THE PLEASURES OF THE GARDEN.

The enjoyment which we all derive from our occasional visits to the various botanica and public gardens that are growing up around our principal cities, no less than in the neighbourhood of the metropolis itself, is confessedly great. Yet even to the uninitiated in such matters it is scarcely less interesting to watch, in the genial month of May, the strenuous effort that Nature makes to show off to advantage. In our own less ambitious territories, the beatific varieties of shrubs and flowers which time and care have made common amongst us. Many of them, are for more beautiful, and were once as rare as the caustic we go so far to see and which are destined, in their turn, to descend into common life; yielding their vantage ground to newer and more cherished favourites. Where is the habitation, not actually within the walls of a town, that cannot boast a plot of ground at once the care and pride of its owner, and affording almost as much pleasure to the passer-by as to the actual cultivator. No sooner does spring come forth with its balmy air and inspiring sunshine, than many a glippie may be caught through the bowery pathways of the enclosure, of fair amateurs at their pleasant labours, busily trimming up bed and border, and doing full justice to the first fruits of the floral year. The garden itself may be limited to a few rods, or may extend over as many acres; each, in its measure, is delightful, and we cannot look upon the smallest space thus carefully tamed, and wonder at the warm admiration expressed by foreigners for our domestic pleasure grounds. Royal and public gardens of stately dimensions and high cultivation, are to be met with wherever a Royal residence exists; but our foreign neighbours speak truly in admitting that they are still centuries behind us in the elegant decoration of that "foot of earth" that makes the modest homestead beautiful. It is only in our native land that the territory of the ladies habitually extends beyond the precincts of the house; with us the flower department is their own especial opanage; and hence the beauty and taste of its arrangement, and the superior skill and knowledge of our own fair countrywomen.

Who has not had the happiness, at one time or other, of being called upon to make at a family council on the manor in which the new garden should be laid out; or smiled good-naturedly to himself at the suggestions dictated by the various tastes of different members of the concubine. One amiable ignoramus, unmannered of certain vague descriptions of the hanging gardens of Babylon, thinks nothing short of them could equal the stately "pleasances" of our ancestors, and grows eloquent upon broad terraces, formal walks, and shady alcoves; each dedicated to some divinity, "heavenly or terrestrial." He appears, however, quite to have overlooked the want of harmony between his favourite style and a mansion scarcely six months old. Another less ambitious copyist, fresh from Trentham Hall and its manifold attractions, and himself a lover of trim pretenses, demands a French parterre. It should be, he thinks, a parterre of embroidery, consisting of arabesque or scroll-work figures, with paths or groundwork scarcely less elaborate, formed of different coloured materials, as sand, gravel, powdered brick, or even pebbles. Falling this, he generously offers to compound for the "parterre de compartiments," where, reversing the general order of things, the accessory, turf, is chosen to exhibit as a principal; cut and arranged in geometrical forms, marked out by miniature shrubs, and surrounded by a second border of gay flower-beds. But the true lover of nature and taste here steps in and protests equally against both extremes; the space to be dealt with is not extensive enough for the one or sufficiently diminutive for the other. Finally, the master is turned over to the ladies, whose wisely adapting the end to the means, resolve that the garden shall be
essentially English; that the bountiful green turf, which no climate save our own can mature, shall "abide compleatly," and cloths the earth like nature in her full dress; and that groups of rich flower-beds shall show like bright jewels on its bosom.

No sooner are the preparatory operations of clearing and levelling performed by subordinate hands, than an animated and busy season ensues. The boundary walls must be clothed with trees as speedily as possible, to veil the glaring limits of the domain, and hint of something like nature extending far beyond them. Trees and shrubs of rapid growth are hastily put in to serve a temporary pur-

