

# House & Garden

Vol. III

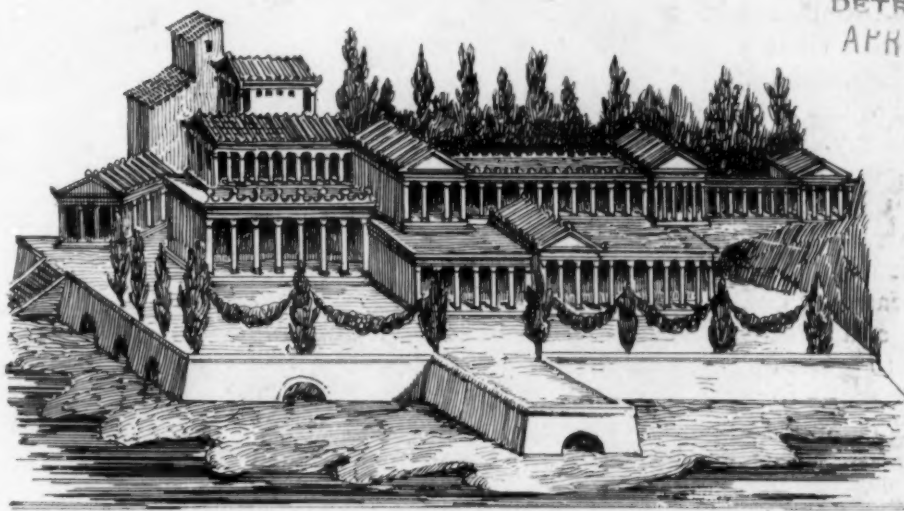
JANUARY, 1903

No. I

## ANCIENT ROMAN COUNTRY HOUSES

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A MARITIME VILLA  
*From a Pompeian Wall Painting*

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APR 26 1904

THE growth of cities is one of the necessary concomitants of maturing civilizations. As cities multiply and become more and more densely populated, there is developed a reaction towards rural life. Unless, however, the means of transit between the busy centers of urban life and the open country are both abundant and speedy, the privilege of living in the country and transacting business in the city is confined to the wealthy few, and it is, of course, only the wealthy who can afford to spend any considerable part of their lives in rural ease upon the income of their investments, or with only infrequent returns to the city to transact business.

In ancient Roman days transit between the Forum and the open country about the Eternal City depended upon the legs of men and beasts. Travel in a springless cart or

chariot over the huge lava blocks of the Roman paved roads, or the deep ruts of rural highways, was not an agreeable experience. The wealthy patrician travelled in a litter borne by slaves, whenever this was possible; those of more active tastes rode on horseback. Though "all roads lead to Rome" the city was much less of a distributing point for the outlying country than are our larger cities to-day, thanks to the economic revolution wrought by our railways. To understand Roman country life it is necessary to picture to ourselves conditions of transportation and intercourse more primitive than we can easily imagine, and it requires no light exercise of the imagination to represent to ourselves other features of the environment of Roman city and suburban life,—the innumerable slaves, the thronging and turbulent crowds in the streets and public places, the obses-

sions of parasites, suitors, dependents and politicians; the noise and smells and other "disagreeables" of the city streets. Yet all these we must take into consideration before we can grasp the full significance of country life to the Roman, or read with intelligent appreciation the letters of Cicero to Atticus, or of Pliny to Gallus and Appollinaris, describing their villas at Tusculum, Laurentinum, Puteoli, and others in the hills of Tuscany.

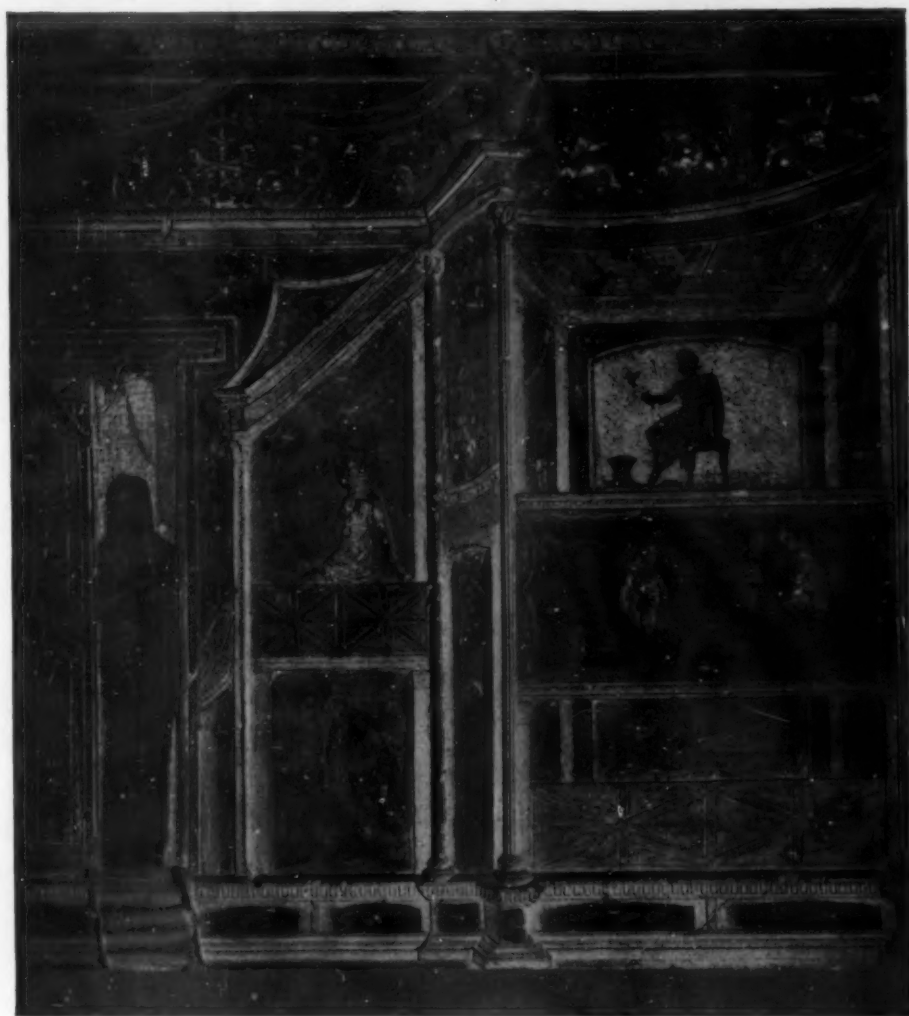
Rome was a city unlike those of our day. A large part of its area was given up to public buildings—temples, theatres, basilicas, baths; and another large part to places of public resort—fora, gardens and colonnades. The mass of the population was housed in a comparatively restricted area, crowded into tenement blocks or *insulae*, piled up in many stories, dark and insalubrious.

The saving element in the lives of the teeming thousands in these *insulae* was the Roman habit of life in the open; the house was a mere aggregation of sleeping cells, to which the workingman or slave retired like a mole to his burrow. Around this city of vast open spaces, superb monuments and squalid *insulae*, spread a fringe of suburban residences, more and more spacious as one proceeded out towards the green Campagna; and finally beyond these, a vast ring of villas or groups of villas, extending far out towards the Alban Mountains in the southeast, towards Tivoli and Subiaco to the east, and northwards along the innumerable affluents of the Tiber. Daily the man of affairs was borne in his litter to and fro between Rome and his villa or *suburbanum*, in the nearer circuits of



A ROMAN ROOM AT POMPEII  
With Mosaic Floor and Painted Walls

country houses; while in those more remote, the jaded politician, the wealthy patrician, and the official whom business no longer called to the Forum or basilica, sought rest and pleasure far from the city's turmoil. Fanned by mountain breezes and lulled by the murmur of mountain streamlets turned to service in the fountains and cascades of his terraced gardens, he rested from the cares of business or of state. The wealthy Roman was not content with a villa or two: he must have a half dozen or more, so variously situated and appointed as to furnish him with a resort for every change of mood or of the weather. Pliny the Younger mentions five in his letters; Cicero had as many. The lot of a literary politician in those days seems not to have been a hard



POMPEIIAN WALL DECORATION IN FRESCO AND STUCCO RELIEF  
In the National Museum at Naples

one, in the matter of houses at least. A winter house and a summer house; a seaside house and a mountain house; a house in the south, at Naples or Baiae or near Pompeii, and a house in the north among the hills of Etruria; a little house and a big house and a house near Rome; those were some of the modest requirements of the Roman of wealth and leisure of the imperial or late republican period, in addition to the city house in the very outskirts of Rome or within its walls.

The Roman love for the country amounted to a passion; it survives to-day in the *villegiatura* of the modern Roman gentleman, to whom the annual summer's rustication is an absolutely essential feature of his life. "No gentleman can do without it," however modest

and air; and the Roman could not live without these. He hated the cramped quarters even of his relatively spacious city houses. He lived by preference in the open air, but in the city the open air meant always the presence of a crowd and sounds and smells hateful to a refined taste. Even a modest farmstead was better than the city with its crowds. "*Odi profanum vulgus et arceo*," cries Horace; and in the sixth of the second book of his Satires he voices his longing for rural quiet and peace:

"This was my dream—a modest piece of land,  
"A garden, and a cottage by a spring,  
"And eke a bit of woods—and lo, the gods  
"Surpassed my prayers. 'Tis well! naught more I crave,  
"O Maia's son, but to enjoy these ever."

The Roman of the age from Cicero to Pliny—the golden age of Roman villa-life—

his fortune. This love of the country was, in the ancient Roman, not the modern sentiment of nature-love, the poetic delight in the contemplation of the wonder and beauty of the natural world for its own sake, but rather the more selfish but not unworthy pleasure in the physical and esthetic satisfactions which rural life could bring. In the country were rest and freedom from care; the coolness of fresh breezes in summer, the mildness of a southern sun in winter; the gleam and plash of springs and fountains, the shade of rocks, the restful verdure of trees and grass, the perfume of violets and roses. Above all there was space



A PUBLIC RESTING-PLACE

POMPEII

never deluded himself with the idea of a reversion to primitive ways of living. His *villegiatura* was no Adirondack camping-expedition. In the country he required "all the modern improvements" and all the luxuries of the city, as well as the pleasures of rural seclusion. The walls were painted by Greek or Campanian artists. In cold weather a portion of the vast establishment was heated by hypocausts, at great expense. The furniture was often more elaborate than that of the city house. An army of slaves waited upon the owner and his guests; and they could, within the limits of their own property, enjoy the luxury of hot and vapor baths as perfectly as in the magnificent *thermæ* of Augustus or Titus in Rome. Pliny writes to a friend to give him notice of his coming, so that he might heat his baths in readiness for his entertainment.

The Roman country estates sometimes, but not always, included the farm. In any case, the villa proper, with its gardens, was complete in itself, whether connected with a farm or not. In its planning and arrangement the gardens were of at least equal importance with the buildings, and the arts of landscape architecture and formal gardening, as they were practiced by the Italians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and by them transmitted to the French, were direct inheritances from the ancient Romans. The terracing, the handling of water in cascades and fountains, and the architectural and sculptural embellishments were all suggested by the ruins of Roman villas. Lanciani tells us that the Villa Barberini at Castel Gandolfo follows practically in every detail "the plan and outline of the glorious villa of Domitian," and that the Villa Pia in

the Vatican Gardens is a fair counterpart of a small Roman villa of the olden time. In all these villas, the first essential seems to have been the selection of a sloping site, capable of being terraced, so that from each successive platform there might be an uninterrupted prospect of distant hills, green plains or blue water. The second essential was a stream of water, for everywhere the Roman demanded the soothing splash and ripple, the cooling presence of fountains and cascades. The third essential was an abundance of shaded and sheltered promenades, screened from the sharper winds or exposed to the more



REMNANT OF A MARBLE TABLE IN THE HOUSE OF CORNELIUS RUFUS AT POMPEII



ROMAN HOUSEHOLD OBJECTS OF SILVER  
*In the National Museum at Naples*

refreshing breezes; and for this purpose colonnades, pergolas, arbors and porticoes were provided with lavish hand. The famous letter of Pliny the Younger to Gallus, describing the Laurentine villa, is full of references to the varied provision made for every sort of exposure and shelter, to secure or to avoid at will the effects of sun, sea-breeze, land-breeze, shadow, heat and cold, according to the season and the momentary inclination of the occupant.

A well equipped Roman villa was therefore an extensive affair. The buildings, for the most part of a single story, covered a wide area, sometimes including several terraces. In general they comprised three fairly distinct portions—the public, the private and the domestic

or servile. Each of these had its courts, rooms and passages. Whether they were all connected into a single block of buildings or divided into separate and distinct wings depended upon the size of the establishment and the taste of the owner. Except in the imperial palaces and such exceptional groups as the Villa Hadriana at Tivoli, comfort and personal ease were sought after rather than grandeur of architectural effect. Yet there was plenty of room for display, and the ostenta-

tion of wealth asserted itself in costly decorations and extravagant furnishings, especially in the later Imperial age. Horace, always praising (whether sincerely or through poetic affectation is immaterial) what is simple and rational, sings the freedom of his own house from such vanities:

“ Non ebur neque aurum  
Mei renidet in domo lacunar,” etc.

“ My house boasts no ivory, nor ceilings panelled in gold; nor beams hewn on Hymettus’ mount, upborne by columns quarried on Africa’s farthest shore.” (Odes: II, 15). The beauty of a fine villa consisted rather in its spaciousness, in the variety of exposure of its courts, *triclinia*, sitting-rooms and libraries, in the number and variety of its apartments, the extent of its colonnades and terraces, the elegance of its appointments and embellishments, such as vases, statues and tripods, of bronze, silver, and marble, and the extent and beauty of its gardens and prospects,—in these, rather than in the splendor or scale of its architectural masses or the costliness of its carving and gilding. Long vistas, distant views and ever-changing perspectives of trees and shrubs, fountains and statues, balustrades and terraces, marble summer-houses, shady arbors, cascades and rocks, these the Roman delighted in; in these his restless nature found relief from ennui, while he mingled the conveniences of the city with the freedom of the open country.

II

The appearance and the architectural details of the Roman villas we cannot reproduce with certainty, but may to a certain extent infer from known analogies. Pliny’s and Cicero’s letters throw light on their general character, and Pliny’s to Gallus (II, 17) and to Appollinaris (V, 6) describing his villas at Laurentinum and in Tuscan, give a fairly detailed



FIG. I—A SUMMER-HOUSE  
From a Pompeian Fresco

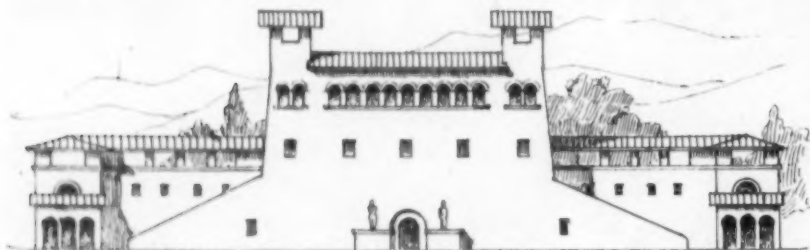


FIG. II—TYPES OF ROMAN COUNTRY HOUSES  
After Scheul’s “Maisons de Campagne de Rome”

account of their planning, so that it has become a favorite recreation of students of Roman archæology to attempt their restoration from these descriptions. But the wide variety of these restorations proves how vain is the expectation of precise and accurate results from descriptions written in the familiar style of personal correspondence, without any effort at technical precision of detail. Dimensions, numbers, decorative detail, architectural features are alike wanting from these letters, to illustrate whose style a brief quotation will suffice.

