

A
0
0
0
5
9
4
4
3
7



US SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY

ROOT

Landscape Garden Series

SB
472
R85
v. 8



LANDSCAPE GARDEN
SERIES



VIII. Beauty in the Vegetable Garden

The GARDEN PRESS
Davenport, ~ Iowa

1912

~~Frank Jones~~

GLEN G. MOSHER

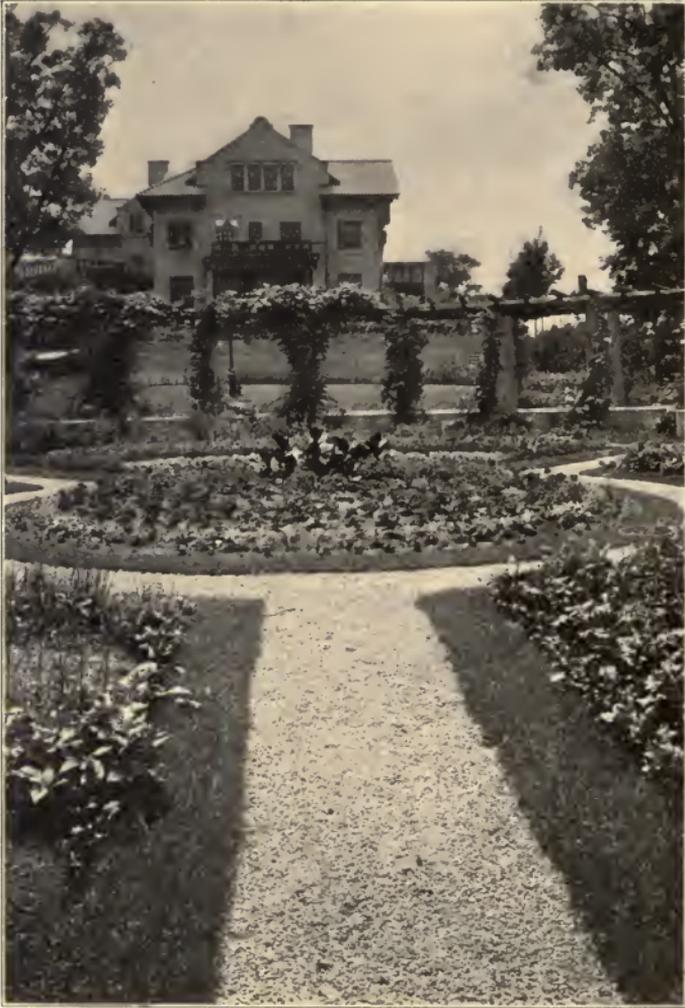


Fig. 1—Even a vegetable garden can be made beautiful, possessing a happy at-one-ness with the rest of the home grounds

Root, Ralph Rodney

LANDSCAPE GARDEN SERIES

BEAUTY IN THE VEGETABLE GARDEN

BY
LEONIDAS WILLING RAMSEY, B. S.



THE GARDEN PRESS
DAVENPORT, IOWA

BLH

Copyright, 1921
BY L. W. RAMSEY

CONTENTS

I. AT THE GATE.....	5
II. THE ONE BEST PLACE.....	10
III. THE DESIGN ATTRACTIVE.....	15
IV. BORDER PATHWAYS	19
V. THE MAGIC OF ARCHITECTURE.....	24

Printed in U. S. A.

CHAPTER I

AT THE GATE

GATES lead to many vistas, some unpleasant, some enchanting; we seek a gate to something fresher, something finer. In any case, the gate of which we think here leads to a garden, a garden where, among other things, vegetables grow.

And it may have been forgotten, in the joy and fascination of coaxing forth the first plants in our garden, that the gate was an old gate, makeshift and unattractive, and that we hadn't been quite as neat as we might have been about clearing away the rubbish, the ashes and old tin cans which were all too obvious to the friends who visited our vegetable garden.

The spirit of War Work inspired us to become gardeners. We may have had our doubts and fears at the start; but experience has banished them quite. It was splendid exercise, it was interesting, and there was a new appeal about the home-grown delicacies which graced the table. They surely had a freshness and flavor that vegetables, gathered up, half-wilted, at the corner grocery, couldn't possibly have.