pose, but are intended to yield their places to the more choice of their brethren, when these shall have attained to sufficient maturity. The trees exist can always see the flowers in the bed, and admit, for a permanency, only those species that are best to hold together, or offer an striking contrast in form and colour. The blue and lavender must stand side by side, for the one is sweet and bowery, the other fragrant and drooping; whilst the mingling flowers present an harmonious contrast. The red hawthorn and white sylings may bloom in close proximity, the last gushing out in clusters of pink blossoms, with the buds of the double cherry, and add beauty to each other as well as to the scene. The whole family of I. roodendron, or rose-bay, is welcome, from whatever clime it may come: America, Europe, Asia, even to the Himalayan Mountains, all contribute many varieties of this beautiful flowering shrub, which has been found more widely diffused than perhaps any other. The sumach, so ornamental in the autumn, when its leaves assume a beautiful shade of purplish red, and its berries show like corn, the phlox, with its fragrant flowers and penitent fruit—so good for medicine, the lavender, a favourite, the thyme, French call it heliotrope, the Italians the fa wine, the Germans silky hair, and the Standards the lady laurel , the hardy American anise, and the graceful fuschia, with a host of others, are in due degree collected together to furnish a perfect whole.

Then the more extensive decorative features finished, the garden afford endless food for thought and discussion; as it is here the evidences of taste will be most perceptible. Can a fountain be introduced sparkling and dancing in the sunshine, for a centre ornament? or must we content ourselves with a lowery cup of the weeping ash, or the more sedate alder and willow? Shall the flower-beds, in outline, be fanciful or geometrical, far and few between, that the cavities of the smooth lawn to admiration may not be interfered with, or are numerous as themselves to form the prominent features? On these important questions, as on so many others, much may be said on either side. At length number and form being decided, the nature of the plants that are to occupy the different beds comes under consideration. Shall each be filled with various flowers, or present a clustering mass of uniform colour? The latter style, as most fashionable, is selected, and may, as has been said, the herbaceous plantain, and asparagus, as well as the yellow calendulas; the heliotrope and magnoile almost mingle their fragrance, and by virtue thereof find prominent places, notwithstanding their neutral turn. It is to be lamented that as the gayest birds have the keenest noses, so the sweetest flowers wear the saddest livery; but there is certainly no lack of brilliancy in the general effect, when pelargoniums, alstroemerias, lilies, and other gay floral treasures are judiciously distributed.

Red roses, used to preclude gray. Contented with the saint's cope—

The nightingale's being over
And the white, proper, curtains over
The whitest thought, nor will it much,
Linger then to love and favor.

Pansies for ladies all. I wish
That men who wear such blossoms miss
A jewel in the mirror
And boys, children love to test
Their figure down, to feel in each
It's beauty's secret near.

Love may be taken with those—
To work out chessmen satisfactorily
No blossoms can be met with
And though we may use the flowers, bowers,
Young minds may wonder if the flowers
Or muslins be the superior.

No sooner is the attention lavished on the garden rewarded by some faint promise of future perfection, than its owners become sensible of the necessity for taking a closer view of it, and of keeping abreast with fashion in its style and comfort. All that fantastic family of garden seats, of which gigantic mushrooms and chimaeras may be cited as examples, are repudiated by the amateur of taste; mushrooms have been too long consecrated to the fairies, to serve with propriety as lounges for any but the too elevating character; porcelain and looking-glasses are devoted by our preconceived prejudices to the sole use of the mandarins of the Colossal Empire, and never look at home except in a Chinoiser garden, or on the china plate where first they made their acquaintance. But against—

* Mrs. Harriet Browning.

the roof-houses, moss-houses, or rustic seat, covered or uncovered, on no such

business can be raised; they are indigenous to the country, and in harmony with the scene around us.

During the warm days of summer, it may be, in
deed, decided that nothing can be so delightful as to repose beneath some weep-

ing willow, or the cool shade of a torchered arch, and sip the cool drinks

with which young girls pour the Most misty benediction round our

But such trees are, unfortunately, not always to be met with; and

some cool look, to serve as shelter from the fervour of a midsummer's sun, be-

comes an absolute necessity. The design is sketched out. If for a roof-house,

roofed with these pale-veiled branches of the willow, or the rare alder

lighter style characterises the wood-house, formed of the unbranched branches

of the pine, which, even in decay, gives forth its sweet rosiness odour; the warm-

er moss-house is also a favourite with those who have no insipid objection

to see the sky, for the moss-house is certain to attract the season's beauties.

As to flowers, these are presented into the service; a

Once a season is past, all which have until then

In flower, the gardener's spirits are sufficiently

With the value of flowers, every gardener must be led to

With the true nature of flowers, every gardener must have been

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