\*\*\* "Behind is a quadrangle, a portico and a lesser court; then again a portico, and then a vestibule, beyond which woods are seen, and at a greater distance, mountains. On the left hand of the dining-room, a little farther from the shore, is a very large parlour, within that a smaller withdrawing room, which has one window looking to the east, another to the west. Joining to this angle is a room in an elliptic form; a shape that allows us from the several windows to enjoy the benefit of the sun during the whole course of the day; and the walls of it are so contrived as to hold books," etc.<sup>1</sup> Obviously

<sup>1</sup> The letters of Pliny the Younger, *trans.* by John, Earl of Orrery; I, 149-150, London, 1752.

here is no architectural specification upon which to base a drawing.

The analogies upon which we must depend for our restorations of Roman country-houses are of three kinds. There are, first, the existing ruins of Roman buildings, both domestic and public. These acquaint us fully with the methods of construction and the common architectural features of ancient Roman times. We have, secondly, certain types of Italian country houses and farm buildings which, it seems not unlikely, have preserved to this late day traditions handed down from a great antiquity.

And in the third place, there are many representations of villas and country houses in paintings upon the walls of extant ruins in Rome and Pompeii, and occasionally also in the details of reliefs preserved in the various museums of Europe. It is the similarity between many of those representations and familiar types of rustic buildings encountered by the tourist on the roads about Rome and sometimes in Tuscany, that warrants the belief that the rural architecture of Italy has changed little from that of antique times.

There was probably a wide range of architectural character in the villas of even the

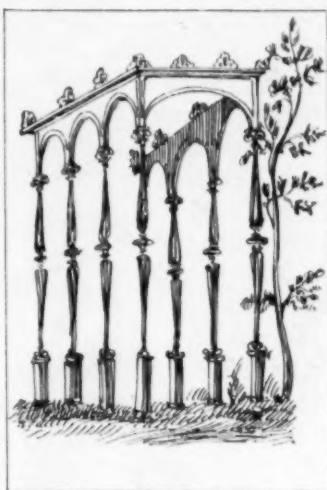
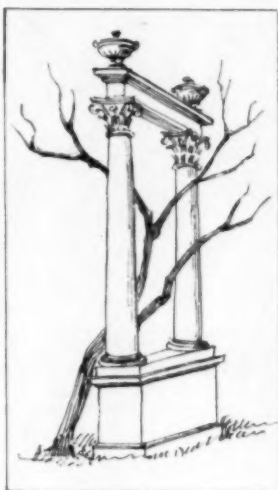


FIG. IV—GATE-LIKE STRUCTURE AND ÆDICULE  
*From Paintings in the Baths of Titus*

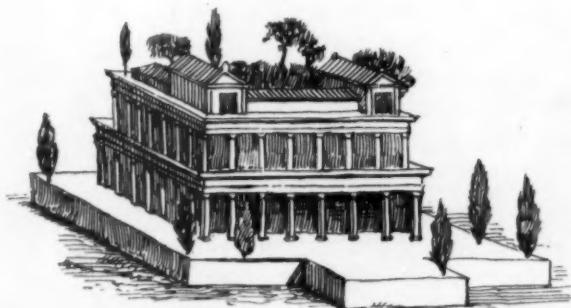


FIG. V—A VILLA WITH ROOF GARDEN



FIG. VI—A TEMPLE OR VILLA

*From Pompeian Wall Paintings*

same period, corresponding to the variety in the purse and taste of their builders, as well as in the situation and purpose of the various villas of the same owner. While some were no doubt splendid with marble columns, carving and sculpture, others, and perhaps the majority, were probably quite plain in external design. Rubble and brick, heavily stuccoed, were probably the commonest materials for walls, and the roofs were low-pitched, framed of timber and covered with tiles like those one sees all through Southern Europe to-day. The chief elegance of these houses was in their various courtyards—*atria* or peristyles, as they were called—such as one sees in ruined Pompeii, but much larger. These, planted with trees, flowers and grass, refreshed by fountains and marble basins of crystal water, shaded by trees or by rich awnings, surrounded by sumptuously decorated colonnades, paved with marble and adorned with statues, marble tables and *exedras*, and an altar, were the chief centers of the family life. In a large villa there were several of these, of different sizes and exposures, with open-fronted *triclinia* or dining-rooms and small *cubicula* or sleeping-

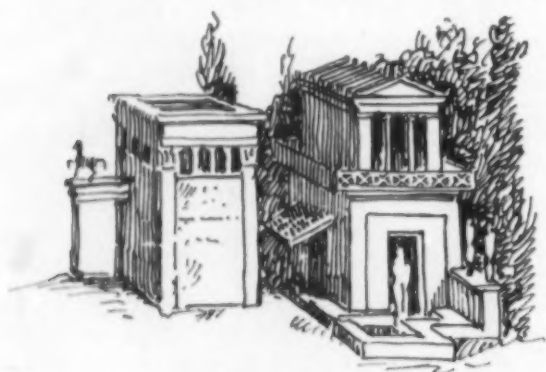


FIG. VII—TYPES OF TOWER-LIKE STRUCTURES  
From Pompeian Wall Paintings

rooms opening upon some, and libraries, lounging-rooms and withdrawing-rooms opening upon others. The villas spread over a vast extent of ground, with open porticoes and enclosed passages (*cryptoporticus*) connecting the several parts, and were for the most part but one story high, though here and there were square towers, turrets or pavilions rising with two or three stories above the rest, providing seclusion and a wide prospect. These square towers with

broad eaves and low roofs are a familiar element in modern Italian architecture.

Undoubtedly the finest feature of the antique villas was their formal gardening, to which reference has already been made. In these terraced gardens, with their marble walks and balustrades, their niches, *exedras* and fountains, their clipped boxwood hedges, their clumps of myrtle and laurel and rose, their beds of violets and other fragrant



FIG. VIII—TOWER-LIKE BUILDINGS  
WITH THATCHED BARN  
From Pompeian Wall Paintings

flowers, the Roman bestowed a large part of the works of art which we gather into museums; for in these gardens he lived much of his social life. He bought Greek statues as American millionaires buy French paintings. Cicero was constantly ordering them of his agents. "Your *Hermathena* pleases me greatly," he writes. "It stands so prettily that the whole lecture-room looks like a chapel of the deity." And again: "As for the statues you sent me before, I have not seen them. They are at *Formiae*" (the Newport or Lenox of Cicero's time; "it is a public hall I have here, not a country house" he once wrote from *Formiae*),—"whither I am now about to go. But I shall remove them all to my place at *Tusculum*." (Cicero, Letters; *Ad Atticum*, I, 4, 2.) In the gardens also were shrines and *ædicules*. One form of gate-like structure constantly reappearing in the paintings and reliefs (see Fig. IV) appears to be a tree-shrine, erected in connection with a sacred tree or tree dedicated to some deity.

### III.

In considering the various representations from paintings, it must be remembered that in most cases the drawing is of the most summary character, and no dependence can be placed upon the correctness of the proportions or details. Most of them may be





FIG. IX—A FARMHOUSE SCENE  
From a Painting in the "House of the Second Fountain," Pompeii

compared to modern pictures on plates and dishes, occasionally representing an actual building with some fidelity, but more often fantastic and unreal. Especially is this true when the representation is part of a mere decoration, rather than of a picture making pretensions to realism. The frequent recurrence, however, of like structures in widely diverse paintings argues an actual and common prototype, and pictures of structures resembling those one sees to-day in Italy are supposedly based on actualities. We may have grave doubts whether the palace in Fig. V ever existed outside of the painter's imagination, for it will hardly bear structural analysis. But when we find that Seneca moralizes upon the unnatural custom of planting gardens upon the housetops, the upper part of the structure takes on an air of reasonableness. Whether Fig. VI is a temple or a villa is not quite clear; perhaps the painter did not himself know and was simply painting "architecture." The tower-like buildings in Fig. VII are equally hard to explain with precision. But in Fig. VIII is another very similar edifice with a thatched barn behind it; and Fig. IX from a painting in the House of the Second Fountain at Pompeii, obviously a farm scene, shows a somewhat similar tower, lean-to shed, and pedestal with statues; so that we have probably here a somewhat fantastic series of pictures of actual types of towers or belvederes connected with the farm buildings and villas of the time. Fig. I is an unmistakably realistic represen-

tation of a wooden trellised arbor in a garden, and in other pictures in Rome and Pompeii we have many details of garden decoration like trellises, fountains, seats, and the like, which help to a reconstruction, in imagination, of the villa gardens of antiquity.

The interior decoration of ancient villas was no doubt much like that of the Pompeian houses, of the Baths of Titus, the Golden House of Nero, and the house excavated in Rome in 1879, a part of whose walls were removed to the Museo delle Terme, where they may be seen to-day in marvelous preservation. The painting

was on hard plaster, done either in *tempera* or—in finer work—by the encaustic process, using melted wax as the medium. Strong backgrounds of yellow, red and black were used, and a fantastic architecture, in a wild sort of conventional perspective, divided the walls into panels, some of which were adorned with landscapes, mythological scenes or *genre* pictures. The ceilings were probably panelled in wood, perhaps some-

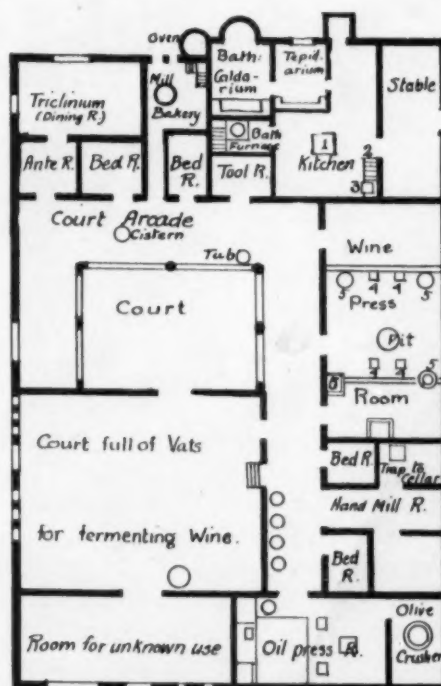


FIG. X—PLAN OF A ROMAN FARMHOUSE  
AT BOSCO REALE  
(After Mau)

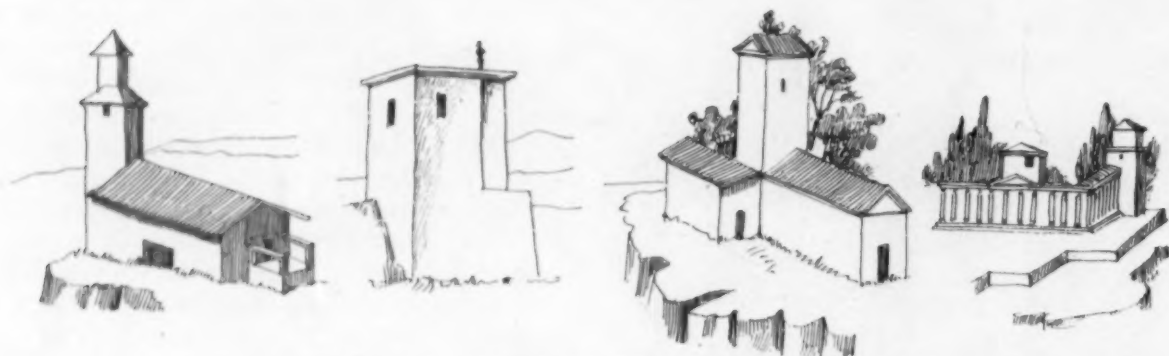


FIG. XI—VARIOUS TYPES OF RURAL BUILDINGS  
From Pompeian Wall Paintings

times of plaster painted; the floors of mosaic or tile, or of marble flaggings. The furniture was scanty compared with modern equipments, but it was costly and heavy, of wood, ivory, bronze or marble. Rugs, cushions, folding stools and couches provided what comfort was to be had. To this day the Italian has little use for the lounging chairs, rockers, hammocks and other devices for comfort which the American deems essential.

The Roman type of villa belonged to the social organization of its time. No other age, people or system could have produced it. We have in modern times the vast wealth necessary for the building of splendid residences, but serfdom and slavery, essential elements in developing the Roman villa, have been forever abolished, and the privacy of family life which we cherish to-day forbids the creation of the vast caravanserais which the Roman villas really were. Four or five hundred slaves were not infrequently accommodated in a single one of the larger villas; and we read that when Cæsar visited Cicero at Puteoli,<sup>2</sup> two thousand of his soldiers were quartered in and about the house of Philippus near by. Hadrian's imperial villa at Tivoli covered a square mile. Such enormous and extravagant establishments are out of the question in an age like ours, even as the folly of an emperor.

The smaller country houses of the Romans were, by contrast with the villas, quite modest affairs. One of these—a suburban rather than a rural house—recently excavated in Boscoreale is shown in plan in Fig. X. There is no planning to it, in the modern

sense of careful arrangement and systematic adaptation. Rooms of all sorts, sizes and shapes are strung around three sides of a court, and the domestic accommodations occupy but a small part of the whole area. This was, indeed, a farmhouse rather than a rural residence, and the wine-press, oil-press and fermentation court take up the greater part of the ground floor. There was a second story, which probably contained most of the sleeping and living rooms. It is noticeable that there was a complete bathing establishment, with furnace, tepid room and hot room, indicating a well-to-do owner.

The more genuinely rural houses of the small landed proprietors of antiquity have wholly perished. We may infer from the pictures preserved to this day that they were small and modest; that a tower or a turret was an essential feature; that barns and granaries were detached structures, often with thatched roofs; that the tools were left in lean-to sheds, and that barn-yard and dooryard were much the same thing. It would also seem to have been the custom to place the house and farm under the protection of deities whose statues were set up beside the entrance door. The group of sketches shown in Fig. XI<sup>3</sup> possibly suggest the types of architecture which prevailed in these smaller houses. They are from carelessly painted details in Pompeian pictures, and are not to be taken too literally. These rural houses may have been picturesque, but the poorest farm laborer on a New England hillside probably has more real comforts in his wooden house than the most prosperous plebeian farmer in ancient Italy.

<sup>2</sup> G. E. Jeans, *Selected Letters of Cicero*: Letter 104, to Atticus. (London, 1880.)

<sup>3</sup> For these sketches I am indebted to the courtesy of Mr. Lucian E. Smith, of New York.



NEWLY EXCAVATED AT POMPEII

THE CASA DEI VETTI



THE STAIRWAY FROM THE LAWN AT "AVONWOOD COURT"

THE GARDENS OF "AVONWOOD COURT,"

AT HAVERFORD, PENNSYLVANIA.

Designed by Percy Ash, Architect.

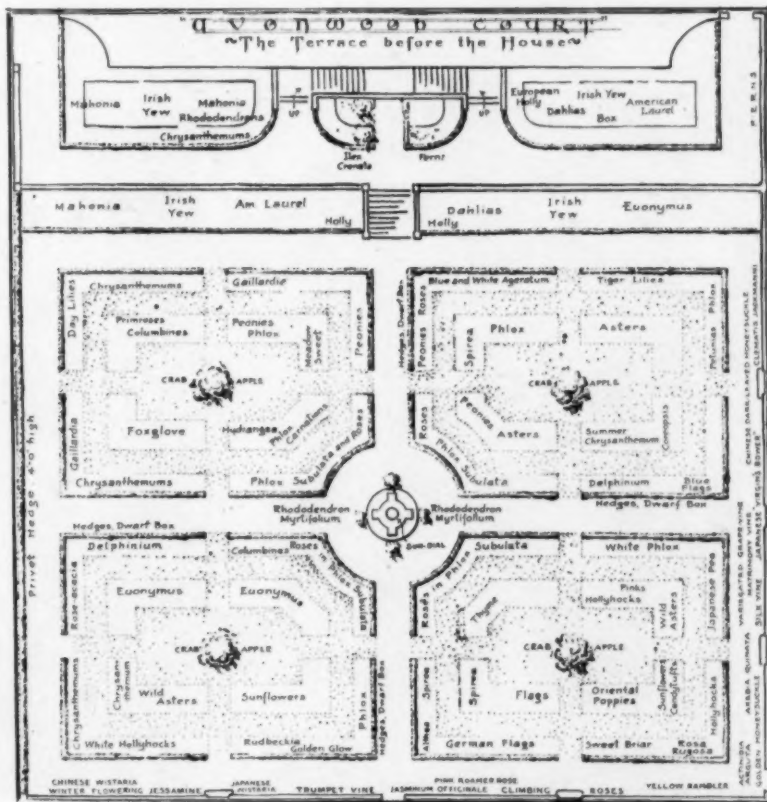
Planted by John S. Cope, Landscape Gardener.

AS the ways of plants and flowers are peculiar and varying, forever eluding the laws which man in his self-conceit has made for them, so the forms or aspects of gardens, where plants, flowers and fruits abide, may be ruleless, multiform, infinitely varied. The hidden garden which steals upon the eye of one strolling in solitude, the terraced hillside disclosing itself range by range as one mounts its steeps, the water garden in some reeking hillside nook, winding wood-paths disclosing marble nymphs and sunny vales, or the stately expanse of an open and monumental design stretching along the façade of a mansion: by these means and many more, a country gentleman may contrive his surroundings to best meet his own pleasure. Sites are numberless, tastes are manifold, and the two, uniting in a garden, produce that which is as individual as man and, like Nature herself, absolutely refuses to be classified. Whether he will look upon a silent forest or enjoy beloved flowers from his study window; whether he will have a garden so forward in the public gaze

that his visitor shall have seen it all before he grasps the hand of his host; or whether, after leading his friend through his house, he will introduce him to a radiant array of parterres and walks is a matter for the owner's temperament to decide just as that temperament has bid the house to be classic, Puritanically formal or free and picturesque.

At all events, the panoramic garden—by that we mean the garden whose whole layout is spread before the house and capable of being all taken in at a glance—this sort of garden is far more commonly seen than any other. Ever since the genial and rolling landscapes of Italy were transformed by the greatest garden builders the world has ever seen; since

the French, remembering the scenic majesty of a Caserta or a D'Este, reared terraced heights from which to enjoy their gardens laid out on level stretches of land, has the panoramic garden been in favor. Certainly it is the choice of those who would portray gardens by means of camera or drawings, for the beauties of a half-hidden dooryard or sunny glade—however



PLAN OF THE GARDENS "AVONWOOD COURT"  
The Seat of Charles E. Mather, Esq.



THE GATEWAY TO THE LAWN AT "AVONWOOD COURT"



THE STAIRWAYS

"AVONWOOD COURT"

charming they may be in reality—are difficult to reproduce on paper, so loth they are to yield up their secrets to the contrivances of picture making.

Avonwood Court at Haverford—one of the beautiful group of suburbs west of Philadelphia,—is an example of this panoramic type of garden. It was built four years ago as an adjunct to a much older house, in relation to which it lies broadside, so that all windows facing the south enjoy the garden's unhidden expanse. From the terrace where stands the house, the ground fell away into what must have been once a meadow. Rich soil, brought from a distance, was placed on the site for the garden so as to make it level. As a matter of fact, it is level in the direction of east and west; but it falls toward the south (i. e. in leaving the house) at the rate of about one foot in six. So well groomed is the countryside now that all traces of careless lowland, fields and stream have gone, and a small copse of maples and pines occupies the hollow. Insufficient are these

for a background, however, and it is a natural framing of dark woodland foliage that the garden lacks. To fill this void, walls were built around the garden, and very beautiful they have made the enclosure. Indeed Avonwood Court is as fine an example of a walled garden, the delight of which our English ancestors enjoyed, as can be found anywhere in America. Once within it, the dark, rich red of the bricks, changing from course to course and from place to place along the walls, appears as the very best possible background for the ever varying and graduating greens. At the side having no wall is a privet hedge, four feet high, which separates the well-kept space of the garden from the open lawns outside. The hedge will grow, and the height of the walls being fixed, in due time will the completeness be realized of "a garden within walls, squared, crossed by walks and full set with hedges."

The level lawn surrounding the house suddenly ends on the side overlooking the garden, and the tops of honeysuckles and

The Gardens of "Avonwood Court"

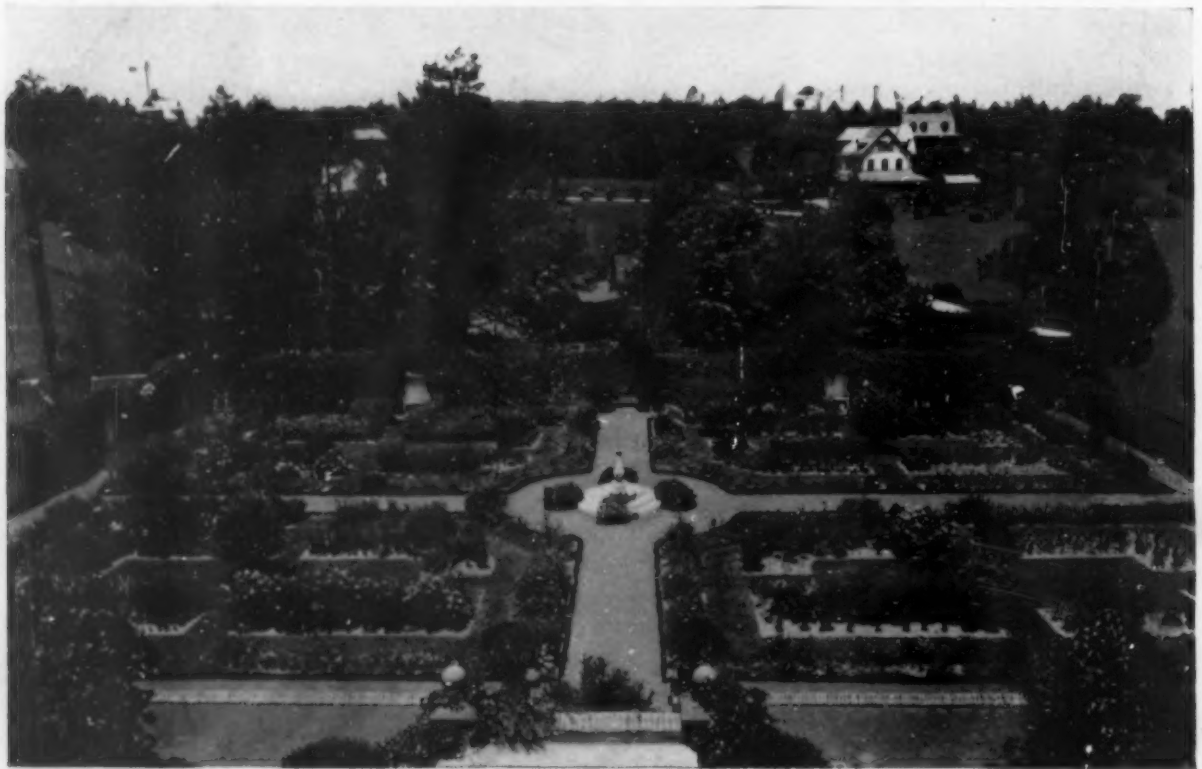
rhododendron, clambering up from below and bending over the turf, hide the brink. In the center a brick stairway descends to a narrow level, situated above and still overlooking the parterred garden. Along this narrow terrace runs a broad walk bordered on the side toward the house with dwarf box enclosing masses of laurel, yew and hardy shrubs. The other side of the walk is skirted only by the summit of a retaining wall,—a coping of



A CLUMP OF PHLOX

moulded brick which rises above the walk but a few inches,—and along which are ranged in intervals of twelve or fifteen feet, bay trees placed in light green wooden boxes. As may be seen by the illustration on page 12 the steps divide symmetrically and reach the walk in two flights. Under them is a tool-house which one may enter by a low door in the ivy-clad wall and passing by a rare specimen of *ilex crenata*.

This terrace is



THE GARDEN FROM A BED ROOM WINDOW

"AVONWOOD COURT"





THE EAST WALL.

GARDENS OF "AVONWOOD COURT"

### The Gardens of "Avonwood Court"

about 8 feet below the lawn of the house and 6½ feet above the large rectangle, measuring 104 by 127 feet, which is the principal part of the garden. By a single flight of steps, the lowest level is reached, and here are four large parterres whose outline is emphasized by beds of annuals and shrubs. The main walks are six feet wide bordered by dwarf box; and as they intersect, they form a circle 24 feet in diameter. In the center of this is the sundial whose supporting shaft is elevated upon

brickwork the shaded red Sayreville bricks, laid in mortar of the same color but somewhat lighter. The ball finials on the stairway balustrades are of red terra-cotta, and even the treads of the steps themselves—in the lower flight at least—are of brick set on edge. Unfortunately, this was not feasible in the large upper flight. There, blue flagging forms the steps, and it is just as disagreeable a note in the beautiful winding stairway closely pressed by the gleaming foliage of the laurel, as in the



THE SUN-DIAL

"AVONWOOD COURT"

three bluestone plinths. Beside four projections on the upper stone, corresponding to the cardinal points of the compass, have been planted single *rhododendron myrtifolium*.

The walks of the garden are made of coarse reddish gravel to which is juxtaposed the little edging of bright green box about eight inches high and four or five inches wide. These two materials reflect in the groundwork of the garden the color scheme of the vine-clad walls. Furthering this, the architect has used for his

smooth cold grey platform of the sun-dial in the center of the garden. In all save this, the architectural part of the garden is eminently successful in that it is sober and restrained, and not overplaying its part in a scene chiefly carried by the shrubs and flowers.

The planting aims to provide a sea of bright color within the darker lines of the surrounding walls. A large proportion of the area, therefore, is given to flower beds and the amount of grass which separates

these, making a background for them, can be seen in the plan, drawn to scale, and reproduced on page 13. For the sake of clearness the different massing of the flowers was not shown in the diagram, but the general view on page 16 will give a true idea of this as it was last season. Year by year the fickle annuals play a merry dance around the perennials, and clumps of rapid growth, which mark a certain bed in July, soon are gone to rise elsewhere and change the face of another bed the coming year. Like light-hearted truants, phlox, peonies, asters, sweet peas, sunflowers and petunias have escaped from the hand which first planted the garden and spend summer days in boisterous revel before silent ferns, dark laurel and prim yews. The charitable

arms of an old creeper shelter the blossoming upstart of a week. The difference between the bright parterres and the sombre planting of the narrow terrace is such a contrast as that of field and wood or sun and shade. And this one bank of dark and shade is necessary to the garden from the point of view of its design as well as its growth and its pleasantness. Without it, the open expanse of sunlight and color would soon tire the eye as surely as it would

aggravate bodily discomfort in summer, and in winter the forlorn blank left by the flowers would depress the mind.

If it be believed that "In every Garden Four Things are necessary to be provided

for, Flowers, Fruit, Shade and Water,"—so wrote Sir William Temple from Moor Park toward the close of the seventeenth century,—his further claim that "whoever lays out a Garden without all these, must not pretend it in any Perfection" is not always justified. Avonwood Court lacks two of these; it has but little of a third: yet it defies old Sir William's declaration in that it perfectly fulfils its mission of heightening the surroundings of a country home. A garden that is a pleasing ornament to a house is sufficient unto

itself where there is no need of raising fruits to feebly compete with the green grocer who calls daily at the kitchen door. American suburbs supply everything for bodily comfort and what they lack—which is often beauty—it is the part of gardens to supply. So Avonwood Court has neither fruits nor kitchen simples; and that it is as beautiful as we find it to be, without the aid of water in any form, is its most striking and interesting characteristic.



A GARDEN GATE "AVONWOOD COURT"



## THE ESTHETIC IMPROVEMENT OF BRUSSELS

A LEADING CITY IN THE MUNICIPAL ART MOVEMENT

By Maurice Gerbeault

MOST American tourists visiting Brussels spend their entire time in seeing the well-known sights announced by the familiar red books "made in Germany." Perhaps the strangers are right in admiring the ponderous beauty of the old Dutch and Flemish masters and the splendid architectural monuments of the city's *Grande Place*. Still, it would seem that much of the modern beauty of greater Brussels ought to attract its due measure of attention from such a wide-awake and progressive nation as America.

The center of the municipal agglomeration, which is the new Brussels, comprises nine communes. The old city, with its quaint Flemish houses, its narrow and tortuous streets, represents a period which, perforce, must soon entirely disappear. Greater Brussels is the boiling pot of Belgium, the mixing point of the various races which make up the striking characteristics of this small

but interesting nation. Moreover, without desiring to flatter the Belgians and depreciate the high sense of art possessed by their French neighbors, I might state that many French and American architects and artists, who have made it a point to study the different ways of improving the appearance of cities, admit that, from the point of view of external beauty, Brussels is ahead of all the European capitals.

*L'Art appliqué à la Rue*, such was the name of the society which, eight years ago, was founded by young artists, sculptors, painters, litterateurs, newspaper men, and even private citizens for the express purpose of beautifying Brussels. Emile Broerman, the painter, was the secretary and promoter of the enterprise, and it was strongly patronized by the last Mayor of the city, Mr. Charles Buls, a clever administrator and also an art lover. Following the efforts of the former mayors Anspach and Brouckère, who had created



A STREET LETTER-BOX



NEWSPAPER AND ADVERTISEMENT KIOSK



THE BOULEVARD DE WATERLOO AND THE AVENUE DE LA TOISON D'OR  
*The two comprise one broad thoroughfare*

the central boulevards of Brussels, and had "Haussmanized" the heart of the city, Charles Buls contributed much to the esthetic improvement of a capital, which is to-day, as we have said, a serious competitor to Paris.

The program of *L'Art appliqué à la Rue* was to open competitions and offer prizes in the shape of medals and diplomas for the finest and most artistic signs for shops and for the façades of new houses. The *début* of the society was successful. The leading shopkeepers fully responded to the hopes and expectations of the artists, and beautiful signs were made, put in place and they still adorn the shops of silversmiths, jewelers, glove makers, druggists and cafés in *Montagne de la Cour* and the *Rue de la Madeleine*. Broerman delivered numerous public lectures on the sub-



STANDARD FOR TELEPHONE WIRES

ject; and the Minister of Fine Arts, who by the way, was also the Minister of Agriculture, took an active interest in the new movement. The government granted subsidies, and King Leopold, who has been called "the king of builders," visited all the shops, admiring and criticising the signs. The newspapers published long articles on the doings of *L'Art appliqué à la Rue* and the society was soon established as a national institution.

The good work so zealously commenced was, however, doomed to languish in a withering public apathy. During the exhibition of 1897, the society tried to embellish the streets with statues in staff, classic porticoes, ornamented poles and huge lions holding coats of arms. This attempt resulted in failure; and the press



PLAN OF THE CITY OF BRUSSELS

showing the series of boulevards surrounding the center of the city and the "North" and "South" railway stations, connected by the Boulevards du Hainaut, Anspach and du Nord. The principal buildings are shown in black and the numerous open squares and parks in white. The Rue Royale, starting the "Passe," and the Rue de la Régence, continuing toward the southwest, divide the upper town, on the right, from the lower town, upon the left of this boundary.

commenced to ridicule the efforts of the enterprising artists, who were now accused of struggling not for the sake of Art, but to advance their personal ends. Since that time *L'Art appliqué à la Rue* has fallen into oblivion. But its existence was not useless. It opened the eyes of many who had not thought of municipal art before. It materially changed for the better the aspect of Belgian cities, and these, in turn, have had an effect upon civic improvement elsewhere.

Upon examining the results of Broerman's crusade, the visitor to Brussels cannot but admire the street accessories in use there to-day. The letter-boxes are well ornamented in a sober way and are free from the usual ugly and offensive features they so often display in other cities. The color, too, is satisfactory to the eye; for, after numerous and careful trials of painting, a light green bronze was adopted. Even in the suburban communes on the outskirts of the municipality, smaller letter-boxes may be found, plainer but always well designed and well painted in dark gray.

All over the city are high telephone poles, painted white with dark bases on which are the coat of arms of Belgium. These standards rise above the streets, light, erect and graceful, and serve at the junction of principal telephone lines to support hundreds of wires, a convenient attachment for which is provided by an encircling iron band at the summit of the structure. At first these telephone poles were generally despised. "They are like as many Eiffel Towers, they are too American, they ruin the perspective of streets": such were the sentences which could be heard passed upon them everywhere; but now-

adays the poles are rather popular, and if they were taken away, they would be sadly missed.

The latest newspaper stands or *kiosks* erected on the boulevards have neat and picturesque roofs surmounting a band of white enameled signs, which serves as a crown to the design. During the day, certain hinged panels are opened to support a display of newspapers. At night when the stand is closed, it remains lighted inside, in order to show the advertisements. These are transparent by being printed upon oiled paper, and are fixed in the windows of the six faces of the stand. The street railway stations on the circular boulevards are built of wood in the Swiss style; but there is now a tendency to replace these by modern structures. This has been done where they have been especially needed, in the center of the city near the Exchange and in the Rue Royale, but the new stands are stiff and severe,—in truth an ideal modern street railway station or waiting shelter has not yet been designed, even in Brussels.

Belgians are very proud of their tree planted boulevards. The circular ones in Brussels which, as will be seen by the accompanying illustration, play a very important part in the city's plan, are very large and are divided into five parts. The outer portions next to the houses are paved with Belgian blocks and are reserved for heavy traffic. Next to this is an alley of soft, red clay, bordered with trees, which is set apart for riders. In the middle of the boulevard is a wide road, paved with wood blocks, and reserved for light traffic and spring carriages only. On each side of this middle avenue is a spacious thoroughfare for passengers, lined with trees and rows of benches. In the spring the aspect of the boulevards lying in the more aristocratic parts of the upper town is indeed delightful, and their beauty is well appreciated by the many citizens who throng there to enjoy the promenade. Very often I have heard Americans say, "We think a great deal of our Massachusetts Avenue in Washington, but your *Avenue de la Toison d'Or* and *Boulevard de Waterloo* (strange to say the two sides of



THE CHILDREN'S FOUNTAIN IN THE PARK



A MODERN SHOP FRONT  
In the street, *Montagne de la Cour*

the boulevard have different names) far surpass any avenue we have in America."

If one leaves the *Avenue de la Toison d'Or* and goes up to the Wood (*Bois de la Cambre*) through the *Avenue Louise*, lined with its splendid residences, a new district is discovered. It is called the upper town, and includes the two towns of *Ixelles* and *Saint Gilles*. Where, ten years ago Buffalo Bill and his horses camped, there is to-day a new city, part of that greater Brussels which is destined to absorb, one by one, the country villages now actually connected with the suburban communes by avenues lined with modern houses and villas. Builders do not hesitate to lavish money on the fronts of their houses, and there is a keen rivalry between the architects in designing the façades. A bluish cut stone, granite in small blocks, white stone, silesian bricks (white or yellowish), red bricks made near by at Waterloo, canal bricks of a light salmon color, are the different materials used, and they have served for the best and the worst of those façades designed à l'*Art Nouveau* when the crusade for that style was led by Horta, Hankar, Plessener and Blaireau.

## The Esthetic Improvement of Brussels

The first efforts of *L'Art appliqué à la Rue* were directed at beautifying the shops; and in this respect, its activity was very successful. At least one hundred new shop fronts throughout the city may to-day attract the notice of any observer awake to esthetic progress. But he must not be prejudiced against *L'Art Nouveau*, for he will find it has held absolute sway over the designs. There were a few atrocities produced which brought down the sarcasm and scorn of the good natured Brussels "bourgeois," upon a

company dared propose erecting any poles whatever in the middle of the *Boulevard Anspach*, there was a general cry of reprobation. At this, the company further offered not only to erect poles but to light the boulevards gratuitously with powerful arc-lamps. At this business-like proposition the city administration permitted one dozen poles to be erected as an experiment. This the company did at its own expense. The standards, surmounted by electric lamps, were far from ugly, and the people were just begin-



A FOUNTAIN AND LAMP POST COMBINED  
*With drinking place below for dogs*



A LAMP POST BESIDE THE ROYAL GARDENS

fad they were pleased to call "phoenia." Perhaps it was fortunate that the style soon began to wane. It is now plainly on the decrease; and, avoided by serious and well-established shopkeepers, it is left to saloons and those shops driving a short-lived trade.

An instance may illustrate how strong is the feeling of the Belgians for beautifying their capital. Two years ago, a street railway company, wishing to run electric cars instead of horse trams on the central boulevard, proposed to erect ornamental trolley poles. As soon as it was known that the

ning to get accustomed to them when, suddenly, the whole question was carried to the Chamber of Deputies. Hot discussions in favor of the poles and lamps provoked still hotter discussions against the harmless poles. Newspapers poured oil on the fire. Petitions were signed, long speeches were delivered, and finally the Chamber passed a vote against the poles altogether. At an enormous cost, the company was then forced to build an underground system to carry the electric current. For six months the boulevards were entirely impracticable. Sewers, water and





THE FONTAINE DE BROUCKÈRE



A STREET RAILWAY STATION

gas pipes had to be removed, and the confusion was discouraging, but the Brussels citizens are now satisfied that the perspectives of their boulevards have been preserved, and they are keener than ever to bear any expense or inconvenience to save the beauty of their town.

King Leopold, himself, takes great interest in everything connected with city improvements; and when a blunder has been made, he does not hesitate to rob himself of a few millions of francs to make reparation for it. He is a great traveler and is ever studying the other capitals he visits. When he discovers their good points, he takes back the innovation to his own country. Ex-mayor, Charles Buls, who was considered quite a globe-trotter was also fond of doing the same. Once in the market place at Turin he discovered some pretty parasols striped with white and blue, used by the flower merchants. A month after the Turin parasols were imported into Brussels and offered to the flower sellers on the *Grande Place* to replace huge and heavy dark blue umbrellas. The flower girls were so glad to receive this present, that the prettiest of them was delegated to present the mayor with a splendid bouquet, and as she made him the gift, she added a hearty kiss.

Under the administration of the same mayor, numerous fountains of cast iron were erected to provide fresh water for horses and dogs. These fountains have proved to be very popular. A new design combining a lamp-post with a drinking place has been adopted by the community of Ixelles. Its very decorative character may be seen from our illustration, page 24. Upon the ground

is a small basin which catches an overflow from above. That this is well appreciated by thirsty dogs needs no emphasis, when one remembers that dogs in Brussels work very hard at pulling light carts, and for small loads, replacing horses. Of all the fountains, however, lately erected in Belgium, the most admired is certainly the fountain for children which has been placed in the public park at Brussels. It is very simple and charming. The *Fontaine de Brouckère*, situated at the *Porte de Namur*, was erected in memory of the mayor of that name and is illustrated on page 25. The picture on page 24 shows the lamp-posts used on the circular boulevards. This particular one is situated behind the King's palace outside the gate of the royal gardens. As many as twenty other different types of lamp-posts can be found in the conglomerate municipality of Brussels. There are also park benches, statues, music stands, cake stands and other civic accessories which are well worthy the attention of foreign visitors, and students of municipal art. American park commissioners could learn a great deal by a study of unique Brussels. The latest effort here for civic beauty is a plan adopted last year to embellish a vacant lot in the center of the most densely populated district. Nearly everything had been attempted to hide the old and ugly walls of houses standing exposed upon a corner which will remain a few months vacant. At last it was proposed to plant evergreens and to lay out a temporary garden. This was carried out and passers-by may now see, instead of bill boards and advertisements, trees, shrubs and green grass.

"MOHICAN COTTAGE"

BOLTON-LANDING-ON-LAKE-GEORGE, NEW YORK

*Designed by Wilson Eyre.*

THIS recently completed residence stands on the site of the old Mohican House, said to be the oldest building on Lake George and a famous landmark for more than a century. Many traditions have been handed

down concerning its history, for it existed not only during the War of the Revolution, but passed through the earlier struggles



THE HOUSE FROM THE LAKE

between settlers and Indians that were waged throughout northern and western New York. When the property came into the hands of the present owner, Mr. William K. Bixby, of St. Louis, he aimed to preserve the historic old

house, if by any means it could be made available as a summer residence; but this proved impossible.



A PERSPECTIVE SKETCH OF "MOHICAN COTTAGE" DRAWN BY THE ARCHITECT



THE PORCH IN THE SOUTHEAST ANGLE

“MOHICAN COTTAGE”

The site lies beside a bay on the western shore of Lake George and consists of a level point of land running some two hundred feet out from the general shore line, and having an abundance of fine trees. From this point there is a beautiful view of the Lake toward the north, east and south; and in planning the house, the porches and the main rooms

were so placed as to obtain the full advantage of this outlook. The plan forms a sym-

metrical cross, this scheme being adopted to give the rooms light from at least two sides. As a roomy effect inside was also desired, a large amount of space was given to halls. The house is the summer home of a large family, many of them children, and to give access to all in



AN ENTRANCE TO THE REAR HALL

"Mohican Cottage"

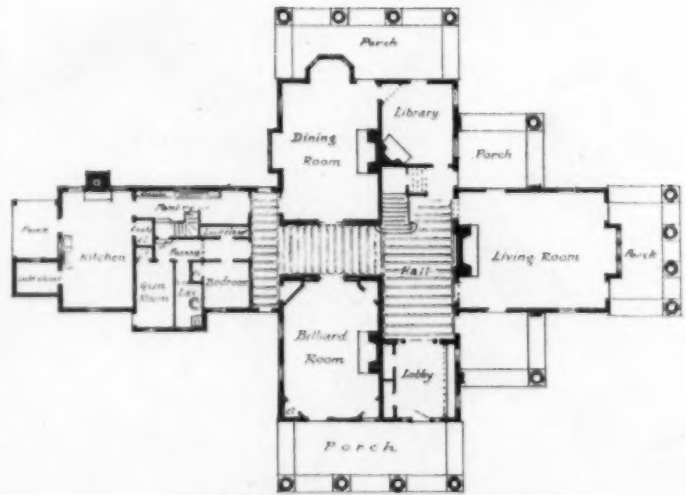


THE SOUTH PORTICO and Main Entrance

"MOHICAN COTTAGE"

their different occupations, entrances from all directions have been provided.

The house is treated in the style characteristic of country residences of colonial New York and New England. The plan is rather unusual in the manner in which it is worked out with reference to the axes of the wings, not an easy matter to accomplish when openings of the different stories are to be kept directly over each other. Each wing, with the exception of that containing the kitchen, terminates in an Ionic portico, with columns extending to the roof and supporting a pediment gable. These columns rest on a wide thick white marble coping, forming the border of the porticoes. The frame walls of the house are covered with clapboards of a special size, showing nine inches of face to the weather and with butts



PLAN OF THE FIRST FLOOR

1 1/8 inches thick. The roof is covered with split cypress shingles, seven inches to the weather, treated with bleaching oil, and terminates in a heavy modillioned cornice.



THE NORTH PORTICO with Dining-room Bay-window

“MOHICAN COTTAGE”



PLAN OF THE SECOND FLOOR

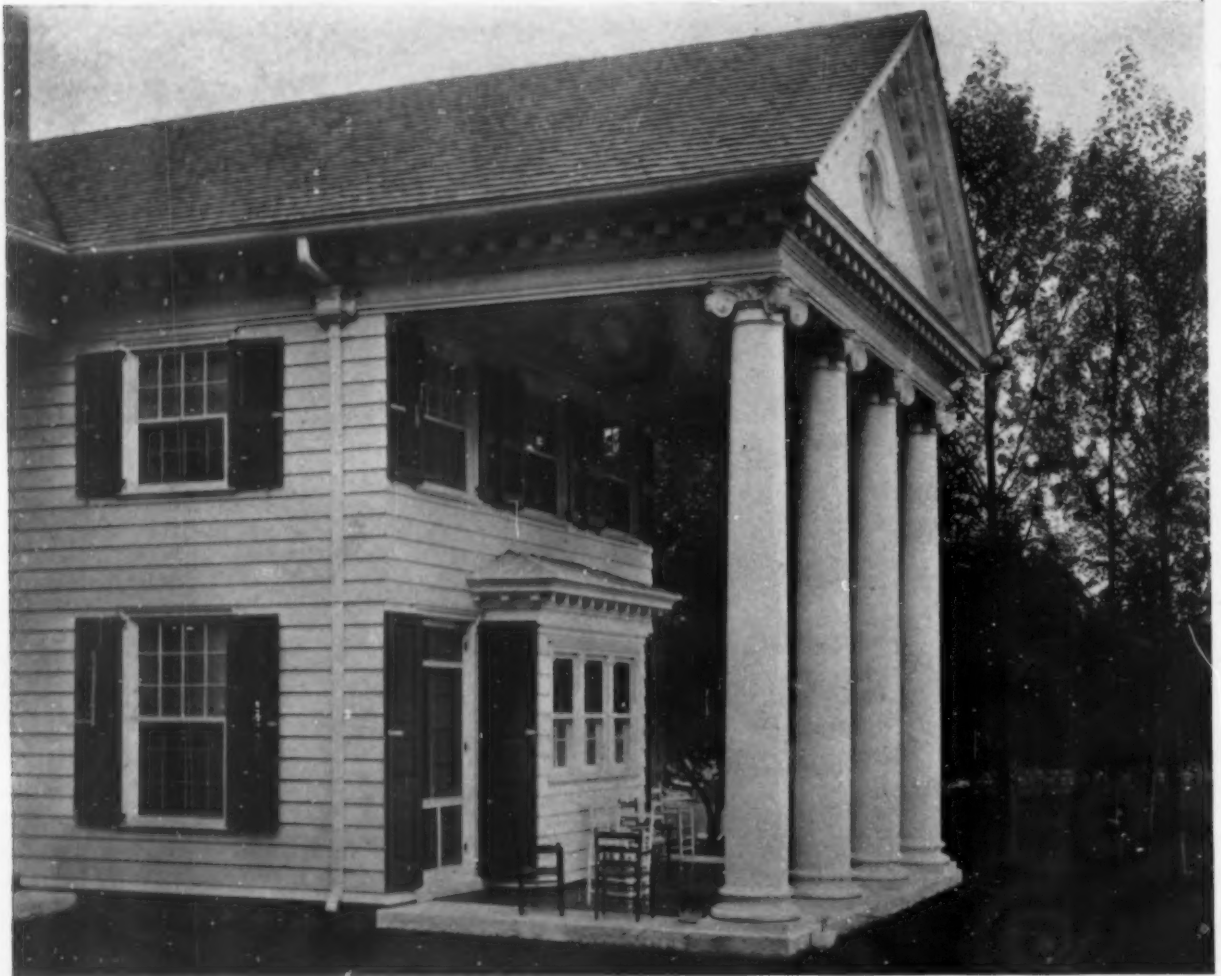
The chimneys are built of Sayreville brick laid with wide joints.

The main entrance is on the south portico, through a large vestibule divided from the main hall by a flat Doric arch enriched with

triglyphs and supported on columns. At the right of the hall is the large living-room, and to the left, on the main axis of the house, is another hall running at right angles and from which open the billiard and dining rooms. At the end of the main hall opposite the vestibule is a wide stairway, finished in white pine and mahogany, with wainscoting on the wall side and carved stair-brackets on the other. From this end of the hall opens the library, which is purposely removed somewhat from the main part of the first floor.

The rooms are throughout Colonial in style, finished in white, and relieved by wood cornices, chair-rails and arches. The walls are of sand finished plaster, painted in subdued tints. The ceiling of the dining-room is slightly vaulted, while that of the halls is treated with beams.

"Mohican Cottage"



THE EAST PORTICO with Living-room Bay-window

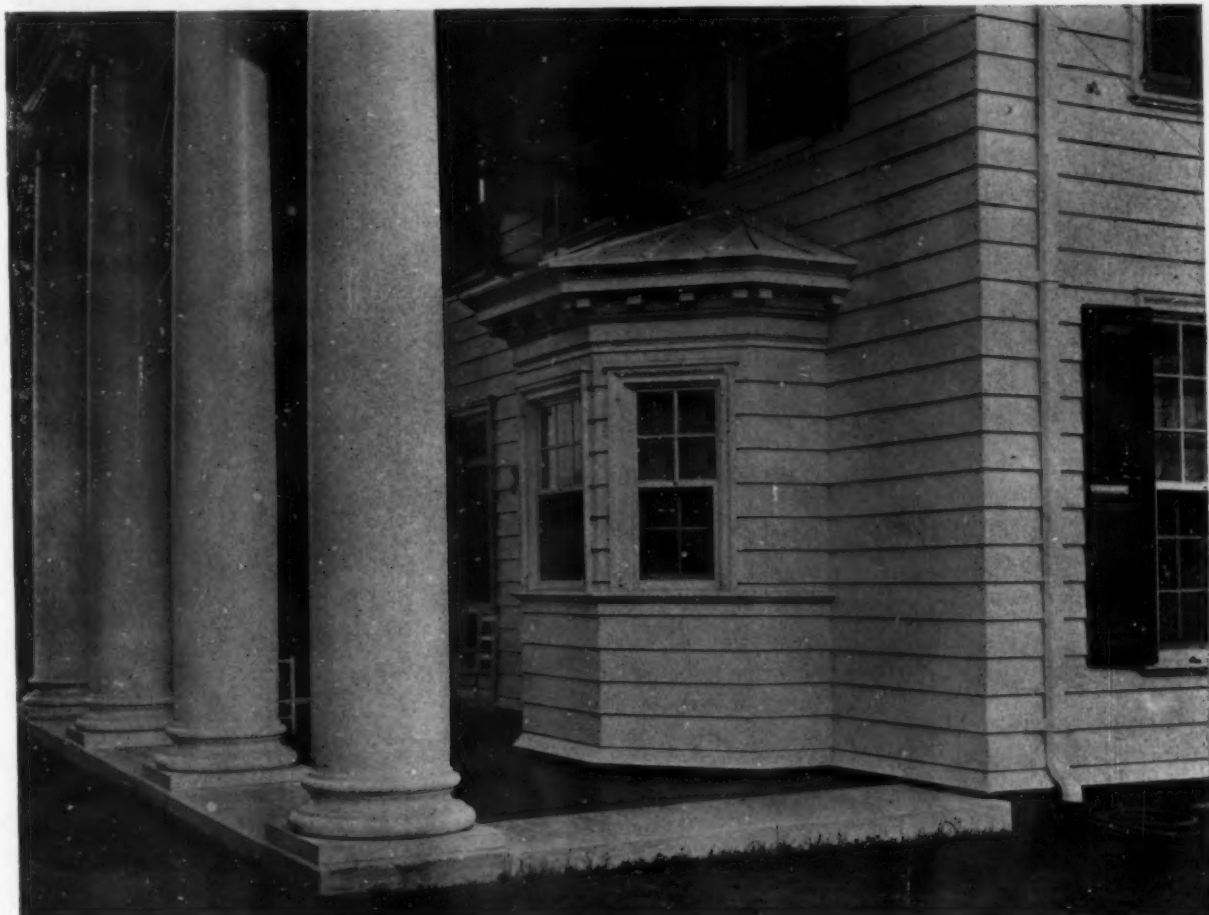
"MOHICAN COTTAGE"

The main feature of the first floor is the living-room, from the windows of which the lake can be seen in every direction. French casements give access to three porches, and a large bay window increases the effect of space and light. On the face of the mantel is carved the em-



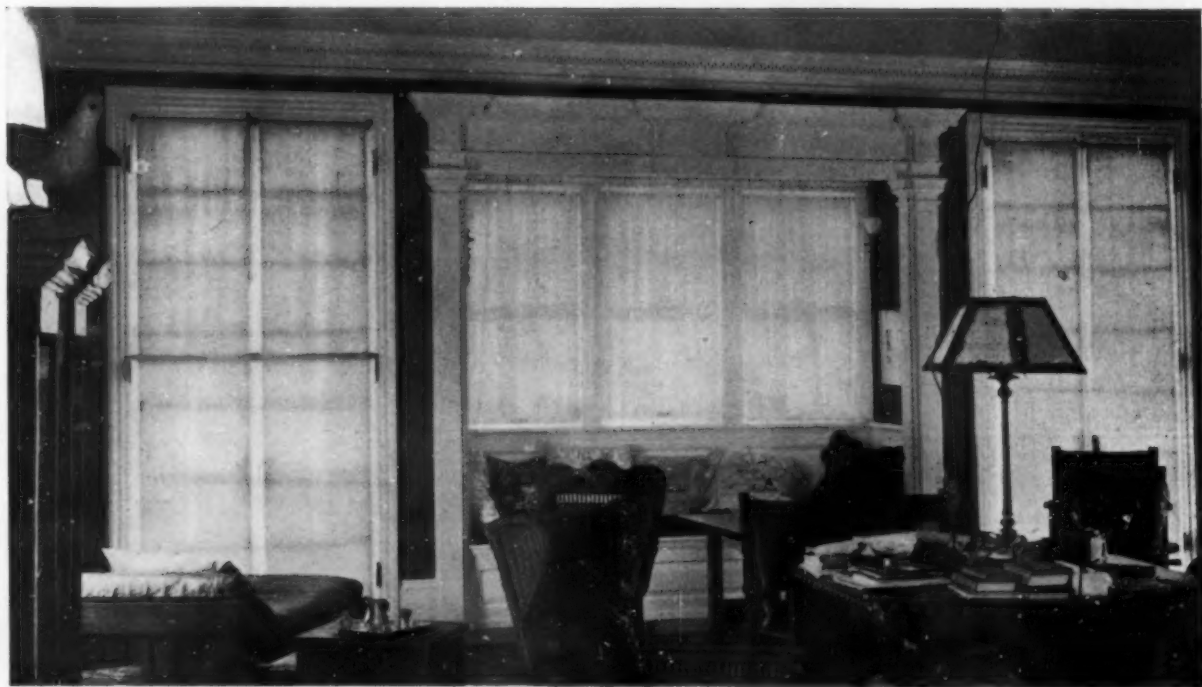
THE MAIN ENTRANCE

blem of the Mohican House, an Indian with bow and arrows. The second floor and garret present no unusual features. The style of the house extends to the subordinate buildings—laundry and engine-room, boat-house and bath-houses.



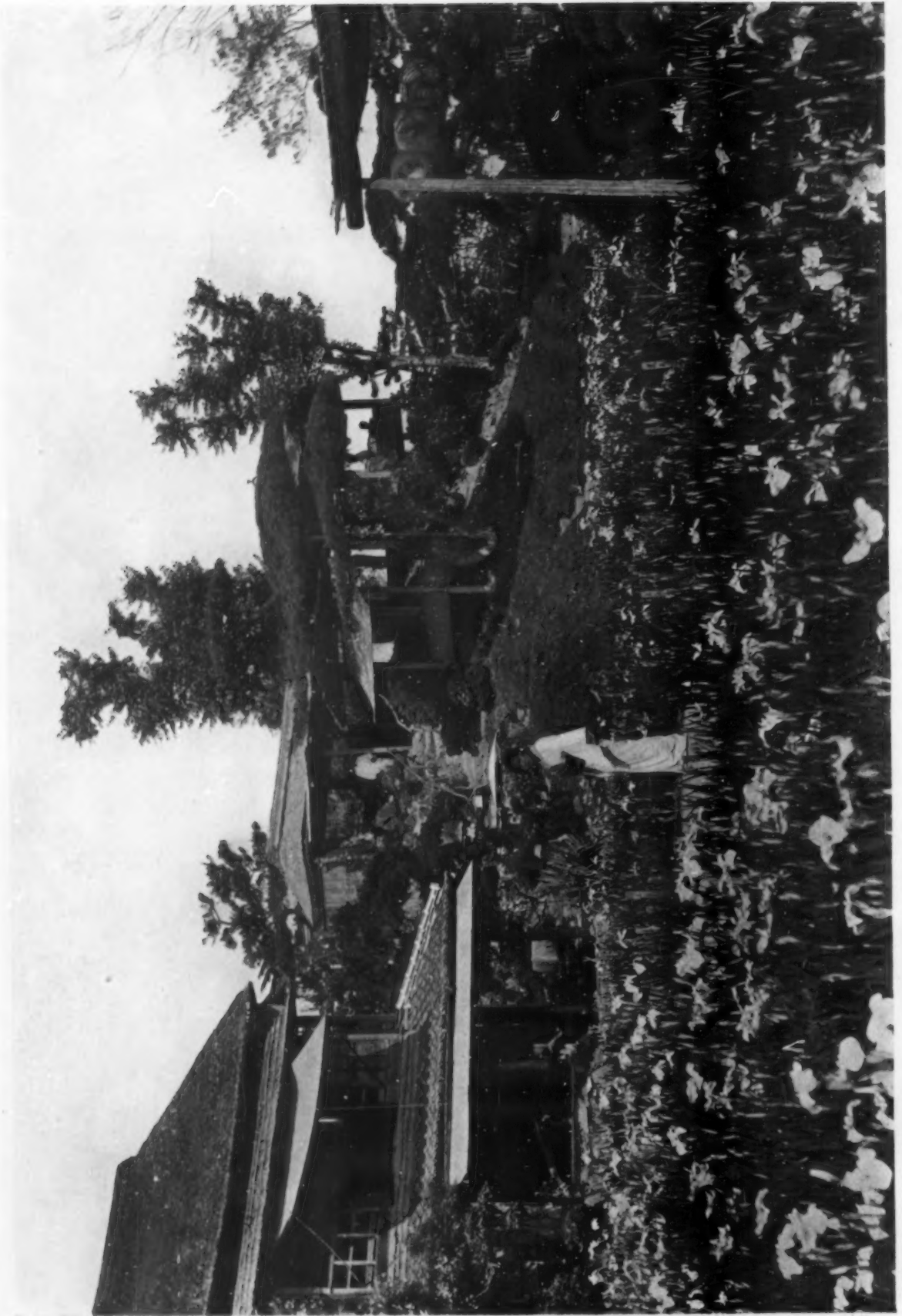
THE DINING-ROOM BAY-WINDOW

"MOHICAN COTTAGE"



THE BAY-WINDOW IN THE LIVING-ROOM

"MOHICAN COTTAGE"



THE IRIS GARDEN AT HORIKIRI



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## THE IRIS GARDEN AT HORIKIRI NEAR TOKYO, JAPAN

BY ANNE H. DYER

THE gardens of Japan possess a significance which is, so far as my knowledge goes, lacking in all other gardens in the world. They exercise a spell upon the beholder, the cause of which is undiscoverable. We may analyze it in vain. After all is said there remains a quality unaccounted for in the physiognomy of all Japanese gardens—a nameless something which in a human being we would call intelligence—but which in a garden we may, for want of a better word, term significance. We feel that something is meant, that it was not by chance a garden has come to express what it does, but that long ago it grew out of the mind and shaping intelligence of some human consciousness to

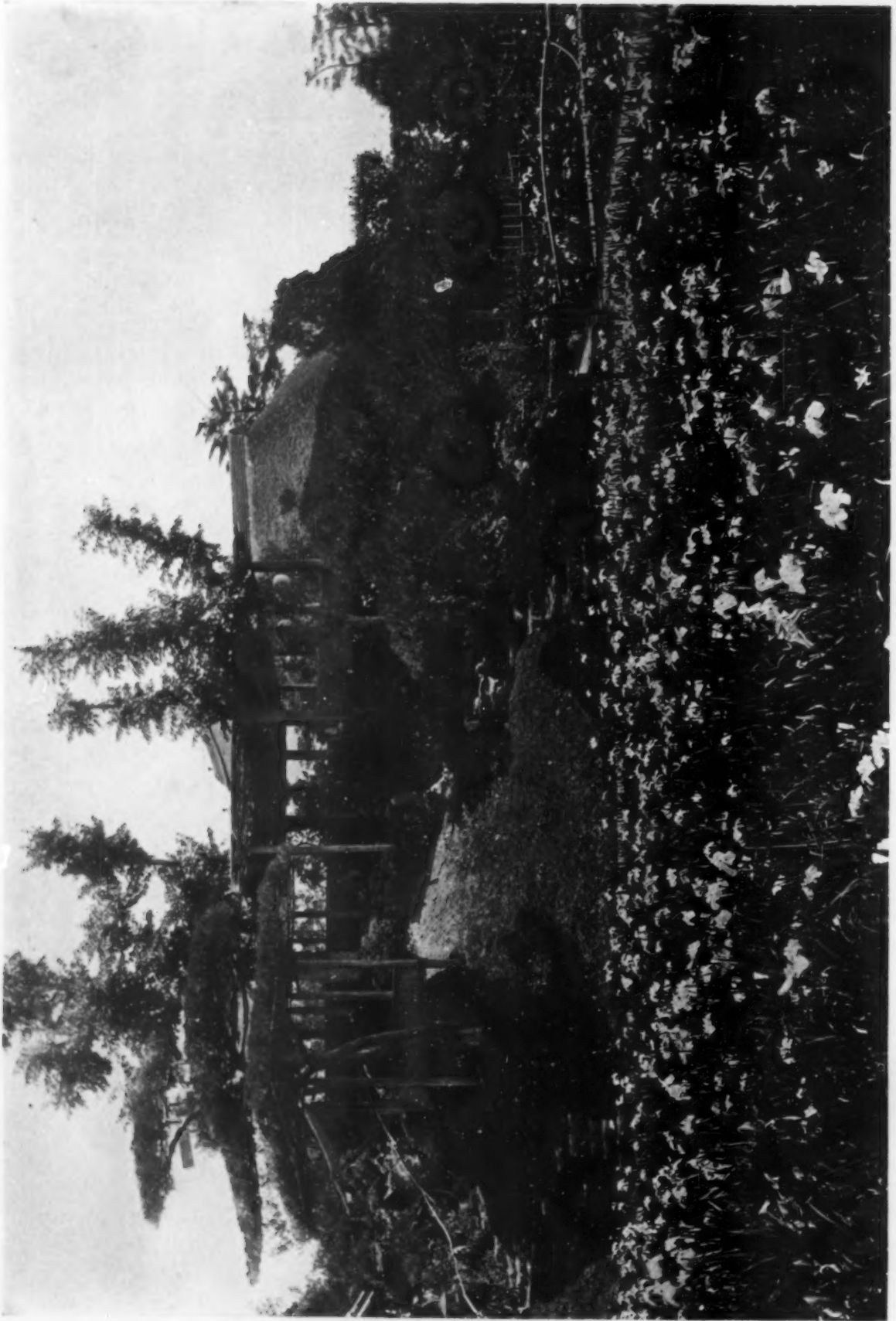
express or fulfil some human need, the meaning of which may be hidden from us but which is very clear to all Japanese.

We do come to perceive, however, after a little study, that a Japanese garden is as closely related to the laws of composition as a poem or a picture, and that in a very true sense it is no less an inspired work of art. The ancient landscape gardens of Japan, indeed, live on like old pictures whose lines and tints do not fade but gather an added depth and richness from age.

Most of us are accustomed to thinking of gardens as places in which to grow things, or at any rate as places in which they are or may be grown, and we generally proceed to



IRIS BESIDE THE PONDS AT HORIKIRI



A LANDSCAPE ARTIST'S FOREGROUND

fill such places, much as a child might, with regard chiefly to the number and variety of our selections. Such ideas would seem lamentably crude and even laughable to a Japanese gardener, in whose eyes every stone possesses character and every plant and species of plant life a distinct individuality. But plants are, with him, ever a minor consideration. The garden space itself is first, and that is selected with as much care as a canvas for a picture, or the space for

a wall decoration. Upon this is sketched the lines of a composition in rock, tree, hill, and stream. Color comes last and sometimes is wanting altogether. Such gardens, without flowering plant or shrub to soften their bold outlines, are like a vigorous Chinese landscape

drawing in pen and ink, and many of the most famous of the old landscape gardens are of this class. But the elements of a garden are, after all, very simple, and such as may be found almost everywhere except in the most arid sections of the earth. Rock, tree, hill, and stream—I think I have never seen a Japanese garden without these four primary elements. Endurance, aspiration, contemplation, and activity, they might be said to represent. But whatever their fancied qualities they are present in reality or semblance in even the most miniature of all gardens, such as may be kept in a shallow bowl on one's desk.

In the little village of Horikiri, situated a few miles out of Tokyo and within easy *jinrikisha* distance, is to be found what is perhaps the oldest and most famous Iris garden in the world; although it is only one hundred and twenty years old, which is very young for a Japanese garden. To this garden, however, and to the founder of it,

Kodaka Izayemon, we owe the Iris as we see it to-day. It is not generally known, perhaps, that this flower in its present remarkable state of development is so modern a product. Up to the time of Kodaka's discovery, it was nothing more than the little wild mountain Iris which has been so charmingly portrayed by some of the old flower painters, and which may be found now on almost any hillside in certain localities,

growing scarcely more than one foot, or at most two, in height. The blossoms of two colors only, blue and white, and with three petals as in the fleur-de-lis or in our own flag lily. But one hundred and twenty years ago a certain well-to-do Japanese farmer, who surely had the

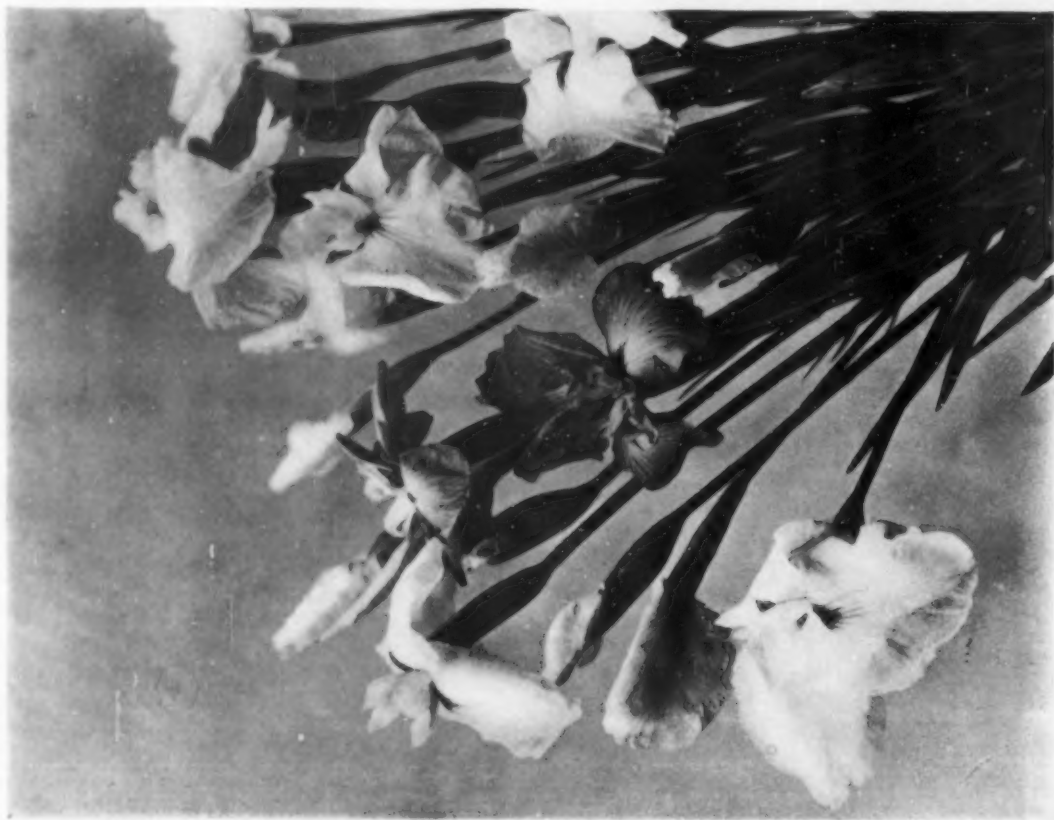


A GROUP OF IRIS BLOSSOMS

soul of a discoverer, even if he was only a sort of head gardener in the little flower-raising village of Horikiri, in making a journey to the foot of Fuji, brought back a specimen of the Iris growing there. With this and two other specimens procured from different places, he formed the nucleus of the garden which was to grow into what is at present one of the most celebrated gardens in Japan. It was not until late in the Tokugawa period, however, in the time of the second Kodaka, the son of the original founder, that *Koda-ka-en*, as it was for a long time called, came into prominence. Two *samurai* chanced to visit it, and their reports attracted others, until finally the fame of it reached the ear of the reigning *shogun* himself, who came in person to see it. Since then the tide of visitors has annually increased until it is not only known to all Japanese, but has also become a favorite resort of the foreign tourist.

The fact that there are comparatively few flower gardens in Japan may account in part

*The Iris Garden at Horikiri*



THE DIAPHANOUS PETALS OF THE JAPANESE IRIS

for the popularity of this one with the tourist, who does not find demands made upon his appreciation to which he is obviously unequal. The untutored visitor can say with Thoreau: "All fables, indeed, have their morals; but the innocent enjoy the story." If there is a moral, a lesson, or a creed contained in this garden, it is to be found, apparently, only in the duty of joyousness and in the communication of that quality from nature to man. Of the subtleties and symbolisms of some of the more ancient gardens there appears to be no trace. It would seem to have been created in a mood of pure delight in beauty for its own sake and as an end in itself.

One's first impression, coming upon it suddenly after the long ride through flat, green intersections of intermediate rice fields, is like passing from the silence of twilight into a burst of sunlight and music. The brilliancy of the scene is almost operatic in effect. As the Japanese themselves are fond of saying, "It is more beautiful than nature, it is as beautiful as art." From the wide irregular ponds situated in the central and flat portions of the garden the flowers rise in magnificent battalions that assault and take the eye by storm. With no suggestion of confusion or massing, each giant spear and stalk stands out clearly, tipped with its great, furred, quivering butterfly blossoms flashing in the sunlight in prismatic hues of gem-like splendor and bearing on its wings all the concentrated radiance of midsummer in Japan.

The garden is not very large, but it is jewel-like in its completeness of form and intensity of color. No western artist has given even approximately such range of color with such infinite blending and shading of tone; only those of the later Ukiyo artists who sacrificed everything else to dramatic effect have partially done so. In a sense such a garden is a departure from the normal, as all genius is, and surely nothing less than genius could have evolved from three simple specimens more than three hundred different varieties of such complex and bewildering beauty as are here displayed. The little simple classic Iris of so many centuries has blossomed into a Court Beauty. The hills, her ancient playgrounds, know her no more, and she lives henceforth in an atmosphere of adulation and applause. Strangely enough a sort of moral transforma-

tion has accompanied this phenomenal growth. In its later brilliant development the Iris is a flower more admired than beloved by the Japanese, who find in it none of the ethical qualities dear to them in the plum and other flowers. *Ayame* is a name frequently adopted by that most brilliant class of modern Japanese women, the *Geisha*, as signifying a superlative degree of beauty and accomplishment, but it is almost never used in private families, being held to typify qualities too striking to fulfil the Japanese ideal of womanly excellence, of which the most essential attribute is a retiring modesty. Nevertheless, the modern Iris is to my mind, pre-eminently the flower of temperament. If she has lost her simplicity she has not lost her inherent grace and charm, and she has remained through all her phases a fruitful source of inspiration to poet and artist.

There is a pretty story told of a beautiful court lady of this name who lived six hundred years ago in the reign of Go Shirakawa, and who was beloved by the famous warrior, Minamoto Yorimasa. This warrior had the good fortune to deliver his Emperor from a *bakemono*, the ghost of a woman who appeared nightly to her august victim in the guise of a demon whose head was composed of three gigantic emeralds. Upon being asked to name his reward Yorimasa without hesitation named the Lady Ayame. The Emperor, perhaps to test his love, perhaps in the hope of retaining the young favorite at court, caused to be brought before him twelve maidens who, by means of the art of dress, had been made so exactly to resemble one another that it was impossible to detect the smallest shade of difference between them.

Being told to make his choice, Yorimasa, concealing the great perplexity which he felt, replied in words which have since become proverbial:—

Samidare ni, ike no makomo ni,  
Midzu no oite, idzure Ayame to  
Hikizo wadzurō.

Which being roughly translated to prose means, "When the June rains flood the pond, how impossible it is to distinguish the beautiful Ayame from common reeds!"

This answer so displeased the Lady Ayame that she blushed crimson with mortification, and thus unconsciously gave her lover the signal that he hoped for.

*The Iris Garden at Horikiri*

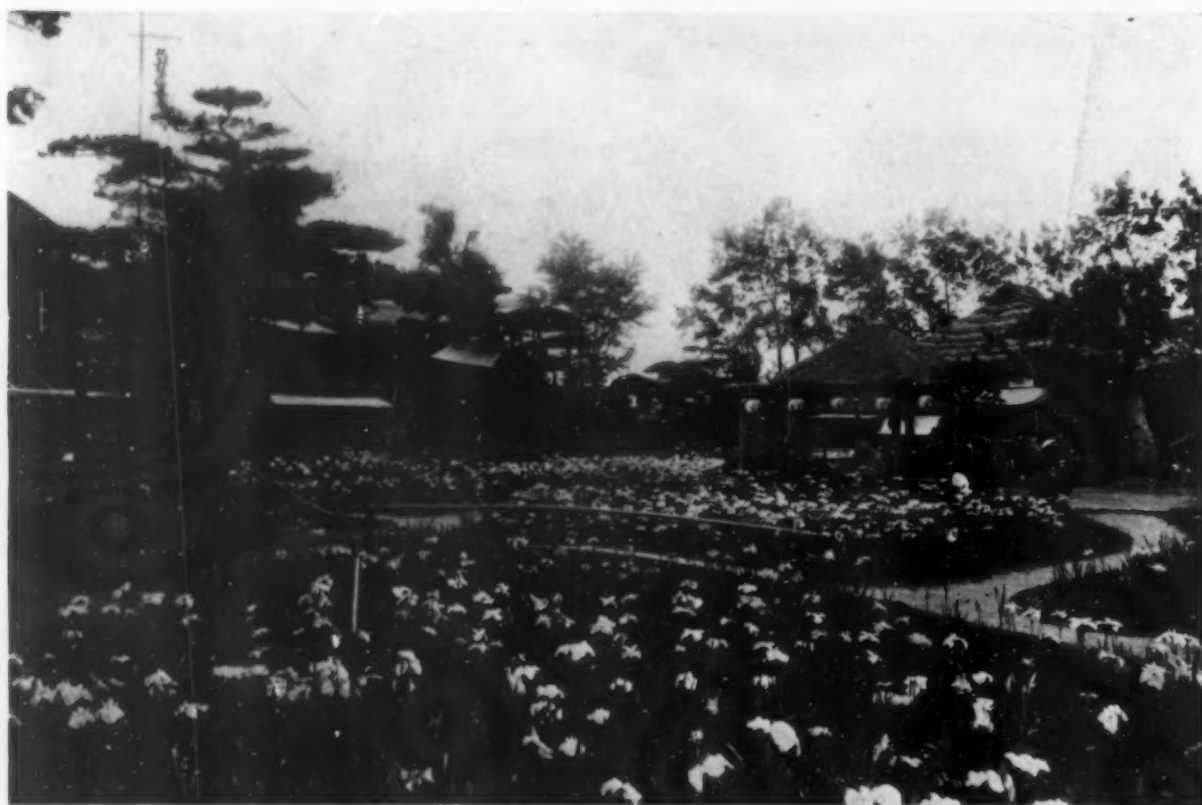
It would require too much space to attempt to give any adequate idea of the place the Iris holds in the art and literature of her country. Her praises have been sung in verse and painted on screen, *kakemono*, and even the single sheet print. In a recent exhibition by modern artists almost all their work was done on gauze or *roe* silk of a very transparent quality. This material proved excellently well qualified to suggest the translucent greens of the spears and the sun-soaked quality of the flowers, whose marvel-

The Iris flower! May it prove the mirror of wisdom to the mountain pheasant!

The reference here is to the brilliant plumage of the mountain pheasant, the reflection of which in water he mistakes for the colors of the Iris, thus not infrequently meeting his death by drowning.

In a collection of verse which I have on the Iris, this is one of the simplest:—

Kono tsuyu ga Hotaru ni naru ka  
Hana Shobu!



IN THE MIDST OF THE GARDEN AT HORIKIRI

ously luminous and glowing petals are so diaphanous as to transmit the very quality of light itself. As a rule, in these pictures, as in all Japanese painting, the fewer the brush strokes the more admirable the suggestion.

Similarly in Japanese verse the image evoked is by means of a few syllables only. On the stone tablet in the garden at Horikiri, is transcribed the following:

Yamadori no Chiye no Kagami-ka  
Hana Shobu!

Which may be rendered:

These drops of dew upon the Iris, I wonder if at nightfall they become fireflies.

Like the picture of a few brush strokes, or the poem of a few syllables, the garden at Horikiri, in its large suggestiveness and its essential poetic feeling, remains with us in memory as the pictorial idea of a garden, and long after we have ceased to see it, is still a vision of that "inward eye which is the bliss of solitude."

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BYWAYS OF ENGLAND



OLD SHOPS AT NANTWICH



THE KING'S ARMS, DORKING  
*Negative by Thos. P. Temple*



AN INN AT TEWKESBURY



AN OLD HOUSE AT EVESHAM





## “HAMPTON”

AN OLD COLONIAL MANSION AND GARDENS AT TOWSON, MARYLAND

*By Laurence Hall Fowler.*

THIS fine old place, than which no better example of a true Colonial establishment can be named, has been in the possession of the well-known Ridgely family for a hundred and seventy-five years. Colonel Charles Ridgely,—grandson of Robert Ridgely of St. Mary's County, the first of the “Hamp-

ton” family to come to Maryland,—was settled in Baltimore County by 1734, and had built himself a simple gambrel-roofed farmhouse, which is standing to-day within a quarter of a mile of the present “Hampton.” At Colonel Ridgely's death this part of his estate passed to his son, Captain Charles

"Hampton" at Towson, Maryland

Ridgely, a man of energy and force. Since, in England, a large estate with a great mansion was the outward sign of position and influence, it was natural that the Captain should have cherished a desire to place upon his many acres a house that would surpass any for miles around. "Hampton" was the shaping of his dream.

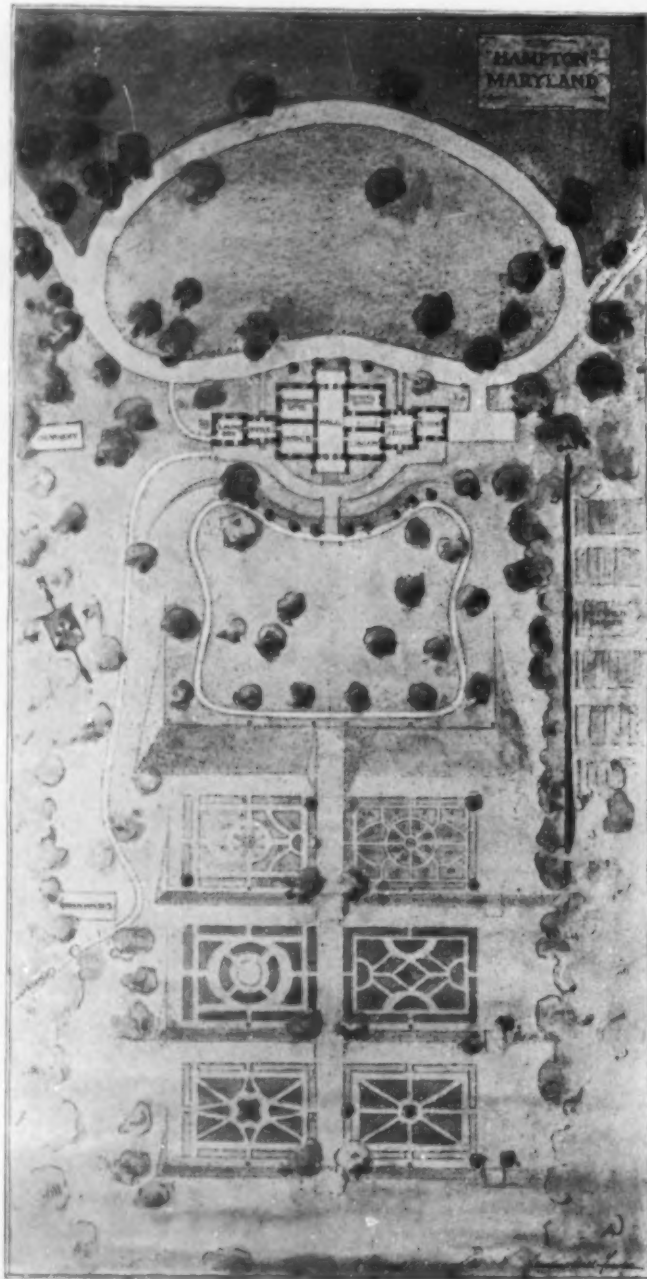
As there is no definite information about the architectural origin of the building, curiosity is excited as to the source of its design, not only because it is so distinctive among the dwellings of the so-called "Colonial Period," but because it seems to have caught more than was usual of the air of an eighteenth century English country mansion. Indeed it is thought that it was suggested by such a pretentious structure as Castle Howard. But this probable connection does not rest altogether upon a broad architectural resemblance of the two buildings, for it seems that the

Captain's ambitions came to be early associated with that particular castle. His mother being a Howard, it is very likely that he often saw the castle during his visits to England while in the merchant service.

Whatever the prototype of the house, its

cupola, at the time of its completion in 1790, was the most elegant, both in proportion and detail of any in this country, and seems to have been the first instance, upon a Colonial domestic building, in which such a feature was treated with monumental importance.

There is no record as to exactly when the plans were matured.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps it was before the Revolution, and their execution was prevented by the war; but the date 1783, in leaden characters embedded in the wall of the east wing near the eaves, shows that preparations for building must have been started just after the cessation of hostilities, and that considerable progress had been made before peace was declared. Soon after the completion of the house in 1790, Captain Ridgely died, having divided his estate among the children of his sisters, "Hampton" going to his namesake, Charles Ridgely Carnan, upon the



THE PLAN OF "HAMPTON"

*Especially measured and drawn for HOUSE AND GARDEN by Laurence Hall Fowler*

<sup>1</sup> It has been discovered in an old account book of Captain Ridgely's that the builder-in-chief or "architect" of "Hampton" was one Jehu Howell and that as early as 1784 he and his family lived in a wing of the house while the rest was being built. At Howell's death in 1787 the amount that had been paid for the house by cash in kind or by having the laborers' hire satisfied by the Captain was £3482, 113, 6 1/2, but the entire cost of the house is not known for the ledger containing the final settlement has not come to light.

condition that he would change his name to Ridgely. "General" Ridgely, as this second master of the house was popularly called, was Governor of Maryland from 1815 to 1818, and it was he who laid out the gardens at the south of the house sometime between 1810 and 1829.

The approach to "Hampton" along the Dulany's Valley Pike affords a distant view of the white cupola and tall chimneys standing

years after the completion of the building, the exterior was covered with stucco. The house is a hundred and seventy-five feet long by seventy-five feet in its widest part: very considerable dimensions for those early days. The main building, or central mass,—both façades of which are the same—contains the living-rooms arranged in two high stories and a dormer story. The wings, composed of two low stories and an attic,



THE HOUSE FROM THE SOUTH LAWN

"HAMPTON"

out against a dark background of trees. The drive, a mile long, from the turnpike to the house lies, for a part of the way, within a lane of cherry trees, maple, oak and ailanthus beyond which are fields of wheat, corn and clover. On passing a marble gateway, a park is entered; and after several turns of the road, one comes suddenly upon the west end of the house. It is built of rubble masonry of a composite limestone obtained on the place, apparently without much difficulty, for all the exterior walls are two and a half feet thick and the interior ones two feet. Several

are connected with the central building by a one-story passage, and they contain the offices. This disposition of mass and plan is typical of Colonial architecture in Maryland where it received its highest development, at "Whitehall," near Annapolis, in 1753; at "Hampton" in 1783; at "Homewood," on the outskirts of Baltimore, in 1804; and in several town houses at Annapolis: the Harwood, Brice and Paca houses all built about 1770.

Inside, the rooms are arranged with the simplicity that is characteristic of Colonial

*"Hampton" at Towson, Maryland*

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THE WEST WING OF "HAMPTON"

planning. An arched entrance door in the north porch opens directly into a large hallway (measuring 20 by 50 feet) that runs through the center of the house, unobstructed by stairs or by dividing arches, to a south porch. West of the hall are the drawing-room and the music room; and on the east, are two smaller rooms—the dining room and the library—between which is a stairway hall opening through an archway into the main hall.

The plan of the second floor is similar to that of the first, except that the space over the central hall below is taken up by two bed rooms with a hall between. The dormer story is still further subdivided and the center is occupied by a winding stairway leading up into the cupola.

At "Hampton" there is none of that carved ornament or decorative plaster-work which distinguishes so many Colonial interiors, both in the North and in the South, but the principal elements in the design of the woodwork about the doors, windows, mantels, and around the ceilings, are pediments, "cross-



IN THE BOX GARDEN

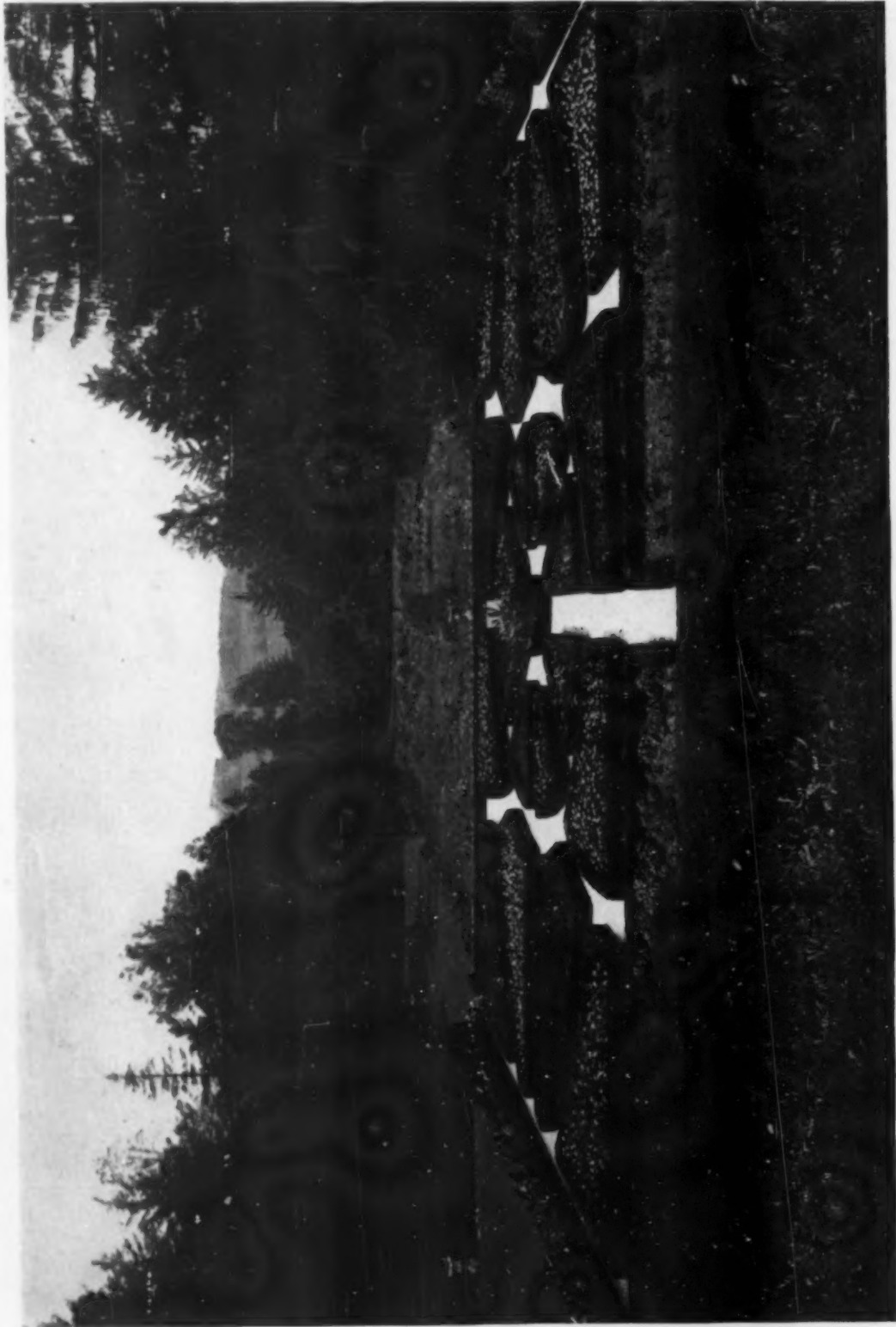


THE WALK TO THE ORANGERY

setted" architraves, dentils, modillions, and the egg and dart ornament, all of which are executed with the delicacy and feeling characteristic of hand work. There is a tradition that much of this joinery was done by British prisoners obtained in gangs, by contract with the Continental Government, to labor at the Northampton Iron Works, which had been started on the northwestern part of the "Hampton" estate in 1760.

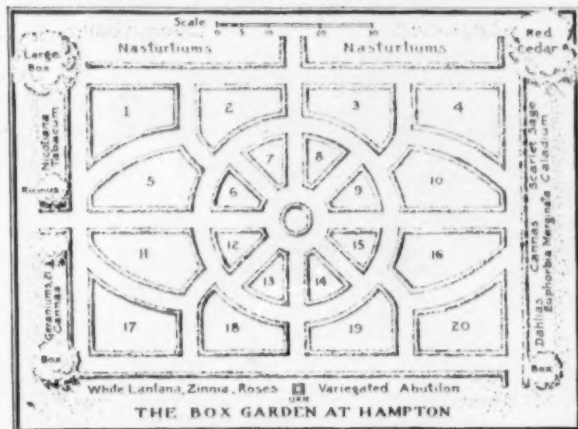
The walls of the big hall are entirely covered with paintings,—mostly of the Italian schools of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The seventeenth century eclectics are represented by Sassoferrato and Carlo Dolci, and there are landscapes by Pagani, Zuccarelli, Demarne and others. Near the drawing-room door hangs one of Gilbert Stuart's portraits of Washington, and beneath it a picture of Colonel John Eager Howard, the hero of Cowpens and of Eutaw Springs. In the center of the west wall, opposite the stairway arch, is a striking painting

*"Hampton" at Towson, Maryland*



THE BOX GARDEN AT "HAMPTON" FROM THE UPPER TERRACE

by Thomas Sully, of Eliza Ridgely, daughter-in-law of the Governor, and a beauty and heiress of her day. She is represented as standing at a harp, the original of which is now in the music-room. Over the dining-room mantel are interesting portraits of Captain Ridgely and his wife, by Heselius a pupil of Sir Godfrey Kneller, and a very popular painter in Colonial Maryland.



THE PLAN OF THE BOX GARDEN

*Especially measured and drawn for HOUSE AND GARDEN*

The parterres contained the following geraniums in July, 1902:

- |                                 |                                      |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 Pauline Lucca                 | 11 Centaur                           |
| 2 A. S. Nutt, dark crimson      | 12 Marshal McMahon                   |
| 3 Gen. Lee, double salmon       | 13 Centaur                           |
| 4 Mrs. Massey, single pink      | 14 Gen. Hancock                      |
| 5 Dr. Jacoby, single pink       | 15 Marshal McMahon                   |
| 6 Single white                  | 16 Single white                      |
| 7 Marshal McMahon               | 17 Pauline Lucca                     |
| 8 Centaur, double pink          | 18 A. S. Nutt                        |
| 9 Gen. Lee                      | 19 Gen. Lee                          |
| 10 Gen. Hancock, double scarlet | 20 Queen of the West, single scarlet |

It is but a step from the dim light of the hall, and from its old pictures and furniture, out upon the south porch, shaded by a luxuriant wistaria. From here one looks down upon grass terraces constructed in sloping ground to the south, and beyond them up to hills of pasture-land and wood. The terraces are in two principal levels, connected by a broad grass-covered ramp.

The upper level consists of a low embankment just before the house, following the general contour of its front, and of a broad lawn beyond, shaded by cedars of Lebanon, larch, purple beech, holly and red cedar. The last, arranged in a row of six along the edge of this level, shades the visitor as he looks down upon terraced flower gardens below, or turns for a view of the house, which appears to great advantage from this point on account

of being raised upon the low embankment; an advantage that the north front, which rests directly upon the lawn, does not enjoy. It is hard to say exactly what it is that gives the house a different look from that which we are apt to associate with Southern work of the time; but the difference is partly due to the use of white stucco instead of red brick, and to the unusually animated sky-line.

The lower, or garden level,—fully twenty-five feet below the house lawn,—is divided into three very wide but rather shallow terraces, upon which flowers are planted in rectangular parterres of comparatively simple geometrical patterns—two on each terrace placed at either side of a broad central path bordered by immense fir-trees. This path is centered on the axis of the house, and may be considered as the big hall extended out-



A PATH IN THE BOX GARDEN

doors. Marble vases, mounds of clipped box, and evergreen trees, are cleverly placed for separating the grass paths from the surrounding turf, thus emphasizing the principal lines of the design.

Originally both of the uppermost

*"Hampton" at Towson, Maryland*

parterres were of box, but that on the west was removed about forty years ago, to make room for beds of colias. The eastern one had to be reset about 1870, but its original pattern was preserved. The parterres on the middle terraces are planted very openly; but the rose gardens below, have a

thicker and more luxuriant growth, which is in pleasing contrast to the trimness of the box borders above. In the middle of each of these lower parterres is a picturesque sophora tree terminating the row of vases and tall plants which mark the edges of the terraces and the centers of the flower gardens.

West of the gardens are the greenhouses and the gardener's cottage; and on the east, screened by a high hedge of arbor-vitæ, is the kitchen garden. Beyond, down a thickly shaded avenue, lies the family burying-ground surrounded by a high brick wall and entered through a simple wrought-iron gate.



IN THE "HAMPTON" DRAWING-ROOM

Near the driveway, just west of the house stands an old-fashioned orangery.

Although there was an interval of some twenty years between the completion of the house and the laying out of the garden they are in perfect harmony. Each, constructed for a

man who was a leader in his community, was designed for a large and open hospitality; and they both show, transplanted to this country, the influences of Italy and of France as they left their mark upon the mansions and gardens of eighteenth century England. But "Hampton" is not entirely of the old world; for, built during those critical years in our history between the war of the Revolution and the adoption of the Constitution, it seems to express something of the dignity, simplicity, and largeness of conception that characterized the founders of the Republic.



THE FAMILY BURIAL-GROUND AT "HAMPTON"



“AN Official Building for a County” is to be this year’s subject for design in the examinations for the John Stewardson Memorial Scholarship in Architecture. The building is to face upon the main street of a typical American county-seat and is to have accommodations for the law courts and administrative offices, beside including a jail. This test of a competitor’s ability to design is to be preceded by an examination in the usual academic and technical branches, and all the work is to be completed by May 23. Candidates must be under thirty years of age, and are required to have practised or studied architecture in the State of Pennsylvania for a period of at least one year immediately preceding the examinations. The successful competitor will receive one thousand dollars to be used in a year’s travel and study abroad. Intending competitors may be interested to learn that this year they may exercise their choice in preparing their final drawings either at the School of Architecture of the University of Pennsylvania or at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. The vacancy in the Managing Committee of the Scholarship, caused by the death of Walter Cope, has been filled by the appointment of Mr. George B. Page.

THE city administration of Philadelphia has just authorized the construction of an avenue, 300 feet wide, starting at a point four and one-half miles north of the City Hall and traversing the northeastern section of the city to the suburb of Torresdale on the Delaware River front. In conjunction with Hunting Park Avenue, already existing, a continuous drive, ten miles long, will then be provided across the northern part of the city. Since the term “boulevard” has been applied to this improvement, it should be clearly pointed out that the thoroughfare just authorized is quite distinct from the boulevard or parkway project of a monumental avenue extending from the City Hall diagonally to Fairmount Park. The Torresdale boulevard does not aim primarily at an organic change or improvement in the City’s plan except in so far as it will develop a territory hitherto remote, and will give a pleasant entrance to the city from a direction

whence one is needed. The avenue, as now proposed presents many awkward angles, and is to have as its important feature an electric railway “handsome in its appointments.” In its minor details, the thoroughfare may be made architecturally imposing, but its position on the street-plan is not of that essential importance as in the case of a boulevard running direct from the City Hall Plaza to the Park. This project has already been fully presented in these columns, and it is understood will soon be seriously considered by the City Councils, with what result remains to be seen. In the near future, HOUSE AND GARDEN will present all the projects of the last five years which have had for their purpose the esthetic improvement of Philadelphia.

IN compliance with a request of Mr. Willis Polk we beg to inform our readers that to both the owner of the property and to Mr. George H. Howard, architect, the design of “Beaulieu,” published in our December number, primarily belongs. After Mr. Howard had commenced the work, it was continued, according to his drawings, by Mr. Polk.

THE element of time is so dominant in human lives that the means of recording its passage never fails to awaken curiosity and interest. In “Sun-dials and Roses of Yesterday”<sup>1</sup> is to be found so much that is valuable and entertaining upon sun-dials alone that it would have been unnecessary to lure the reader on by strewing his path with roses. The way that Mrs. Earle points out is a pleasant one, and leads us through the centuries, discovering antique as well as modern dials and how time was measured by those not fortunate enough to possess any dials at all. The insertion of roses in the title of the book leads one to suppose the author would deal only with dials existing among flowers. But this is not the case. Noon-marks, by which the Indian learned the hour of midday by a shadow before his tent, or the housewife by a golden ray on her chimney-piece, are described, as well as nat-

<sup>1</sup> Sun-dials and Roses of Yesterday, by Alice Morse Earle, 461 pp., 12mo, 237 ills. in half-tone and line. New York and London, Macmillans, 1902. Price, \$2.50 net.

ural sun-dials formed by hill tops, window dials, pedestal dials in their infinite forms, portable dials and ring dials. It is, however, the stationary position upon pedestal or wall that the sun-dial must be content to henceforth occupy, since watches and clocks have outstripped it in its primitive function of time-keeping. Of sun-dials of any sort there is not only a sad dearth in new America, but compared with the highly wrought Scotch dials and such beautiful English examples as those at Wroxton Abbey or Eyam Church, we must confess to having almost no examples worthy of illustration in this country. Nevertheless, to Mrs. Earle is due the credit of having collected all American ones, however sterile may be their designs. Of these specimens, the setting of that at Ivy Lodge, Germantown, fares well in comparison with foreign dials; while one would indeed travel far abroad to discover such a beautiful dial-face as the bronze example reproduced from a Pompeiian prototype and in place at Yeddo, N. Y. In so many cases the elaboration of sun-dials has been confined to their pedestals, that the illustration of the "dragon gnomon" on page 416, points the way towards new possibilities in the design of stiles. The many mottoes and quotations scattered through the book are not only interesting to a superficial reader and precious to one in search of a motto to make his own but, in most instances they sum up, in the words of sages, the profoundest wisdom of human life. The author's manner of presenting the mass of valuable data she has collected is discursive to a degree; it is also avowedly sentimental, but her book, the first American one on the subject, is a creditable and exceedingly useful pioneer.

WERE it necessary to divide garden literature into two classes, it could be described as that of research and that of execution. The works of research, tell us of gardens in the past; the books of execution, bid us take up our tools and build gardens ourselves. "English Pleasure Gardens,"<sup>1</sup> by Rose Standish Nichols, belongs to the former class, and illustrates the difficulty of

<sup>1</sup> English Pleasure Gardens, by Rose Standish Nichols. 324 pp., octavo, with 11 plans drawn by Allen H. Cox and 300 illustrations in line and half-tone. New York and London, Macmillans, 1902. Price, \$4.00 net.

detaching the art of a certain country from that of other parts of the world. Seeking to throw a true light on English garden craft, the author turns to the influence of Syria and Persia upon Egypt, that of Greece upon Rome, that of the Holy Land and the Orient upon European gardening of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; above all, to the effect of French and Italian gardening upon English work, and also the later hues which Holland and China cast over the landscape art of Great Britain. With such a wide scope for its contents, much of the volume is necessarily devoted to gardens elsewhere than in England; but this is scarcely a demerit, for the author gives with that facility which comes of extended study, such precise data upon the arrangement of ancient and medieval gardens, their character, proportions and details, that the book teems with suggestions for our gardens of to-day and to-morrow. We are told that a lack of our variety and flowers, was the only deficiency of classic achievements. Whether, indeed, the ancients valued flowers as a part of their garden schemes may be asked by a sceptical student, inasmuch as classicism is an attitude of mind, once held by races and now by individuals, and is easily contented with a monumental and intellectual arrangement, in which the exuberance of flowers may have been considered a barbarous intrusion. The part the garden occupied in the daily life of the past points out the limited rôle it is now permitted to play, and greater yet than in ancient times, is shown the importance of the garden, in the Middle Ages. For furthering gardening and horticulture, full credit is given to the monasteries; and from their secluded confines, the next step is out upon castle wall or terrace constituting the medieval pleasure. A minute study of English gardening divides it according to the reigning families. The Tudor garden, the Elizabethan flower-garden and the gardens of the Stuarts, are illustrated by exquisite examples. The planting of gardens is sufficiently dealt with to complete the author's pictures of historic periods, while a brief account of Anglo-Saxon horticulture as well as a bibliography of works referring to gardens are contained in an appendix. Numerous line-drawings by the author increase the interest of the pages.



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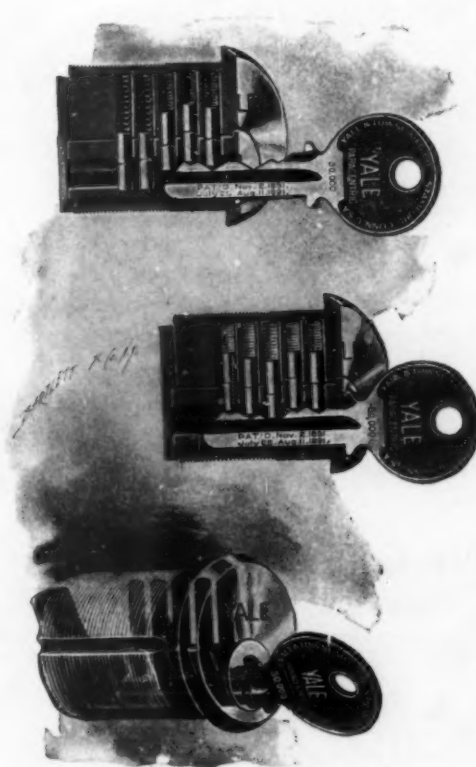
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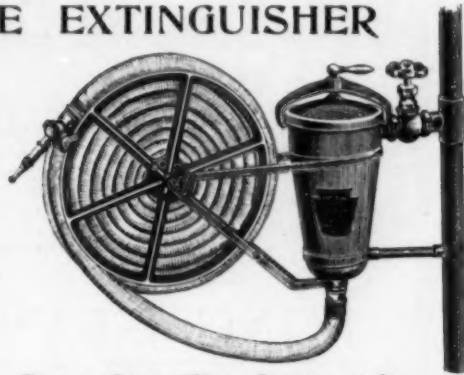
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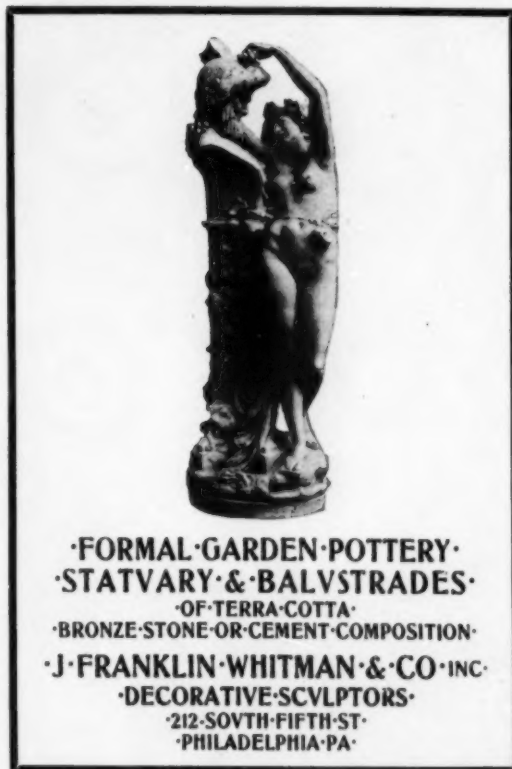
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