A garden is a precious thing. The wonderful thing about it is that it can be made to feed not the body alone but the spirit also. Even a vegetable garden can be made beautiful, possessing a happy at-one-ness with the rest of the home grounds.

There is no excuse for decrepit gates nor an array of old tin cans and scattered rubbish. Beauty costs but little and is too easy of attainment to be forgotten or neglected. Most of us can remember old-time vegetable gardens or have read of those of England, where vegetables were edged with flowers and where bright colors and enchanting fragrance wove romance into the commonplace. Perhaps there was an old stone wall over which vines and roses clambered or against which were green shrubs, fair, indeed, to see.

Such gardens have left fragrant memories. Yet they need not remain memories. A little thought and a little work and a little waiting and lo, we too will have woven like magic. Remembered joy will have become reality.



Fig. 2—At Mount Vernon, General Washington, too, found time for an attractive vegetable garden

Our vegetable gardens are often made too large. We need not give as much space to vegetables alone. We have learned to rotate our crops, to keep our rows constantly green, replanting as fast as the old crop is removed, thus concentrating our efforts and making for perpetual freshness. So they have done in Europe, making every inch count. It is by far the best way, and if we have not made it our way the time is at hand to start. If hit-or-miss gardening proved fascinating exercise and gave us something we delighted to chat about, how much more can be gained by making our garden more scientific and more beautiful. Surely peace and contentment work a very real spell when we find them about us as we labor. Close at hand there is sure to be a place for attractive little nooks and shelter houses which Nature is ever willing to help you to embower.

Beautiful on the hills overlooking the majesty of the Potomac, in a wonderful garden setting, visitors find the fine old home of the first great American. There at Mount Vernon, General Washington, too, found time for vegetables. But he realized keenly that garden crops had possibilities for beauty, and, so, one hundred and fifty years and more ago, the Mount Vernon gardens were laid out so that even vegetables contributed their part to the charm of it all. The little camera glimpse published here suggests the beauty and seemliness of the arrangement of the vegetable garden and shows how nicely it was wedded to the other true beauties of this fine old estate. Even today that garden is still kept verdant and we find it much the same as it has been for years and years.

Here in America we reverence the memory of Washington and like to hold him up as an example of what a true man

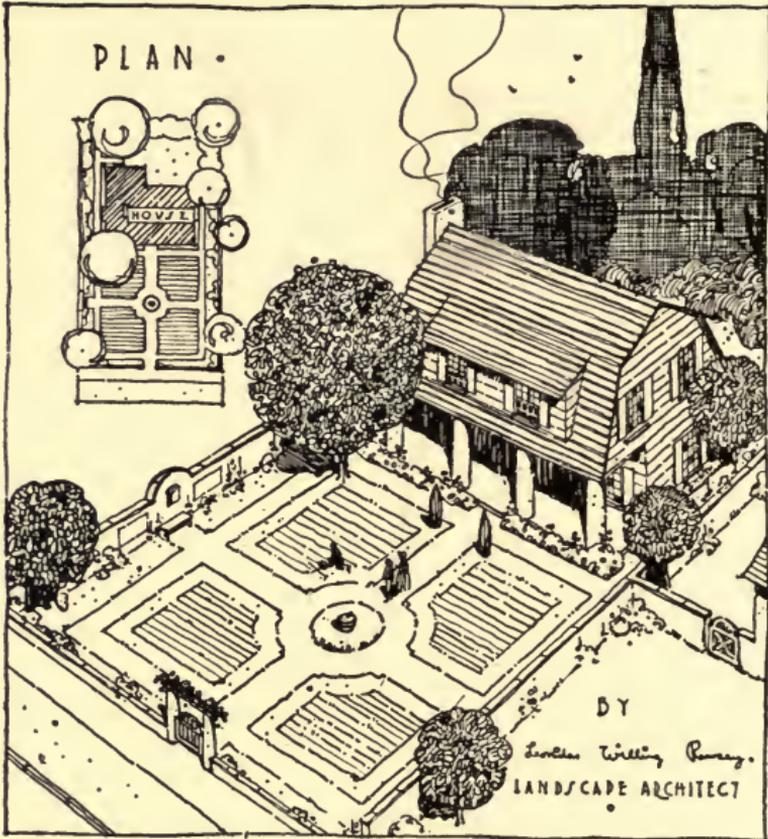


Fig. 3—Even the front yard vegetable garden may be made a thing of beauty

should be. Here, again, we can learn from him something that is fine and worth while and pledge ourselves to build us a vegetable garden which will also be beautiful; one which we will make a permanent source of joy to us and to our children.

If any of us argue that it is cheaper to buy than to grow, surely we are forgetting the thrill of the work and the taste of

added delicacy and freshness which comes to each of us as we sit about the family board.

Do flowers grace the table where our friends and ourselves foregather? If they do, we know how they add to the joy and communal good fellowship of the meal. In our vegetable garden beautiful there will be plenty of such flowers and thus we can gain the joy of them at a trifling expense and a trifling effort. We cannot but vote such a garden worth while. But how enhance it, how make it a vegetable garden beautiful which will feed the finest phases of our natures. Why, that is just where this little book aims to help you, that is where we make our bow and offer you in word or picture such aids to joy in gardens as we can find or plan.

CHAPTER II

THE ONE BEST PLACE

EVERY home plot—be it a country place, suburban home, or a modest city lot—has a place for a vegetable garden. But no garden should be laid out just anywhere. We should strive to seek for it “the one best best place”. Should it be already located, however, it is usually possible thru limiting its size a little, or by careful re-arrangement, to make it fit—to create in and about it a spirit of perfect harmony. The home grounds must not fail to form a pleasant setting for the home, and the vegetable garden beautiful is sure to be most attractive if made an integral part of those grounds and we cannot fail to find repayment in the charm attained if we have given proper study to the subject of location.

We are now striving, we must remember, for the permanent beauty and we should particularly recall that fact when two or more locations suggest themselves. Opportunities for ample sunshine and encouraging soil are, of course, very real factors which cannot well be forgotten. But the sun isn't selfish with its blessings and, with the aid of modern science, even barren soil can be made fertile.

Since rows running from north to south best foster plant development, and since straight rows insure less labor and better success with garden tools, haphazard planting, or any informal arrangement, cannot fail to be aught save undesirable in the

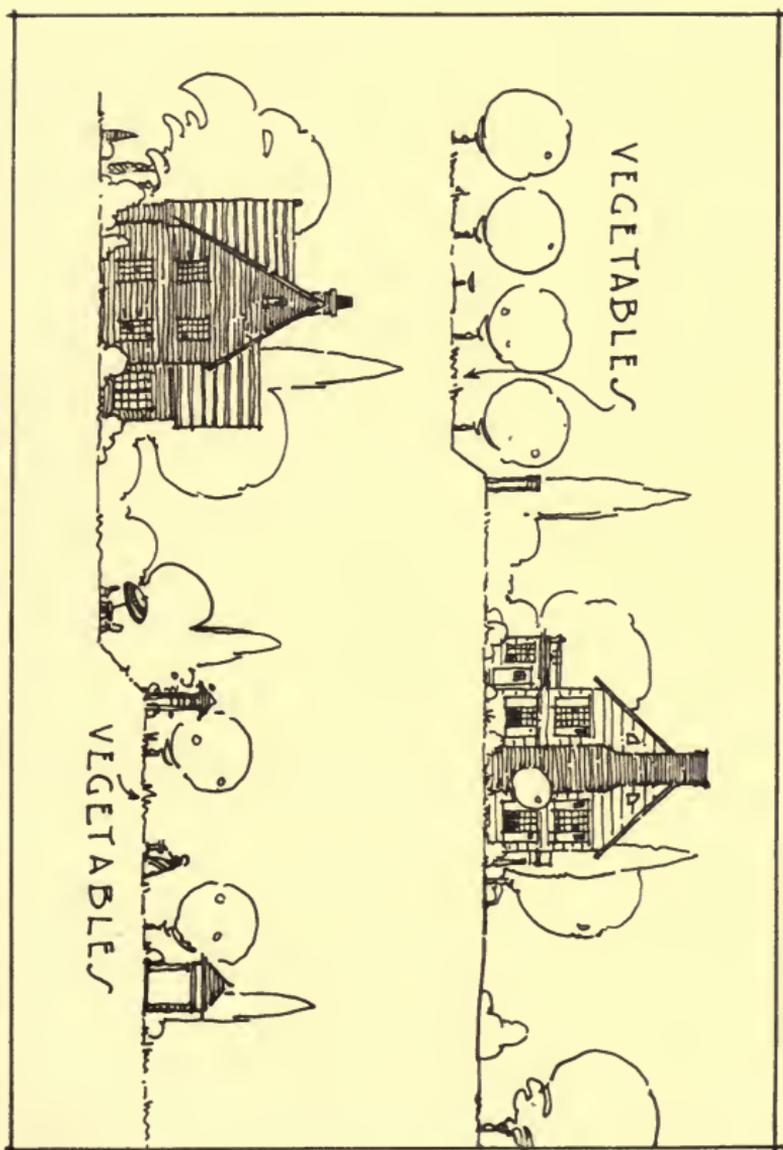


Fig. 4—Any difference of grade adds rather than detracts from the beauty of the garden

usual garden. In vegetable gardens we have now set forth to implant beauty, but in the nature of things it must needs be beauty of the more formal sort.

A simple formality is best. Intricate designs, though often both desirable and attractive, call for many extra hours and are possible only where leisure is ample or where help and funds are abundant.

Where the place is extensive, and garages, hot houses, and other service buildings have their place in the scheme of things, the vegetable section must, of course, bear its proper relation to them. The little sketches accompanying this paper should prove helpful among other things in suggesting how this relationship can successfully be worked out. Plans and pictures tell their story quickly and clearly; and so you'll find we've relied on our sketch book quite as much as we have on words, and we hope the sketches do their part towards bringing beauty to your garden.

Is your place small? Is space at a premium? Then, of course, you have a different problem, and the location of the house or cottage and the size of the property is certain to determine the location where you will plant your vegetables and influence the design of the garden in which they grow. The beds should be handy to the kitchen, though a place too close may prove less desirable than one at a little greater distance.

Level property is often coveted as being likely to save in time and effort. Yet less level tracts oftentimes have very real charms to offer. Differences in grade may prove a veritable "Open, Sesame!" to beauty, especially when one's problem is the location of a formal garden plot. They have, somehow, a magic touch which proves effective to the garden, but spread below one, or

whose charm urges one upward. That is the secret of the sunken garden which the owner of a level tract often finds worth while—even though its creation demanded added time and labor.

And as we chat of gardens many of us have time for a smile over memories of front-yard gardens we have seen. Patriotism prompted quite a few of them. All too often they were disfigurements which patriotic intent alone made commendable. Yet, not infrequently, we encounter the tiny place where the front yard seems the only possibility. The owner of such a place need not

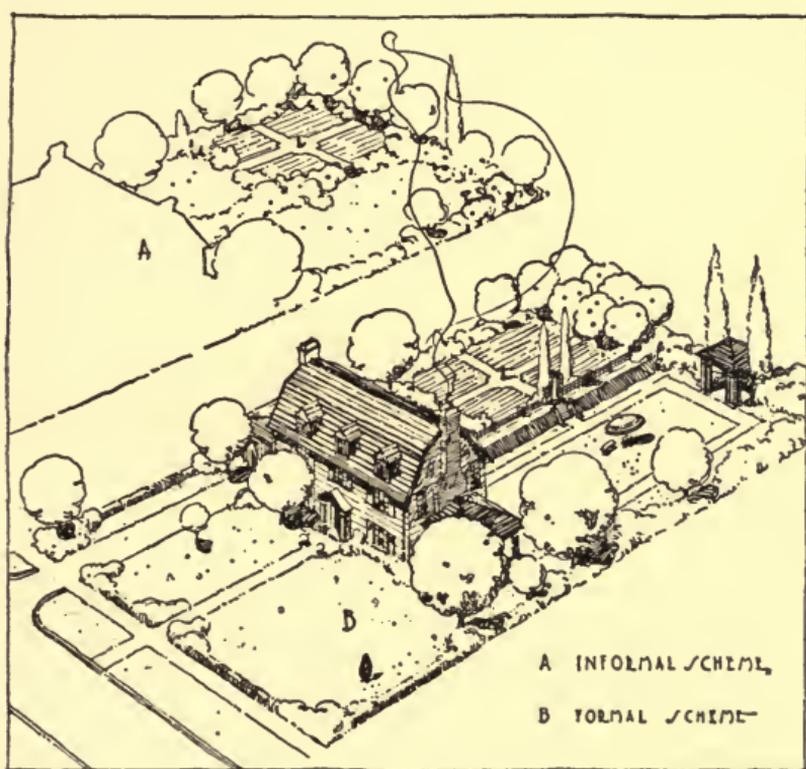


Fig. 5—The vegetable garden should be planned as an integral part of the home grounds

despair for fresh vegetables. For, edged with flowers and laid out with pleasing formal paths and in a design otherwise seemly, a vegetable garden of such real attractiveness is possible that the passer-by who smiles, will smile only from real appreciation.

Yes, indeed, there is surely some place for every man to plant him a garden where vegetables will grow and, if it be a vegetable garden beautiful, the world will love him for it. Go forth, then; plan and plant!

CHAPTER III

THE DESIGN ATTRACTIVE

DESIGN is really the secret of our kind of a vegetable garden. Give us the magic which good design can offer and right soon can we give to our array of growing vegetables the sightliness and the interest usually considered the attributes of flower gardens alone. If some of us look at the meagre space we have and sigh our regret that there isn't room for a flower garden also, we musn't forget that flowers will thrive side by side with the more prosaic vegetables. Proper ornament makes a simple gown a creation and gives distinction to the room wherein it

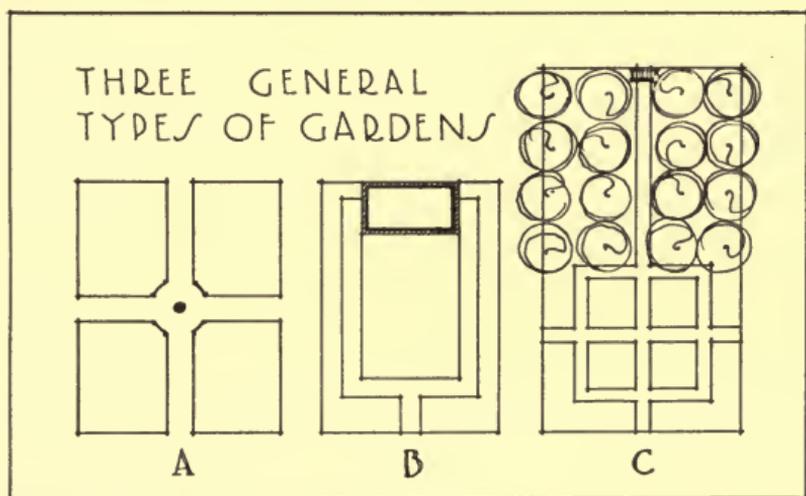


Fig. 6—Three general types of gardens; A, accent in the center of garden; B, accent at end of garden; and C, accent outside of garden

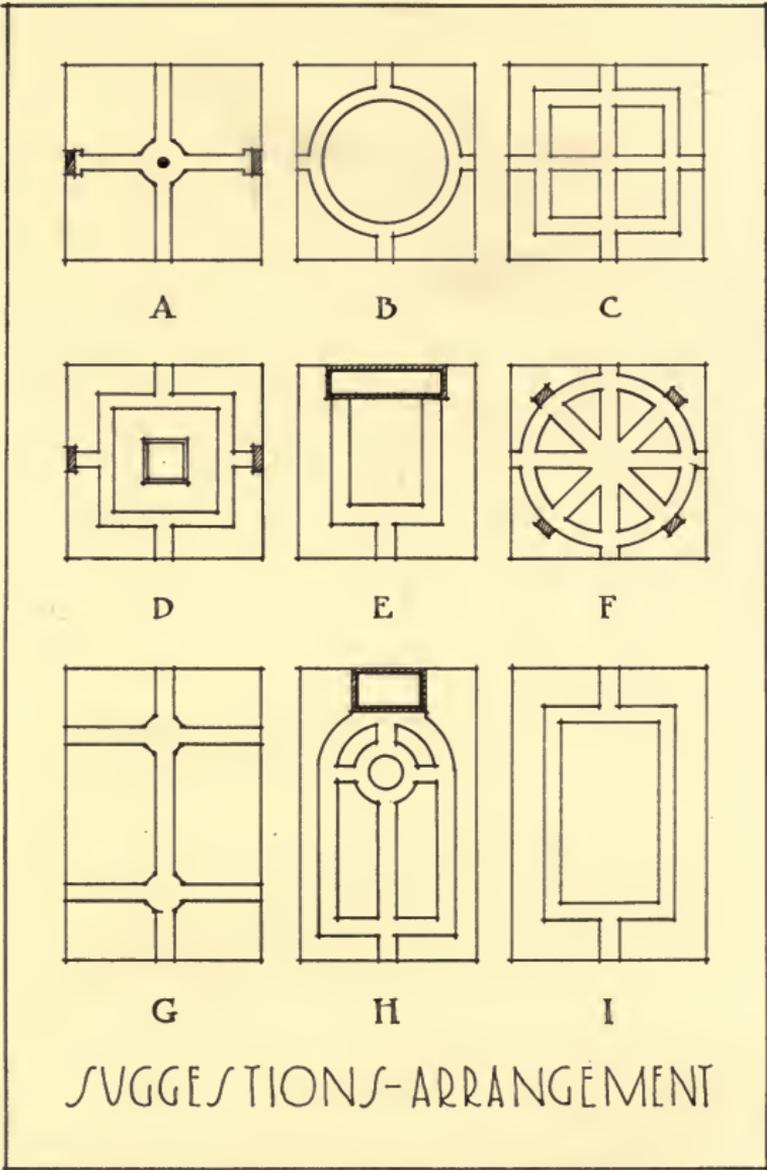


Fig. 7

enhances wall draperies. Even so, flowers and good designs will rescue your vegetable garden from unsightliness and make it fair to see.

Perhaps you'll decide to use the flowers for borders along the walks or paths. For in a formal garden one must have walks. They are the very basis for such a plan. And surely they are necessary for circulation also.

Many interesting arrangements of walks and garden beds will suggest themselves. Here we present several attractive types, which gain added attractiveness if they bear proper relation to the main features of the home grounds.

The designs are offered merely as suggestions. Most planting problems are individual and a proper adaptation of these types, or, perhaps, something refreshingly new and original may prove even better. When once we begin to think about design, attractive schemes have a pleasant habit of suggesting themselves. Here are more sketches of inviting possibilities, one suggesting a walk through an orchard. That should be a happy picture. Or, perhaps, we'll find making the garden part of the drive scheme more in tune with our particular problem. Workable variations are likely to prove more numerous than we may have thought.

And when planting time comes there are still plenty of ways to remember design. The relation one to another of our growing things as regards height and spread may make or mar the beauty which we seek. The usual rule is to use tall varieties for a background and to keep the lowest sorts in the immediate foreground. It is a good rule but it musn't be made too absolute, for even though we don't follow the rule to the letter it is sure to prove helpful, a useful reminder when doubt creeps in.

This little book is a treatise on *doing*, an inspiration, we hope *to action*. But where there are "Do's" there we must sketch "Don'ts" as well. For example, the garden formal should seldom be located off the principal axis of the building or architectural scheme to which it should bear relation. Nor should its walks and appointments be utterly divorced from the house or from the rest of the scheme. Tie it in with the entire grounds, have walks or stepping stones which impel the visitor to discover it. For a vegetable garden beautiful is something of which to be proud, something which should seem at home with its surroundings. Let us plan it so.

CHAPTER IV.

BORDERED PATHWAYS

THE effectiveness of pathways and walks has already been discussed and we have pointed out how essential they are to the formal garden. Walks of concrete have become so common that many of us, whenever we see the word "walk", immediately picture a long, hard and glaring stretch of that material. