or the French gardener would almost seem like untidiness.

Unfortunately it has been impossible to show in this book some of the many charming “naturally” planned country places in America, because their beauty is mainly due to situation and to attractive views or else to the successful creation of a naturalistic landscape. Such scenes are not only impossible to illustrate adequately by photographs, but, moreover, though they present examples of beautiful scenery, they are of no value as examples of garden design. In such places the garden is simply a part in the whole, although a part capable of being complete in itself. It has, furthermore, been impossible, for the same reason, to show some of the American gardens where the flowers serve only as a border in the natural landscape. In such places, also, the garden is simply a part in the whole, and is in fact a detail that must follow the same artistic principles as the more formal garden.

These artistic principles are many of them self-evident, but are none the less interesting to trace in their relation to the whole problem of garden design. We shall see how they have been observed in the gardens and their details shown in the following pages.

The garden in this and other countries is composed of flower beds with paths or grass plots, often combined with such architectural accessories as garden and terrace walls, summer-houses, balustrades, pergolas, vases, statues, fountains, and gates. Before determining how to compose these different elements, however,
the garden-maker must decide where to compose them,—in other words, he must first select the best situation for his garden; and this is oftentimes no easy matter.

If the garden is to be formal, with straight lines or geometrical curves, its formality must of necessity find some excuse in its surroundings,—a straight road, a terrace, a wall, or, what is yet simpler, the straight lines of a house. Often when it would be otherwise difficult to make the house harmonize with the surrounding landscape, the garden, by prolonging the formal lines, softening them with vegetation, and tying them in with the landscape beyond, perfectly accomplishes the desired result. When there is no formal framework, no formal lines are necessary. One of the most charming gardens in America (though unfortunately not represented in this book because it is of that type which, being largely dependent upon color, loses almost all its charm in a photograph) is at Bar Harbor, Maine. With woods for a background and merely an irregular lawn for a path, it is more charming than any walled or formal garden that could have been put there; but only an artist could have made it, and it requires the constant care of an artist to keep it up year by year, for none of its elements is permanent, and lines and grouping must annually be laid out anew. A garden of this kind, forming as it does a foreground to the natural scenery beyond, need not necessarily be in close proximity to the house; in fact, to attempt to make a garden serve as a foreground to the main vista from the house is often a mistake, for the bright colors of the flowers may kill the more delicate tones of a distant scene, whereas these same rich colors might give decided interest to a less important view.

The situation of the garden once selected,—when it seems to have been placed where it will add to the attractiveness of the house or grounds, and where conditions of soil seem to be satisfactory, or are capable of being made so by enriching or draining, when questions of sunlight for the flowers and shelter from the winds have been settled,—then the problems of size and proportions may be considered. It would naturally be folly to make a garden so large that its maintenance and care will become a perennial burden,—in itself a sufficient practical reason for planning the garden and the house in proportion to each other, so that the garden shall become, as it were, an outdoor room to the house, larger than any inside because it should give the sense of freedom and of sunlight and air, but still small in the case of a small house, and proportionately large in the case of a large one.

The direction of the garden with reference to the house is also important.
The view as seen from the house should, generally speaking, follow the direction of the garden; that is to say, should be parallel to the long axis rather than at right angles to it. The full effect of the garden in perspective is thus obtained, and the whole, composed as a whole, will form one picture, while the charm of detail is discovered later.

An examination of the sketch plans at the end of this book will show that the shapes and relative proportions of the various parts may be many. Often these shapes and proportions are controlled by some predetermined factor; often they are merely the result of study. In the more simple gardens, — and the simpler they are the better they are apt to be,— the form is usually rectangular, sometimes ending in a half circle or ellipse. A good typical plan is that of the garden at St. James, Long Island, N.Y., shown on this page. (Compare Plates xii., xiii., and xiv.) Here, as in many other good examples, there are central paths and two sets of lateral paths running at right angles to each other. Where such paths cross in the centre, statues, fountains, sun-dials, basins, or pools may be placed; or if the garden be long in proportion to its width, the motive may be repeated so as to form two centres, as, for example, in the garden at Pomfret, Conn., shown in Plates xxxv. to xxxix. Frequent subdivisions of the garden beds are necessary, and a rectangular rather than a curvilinear treatment of them seems to be the more pleasing, though a charming example of the latter style may be seen in the garden at New Castle, Del., shown in Plates lxxii. and lxxiii.
In combining the various elements of the garden design, they should be so placed as to form a composition; that is to say, each element should stand in its proper relation to every other. An example will show what I mean. In discussing the difference between the natural and the formal styles, we saw that in the formal garden the paths were a part of the decorative design. Suppose, then, that in some geometrically planned garden a series of parallel paths were to be separated by strips of grass or by flower beds. If the paths and the grass strips were made of the same widths throughout, the uniformity would suggest a piece of striped calico in green and yellow. Not only should there be a difference, then, in width between the grass and the walks, but there should be a difference between the widths of the paths themselves. Some one path is sure to be more important than the others and should therefore be emphasized.

What is true of the paths is true of the other elements of the garden. The same rules of contrast apply; though the desire for contrast should be at all times controlled and tempered by the balance of the scheme as a whole. If symmetry be one of the elements in a design, it would be a mistake, for instance, to plant one side of a path with Japanese dwarf evergreens, and the other with American cedars. The two would not harmonize, the balance would be lost, and, owing to their differences in size, the two kinds of trees would, in their symmetrical positions, be out of scale with each other.

To keep the garden “in scale” is one of the most difficult problems with which a designer has to contend, and is one that requires experience and training. Shall he crowd many elements into a given space, making the scale small, or shall he use fewer elements and keep the scale large? It is a matter for individual choice with each designer; sometimes it is even a matter of individual habit, for some men always design large, while others always design small. The character of the surrounding landscape, whether part of the same estate as the garden or not, has much to do with the scale; and the size of the building near which it is to be laid out has, as we have said, even more. The garden of Versailles laid out beside a New England farm-house would be as inappropriate as a Salem garden adjoining the Vatican.

The scale of the gardens is determined not only by the relative sizes of paths, lawns, and flower beds, but also by the proportions of the architectural ornaments. Sometimes a fragment imported from Europe is set up in surroundings which in themselves form no fitting frame, and what was admirably suited to some large Italian villa garden is found to be utterly unsuitable to the surroundings of an American country house. Unfortunately this disparity in scale is not limited to
fragments that have actually been imported from Europe, but extends to reproductions of architectural detail, originally charming because of their harmonious settings, yet which fail to produce the same effect in totally different surroundings. Indeed it is because they exhibit as they do the adaptation and alteration of the work of other lands to suit our own American surroundings, requirements, and tastes that makes a study of the illustrations of this book so interesting.

Once erected and complete, a building can be left measurably to itself; and indeed time will increase its beauties, for time softens and mellow its lines without destroying them. This is not equally true of the garden: age, and age only, certainly can develop many of its greatest charms, but it will show the effects of neglect all too rapidly, and a garden requires therefore not only art in him who designs it, but the constant watchful skill of the gardener who cares for it, if it is to grow, as it should, perennially more lovely. A landscape gardener may lay out and design many gardens, but it is not within his power to bring many to perfection; for when his constructive work is done and the first year's planting arranged, he has often to leave the perfecting of his work to the owner, or to the gardener whom the owner may employ. One who wishes to have a garden, then, should be prepared to work long and late, and to give it his best attention, otherwise he will be at the mercy of his gardener's taste.

The designing of the garden is, of course, only a part of the problem, and perhaps the part least difficult to accomplish well. The ultimate success or failure of the result will depend on the proper choice of plants and on their combinations of color. No matter how good the architectural accessories may be, no matter how perfect the proportions of the garden itself, if the beds be bare or the colors crude and discordant the garden will lack its chief beauty, for, after all, a garden is, it should be remembered, primarily a place in which to grow flowers; the rest is but the frame.

First and foremost in importance, then, are the flowers; but they should not be looked on as so many beautiful specimens that need but to be planted to grow and blossom. The garden ought to be more than a museum of one's favorite blooms, where the beauty and fragrance of each may be admired in succession, but where each, except in some haphazard way, does not contribute to the total effect of the whole. However beautiful in themselves, the flowers should be considered as elements in the design, and should be so arranged that, as they succeed each other all summer long, each shall add to the general composition; that is to say, to the effectiveness of the garden as a whole, even if it be but by some tangled, rampant growth. Not only should all the varying combinations of colors,
both of blossoms and foliage, week by week, be foreseen and planned, but the
delicate fresh colors of spring flowers must be so chosen as to harmonize with
such permanent features as gravel walk, garden wall, and house; while the rich
yellows and purples of the autumn-blooming annuals and perennials — sunflowers,
asters, goldenrods, and phloxes — will require an entirely different color scheme.

With a country like our own, which extends through so many degrees of
latitude, the variety of planting that is possible is at once a delight to the traveler
and the despair of him who would write upon methods of gardening; for though
one country, we have many climates, and advice suited to one section would be
utterly valueless for another. Thus the amateur gardener who designs and
composes his own garden is sure to make mistakes during the first year or two.
Plants that flourished well elsewhere may not find the precise conditions that they
need in the new garden, the time of flowering will vary, the colors will not prove
what the florists promised, so that the combinations of colors will be found dis-
appointing, — all of which will result in extensive weeding during the season.
To design successfully in color demands a power of visualization that is rarely
found in beginners; but loving thought and affectionate and patient tending will,
in the end, create a garden that may serve as an encouragement to all lovers of
flowers. It is unfortunate that the photographs cannot enable us to see how
glorious the colors of some of the gardens represented in this book really are,—
with the white and pink hollyhocks glowing against the dark green of a well-
clipped box hedge in some old-fashioned garden, a sunlit grapevine trailing over
a white trellis, a group of tiger lilies under a hot sun, or the yellow narcissus on
a shaded bank.

Taking up in detail the elements that compose a garden, we shall find
that next in importance to the flowers is the framework or boundary. This may
consist of a building, a garden wall, the edge of a terrace, a hedge, a border of
shrubbery, the edge of a wood, or a sheet of water; for whether the garden be
formal or natural, it should have some boundary. An irregular field of daisies
or a stretch of heather is extremely beautiful, but, according to our use of the
word, is not a garden. Even in the most informal arrangement of flowers, a
background is necessary in places. Walls and hedges should serve, however,
not only as a background, but to give protection from the cold winds, and yet
be low enough to let the sun into the garden all day long, for there will always
be spots where a little shade can be contrived for those plants that especially need
it. If the house is built, or the walks and hedges are already in position, the
garden ought to be so placed as to fulfil these requirements of shelter and sun.
When the garden is to be terraced it becomes one of the most difficult problems that the designer has to face; for, owing to the great expense of retaining-walls and balustrades, work cannot be done experimentally, but must be done right the first time. There are, however, many admirable examples for the treatment of walls and terraces in England, and especially in Italy, where the designing of terraces was carried to a state of perfection which has added much to our command over this architectural detail; and the Italian examples should be studied on all occasions where terracing is necessary. The various levels, too, have to be connected by steps and stairways, which in themselves often form interesting decorative features. We are prone in this country to make our steps too narrow and our stairways too steep. Out-of-doors, where more space is available than within, stairs may be given a breadth and treatment that are impossible in a house; and their ornamental, even more than their utilitarian character should constantly be borne in mind. The planting on the different terraces may be divided into garden beds or grass lawns by gravel paths and paved walks, so as to give variety in detail. The aim should be to avoid too much monotony in the width of successive terraces, especially where the grade is so uniform that it becomes expensive to make the various levels vary in width on account of the large amount of soil that has to be moved. When, however, marked and abrupt changes in grade occur, it becomes possible to produce most interesting results. The garden at Purchase, N. Y. (Plate xciv.), shows an illustration of such terracing. Here the garden is below the terrace on which the house stands, and is itself well backed up on the west by a high retaining-wall, and on the east and north by a thick row of trees, while the irregular fringe of shrubs growing up from below softens what might otherwise be too straight a line in the framework.

When the beds and grass patches are separated from the paths by box or some other edging, as is usually the case, the sharp lines so produced should be softened by a freedom of growth in the flowers, so as to attain not only a rich but a soft effect. For the same reason all planting should be done with a view to keeping the beds full throughout the season,—and therein lies one of the drawbacks of planting roses in the central beds, as several of the following plates bear witness. When they are at their best there is nothing more attractive than roses; but the season is so short in this country that a rose bed will be bare late in the spring and early in the autumn, and is then apt to contrast unpleasantly with more luxuriant growths. Roses seem to produce better results either when planted on the outer edge of the plot or by themselves to form a special rose
garden. Such a separate rose garden will give complete satisfaction in its season; and at other times, when admittedly in a transition stage, it will, being by itself, break up no composition. Roses, unless they are of the climbing variety, produce a far better effect, too, when seen from above or else banked up so that each bush can be readily seen. They grow so tall that they lose much of their effect in a mass. Other flowers which, like roses, grow so high that they might prevent one walking through the paths from seeing their humbler brothers behind—hollyhocks and sunflowers, for instance—should find their place beside the garden wall, which, covered with vines or serving as a support for fruit trees en espalier, will make an excellent background for the taller varieties.

I should not be understood to imply, however, that the garden should only make a color design in flat patterns; indeed, nothing is more monotonous than the “carpet bedding” style, where plants are set out in formal patterns to remain, with as few changes as possible, throughout the season. This fashion, in vogue during the last century, finds its complete expression of bad taste in the attempts one often sees to reproduce in private gardens certain emblems or pictures by means of different colored plants. The habit of making intricate designs with box edging, another relic of the labyrinthine and embroidery-like bedding of two centuries ago, should also be avoided as belonging to the past.

Paths have sufficient excuse for being if they wander in and out among the flower beds, follow the line of a terrace, a balustrade, or lead to some flight of steps. They may, following the inspiration of some vine-shaded terrace at Amalfi, or some half-ruined arbor in an old Nantucket garden, be covered with trellis-work, so as to form an arbor or pergola.

The pergola may bound the garden on one side, or form a central motive in the distance. In either case its lines should be carefully studied, for its size and proportions may have much to do with the scale of the garden. The following plates show how the pergola may be treated in many different ways. In fact, the whole end of the garden may take the form of a pavilion or summer-house combined with a pergola, as in the plan, shown on the following page, of the garden at “Faulkner Farm,” in Brookline, Mass. (See Plates cvi. to cxii.) This garden, which prolongs the line of the house in an admirable way, forms, with its flowers and basins, its terraces and walks, the pleasantest of out-of-door rooms. It is so near the house that it requires no effort to reach it, and so surrounded that the charm of seclusion is well preserved.

The arbor, the pergola, and the summer-house have always been the principal ornamental architectural features of the garden; but in using them in a
climate like ours we must always remember how comparatively short our American summer is, and how bare and out of place they are apt to look during the winter months. Indeed, in laying out suburban places or in planning houses that are to be lived in the year round, we are too apt to forget the long months when the basins will be frozen over, the sun-dial covered with snow, the statues boxed up, and the garden beds nothing but brown patches. To any one who loves the country the winter aspect of trees and shrubs will always have great charm. The network of limbs and twigs of the trees against the sky, and the soft coloring of the young branches of both trees and shrubs are important elements in the beauty of a natural winter scene; but in a formal garden these same trees and shrubs, when denuded of their leaves, serve only to accentuate the bareness of the garden itself. There can be no doubt that, despite the summer charms of the formal garden, the natural style appears better in our climate in winter, and that, therefore, a formal garden will give its greatest satisfaction only when it is built in connection with a house that is to be principally used in summer.

The opportunity to introduce such elaborate fountains and combinations of pools and cascades as are seen abroad does not often occur in this country; and where water is used, some regard must generally be paid to the presence of the
water-meter. A pool or basin of standing water, as in the old Egyptian gardens, will, however, serve to grow aquatic plants, and to add that touch of life to the scene which can best be given by the reflections from the surface of a pool. Indeed, the charming effects that can be obtained at comparatively slight expense by the judicious use of a small basin make water one of the most useful accessories of the garden.

Of the other architectural ornaments of the garden, little need be said except that they should be, if possible, beautiful,—at any rate, well designed,—and that they should be in scale with the garden. No imitation of more expensive materials by cheaper ones should be permitted, because, even though the counterfeit may not be apparent from a distance, a nearer view will detect the sham. Marble should be marble, stucco should look like stucco, and wood should pretend to be nothing better than wood. The solidity of the stucco columns at "Stratford Lodge," Bryn Mawr, Penn. (Plates 1., 11., and 111.), for instance, shows that they make no pretence of being marble. It is perfectly possible to build, as our ancestors did, interesting wooden pergolas and balustrades, which owe their attractiveness to the fact that they are delicate in line and in mass in a way that would be impossible in marble. There are limitations to any one material, of course; but a study of the following plates will show that no matter what the material be, so long as it is properly used, or no matter how slender the owner's purse, an attractive garden can still be contrived. Indeed, several of the gardens illustrated were built by their owners without the assistance of any skilled workmen, and many of them are planted and brought to a state of perfection, year after year, by the owners themselves. It is, after all, the feeling of ownership that is one of the greatest pleasures of gardening,—ownership not only of the ground where the flowers grow, but ownership of the design according to which they have been planted, and therefore ownership of the resulting beauty.

We shall find that the special elements of beauty in the best and most characteristic of our American gardens are simplicity of line, harmony of form and color, and richness in the details of planting. The judicious study of the best examples of this and other countries, the aim to keep within the limits set by one's surroundings and one's purse, and above all the patience born of a love for flowers, will make possible a garden which may be a well-spring of delight, even to him who owns the smallest plot of land. There is no spot so small that cannot bring forth a few flowers, no rock so barren that it cannot be made to bloom.

GUY LOWELL.
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PLATE I

"Swarthmore Lodge"
BRYN MAWR, PENN.

I THE GARDEN FROM THE LOWER LEVEL
"Swarthmore Lodge"
BRYN MAWR, PENN.

1 THE LOWER GARDEN
2 THE UPPER GARDEN FROM BELOW
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"The Governor's Garden"
MILTON, MASS.

FROM THE CENTRE OF THE GARDEN
"The Governor's Garden"
Milton, Mass.
THE CENTRE PATH
PLATE VI

"The Governor's Garden"
MILTON, MASS.

1 THE END OF A SIDE PATH
2 LOOKING TOWARD THE ORCHARD
3 THE LOWER PATH
4 THE SOUTH WALK
"The Governor's Garden"
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Through the Grape Arbor
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"Woodlen"

SCARBOROUGH, N.Y.

1 THE GARDEN FROM THE TERRACE
2 THE FOUNTAIN
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"Woodlea"
SCARBOROUGH, N. Y.

1 FROM THE TERRACE STEPS
2 FOUNTAIN AND PERGOLA FROM THE NORTH
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"Woodlea"

SCARBOROUGH, N.Y.

1 AN ITALIAN WELL-HEAD
2 A BED OF EVERGREENS
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A GARDEN AT
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1 The Pergola
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"Aspet"
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1 A SEAT IN THE LILY GARDEN
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"Aspet"
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1 THE FOUNTAIN BASIN FROM THE FRONT
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"Loon Point"
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GENERAL VIEW OF THE GARDEN
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1. THE CENTRE PATH
2. UNDER THE GRAPE ARBOR
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GLIMPSES OF GARDENS IN
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2. A GARDEN ON BARTON SQUARE
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1 GENERAL VIEW OF THE GARDEN
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"Auldwood"
SEABRIGHT, N. J.

1 THE CENTRE OF THE GARDEN
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1 THE GARDEN FROM THE HOUSE
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"Fairacres"
JENKINTOWN, PENN.

THE CENTRE CROSS-PATH
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"Fairacres"
JENKINTOWN, PENN.

1 GENERAL VIEW OF THE GARDEN
2 LOOKING DOWN THE GARDEN
3 LOOKING UP THE GARDEN
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"Wye"
WYE RIVER, M.D.

1 THE FLOWER GARDEN
2 THE ORANGERY
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"Wye"
WYE RIVER, MD.

1 AN OVERGROWN PATH
2 "LOVERS' WALK"
PLATE XXIX

"Bellesfontaine"
LENOX, MASS.

1 THE WATER GARDEN FROM THE HOUSE
2 THE WATER GARDEN LOOKING TOWARD THE HOUSE
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"Bellefontaine"
LENOX, MASS.

THE FAUN FOUNTAIN
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1 STEPS TO THE EAST FLOWER GARDEN
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1. THE GARDEN FROM THE TERRACE
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1 FROM THE CENTRE OF THE GARDEN
2 A SHELTERED FOUNTAIN
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"Shirley"
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"Glen Elsinore"
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POMFRET, CONN.

1 General view from the upper terrace
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POMFRET, CONN.

1 THE CASINO
2 THE SOUTH CORNER OF THE GARDEN
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POMFRET, CONN.

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"Glen Elsinore"
POMFRET, CONN.

1 THE WEST SIDE PATH
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POMFRET, CONN.

1 ALONG THE UPPER TERRACE
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"The Garth"
STRAFFORD, PENN.

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1 "Pan of Rohallion"
2 The Sand Garden
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1 THE HOUSE FROM THE LAWN
2 A BOX-BORDERED WALK
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JAMES RIVER, VA.

1 THE GRASS WALK TO THE RIVER
2 ALONG THE HOUSE FRONT
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BROOKLINE, MASS.

LOOKING THROUGH THE PERGOLA
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"Green Hill"
BROOKLINE, MASS.

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2 a seat under the vines
3 looking through the pergola
4 the Japanese water-garden
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“Green Hill”
BROOKLINE, MASS.

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1 THE GARDEN LOOKING TOWARD THE HOUSE
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PETERBOROUGH, N. H.

FROM THE EAST SIDE OF THE GARDEN
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1. The garden seat
2. The centre path
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"Drumthwacket"
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1 LOOKING EAST DOWN THE GARDEN
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A GARDEN AT
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A GARDEN AT

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GREENWICH, CONN.

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2 LOOKING UP THE Pergola
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"Villa Parcault"
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"Cedar Court"
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1 THE COURT
2 THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE COURT
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MORRISTOWN, N. J.

1 THE FOUNTAIN BASIN
2 THE WEST END OF THE PERGOLA
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A GARDEN AT
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1 THE BASIN
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1 "THE OLD SANFORD GARDEN," NANTUCKET, MASS.
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1 THE GARDEN FROM THE TERRACE
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1 THE UPPER GARDEN LOOKING TOWARD THE VERANDA
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1. THE SUMMER-HOUSE
2. A GARDEN SHELTER
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"Chelten"
RYDAL, PENN.

LOOKING DOWN THE CENTRE PATH
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“Chelten”
RYDAL, PENN.

1 THE CROSS PATH
2 ACROSS THE LOWER END OF THE GARDEN
3 A CORNER GARDEN HOUSE
4 ACROSS THE UPPER END OF THE GARDEN
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The garden entrance

A sheltered corner
"Washington's Garden"
MT. VERNON, VA.

1 BOX-EDGED BEDS
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"Washington's Garden"
MT. VERNON, VA.

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MT. VERNON, VA.

1 HOLLYHOCKS
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"Faulkner Farm"
BROOKLINE, MASS.

1 A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW
2 ACROSS THE GARDEN
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"Faulkner Farm"
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"Faulkner Farm"
BROOKLINE, MASS.

1 ENTRANCE TO THE TERRACES
2 STEPS TO THE CASINO
3 SIDE WALK LOOKING TOWARD THE Pergola
4 SIDE WALK LOOKING FROM THE Pergola
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"Faulkner Farm"
BROOKLINE, MASS.

1 A CORNER OF THE UPPER TERRACE
2 END OF THE CASINO PERGOLA
3 STEPS TO THE UPPER TERRACE
4 THE TERRACE WALL
"Faulkner Farm"
BROOKLINE, MASS.

1 THE UPPER TERRACE
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"Faulkner Farm"
BROOKLINE, MASS.

THE CASINO
NOTE.—The sketch plans contained in this Index make no pretence to exact accuracy of dimensions or detail. They are merely intended to show the general arrangements of the gardens they represent, and to indicate the points from which the views on the foregoing pages were photographed. The italic letter following the title of a view refers to a correspondingly lettered arrow on the plan which shows the position and pointing of the camera.
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Mr. Stanford White, Architect

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Messrs. F. L. Olmsted & Company, Architects

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A Garden at Cornish, N. Y.

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"Fairacres," Jenkintown, Penn.
Mr. Wilson Eyre, Jr., Architect

Plate XXV. The Centre Cross Path a

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Messrs. Carrère & Hastings, Architects

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Plate XXIX. 2 The Water Garden looking toward the House

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Mr. A. J. Manning, Architect

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Mr. Charles A. Platt, Architect

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Mr. Wilson Eyre, Jr., Architect
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Messrs. McKim, Mead & White and Mr. Nathan Barrett, Architects

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Mr. Charles A. Platt, Architect

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**Plate LIII.** 4 Outside the Garden

"Drumthwacket," Princeton, N.J.
Mr. Bradford L. Gilbert and Mr. Daniel W. Langton, Architects

**Plate LIV.** 1 Looking East down the Garden a
**Plate LIV.** 2 The West End of the Garden b

A Garden at Rydal, Penn.
Mr. Wilson Eyre, Jr., Architect

**Plate LV.** A Side Path a
**Plate LVI.** 1 General View of the Garden c
**Plate LVI.** 2 Looking toward the House d
**Plate LVII.** The Lily Pool b

**Plate LVIII.** 1 The West Shore looking North b
**Plate LVIII.** 2 The West Shore looking South c

**Plate LIX.** 1 Stairway from the Boat Landing f
**Plate LIX.** 2 Looking up the Pergola g

**Plate LX.** The Pergola from the Portico a

**Plate LXI.** 1 The Flower Garden d
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**Plate LXII.** 1 Before the House a
**Plate LXII.** 2 A Terraced Path b

"Indian Harbor," Greenwich, Conn.
Messrs. Carrère & Hastings, Architects
A Garden at Beverly, Mass.
Messrs. Little & Browne, Architects

Plate LXIII. General View of the Garden

Plate LXIV. 1 The Lower Terrace
Plate LXIV. 2 The Fountain Basin

Plate LXV. 1 The Fountain Basin
Plate LXV. 2 Steps to the Raised Terrace

"Aysgarth," Abington, Penn.

Plate LXVI. 1 General View of the Garden
Plate LXVI. 2 Through the Grape Arbor

"Old Place," Brookline, Mass.

Plate LXVII. In the Wild Garden

"Villa Narcault," Montclair, N. J.
Mr. Charles A. Platt, Architect

Plate LXVIII. 1 The Garden Front of the House
Plate LXVIII. 2 The Garden from the Porch

Plate LXIX. 1 The Garden from the Porch
Plate LXIX. 2 The Entrance to the Garden

Plate LXX. 1 Gate to the Stable Yard
Plate LXX. 2 The Sun-dial


Plate LXXI. Looking down the Garden

Plate LXXII. 1 General View of the Garden
Plate LXXII. 2 The Side Path
Plate LXXIII. Looking toward the House

"Ashford," Belle Haven, Conn.
Mr. Wilson Eyre, Jr., Architect

Plate LXXIV. 1 The House Court
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Plate LXXV. 1 On the First Terrace
Plate LXXV. 2 A Vine-covered Arch
Plate LXXV. 3 The House Court
Plate LXXV. 4 The Descent to the Garden

"Longcroft," Mamaroneck, N. Y.
Mr. E. Hamilton Bell, Architect

Plate LXXVII. 1 The Garden from the House Terrace
Plate LXXVII. 2 The House Terraces
Plate LXXVIII. 1 The Corner of the Terrace
Plate LXXVIII. 2 Along the Upper Terrace

A Garden at Cornish, N. H.

Plate LXXIX. In the Flower Garden
Plate LXXX. 1 The South Path
Plate LXXX. 2 Looking from the Terrace

"Constitution Hill," Princeton, N. J.
Messrs. Cope & Stewardson, Architects

Glimpses of Two South Carolina Gardens

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Plate LXXVI. 2 "Drayton Hall," The Magnolia Garden
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“Brandywine Farm,” Lenape, Penn.
Messrs. Keen & Mead, Architects

Plate LXXXII. The Garden from the House a

A Garden at Stockbridge, Mass.

Plate LXXXIII. 1 General View of the Garden a
Plate LXXXIII. 2 General View of the Garden b

Plate LXXXIV. 1 The Garden Seat c
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A Garden at Wellesley, Mass.
Plate LXXXV. The Italian Garden

“Cedar Court,” Morristown, N. J.
Messrs. Carrère & Hastings, Architects

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Plate LXXXVI. 2 The South Side of the Court b

Plate LXXXVII. 1 The Fountain Basin c
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A Garden at Annapolis, Md.
Plate LXXXVIII. 1 The Grape Arbor
Plate LXXXVIII. 2 An Overgrown Corner

A Garden at Bernardsville, N. J.
Mr. Daniel W. Langton, Architect

Plate LXXXVII. The Italian Garden
Plate LXXXIX. General View of the Garden a
Plate XC. 1 The Basin b
Plate XC. 2 On the Middle Terrace c

Two Colonial Garden Gates
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Plate XCI. 2 A Garden at Portsmouth, N. H.

"Masstlands," Cornish, N. H.
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Plate XCII. 2 The Centre of the Garden a

"Rhua House," Newport, R. I.
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"Ophir Farm," Purchase, N. Y.
Messrs. F. L. Olmsted & Company, Architects

A Massachusetts and a Pennsylvania Garden
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Mr. Nathan Barrett, Architect

Plate XCIV. General View of the Garden a
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"Ellis Court," Bernardsville, N. J.

Messrs. Carrère & Hastings, Architects

Plate XCVII. The Lower Garden

Plate XCVIII. 1 The Upper Garden looking toward the Veranda
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A Garden at Salem, Mass.

Plate XCIX. 1 The Summer-house
Plate XCIX. 2 A Garden Shelter
Plate XCIX. 3 Box-hedged Beds
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"Chelten," Rydal, Penn.

Mr. Wilson Eyre, Jr., Architect

Plate C. Looking down the Centre Path
Plate CI. 1 The Cross Path
Plate CI. 2 Across the Lower End of the Garden
Plate CI. 3 A Corner Garden House
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Two Pennsylvania Gardens

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   The Garden Entrance.
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"Washington's Garden,"
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"Faulkner Farm," Brookline, Mass.
Mr. Charles A. Platt, Architect

Plate CVI. The Garden from the Casino a

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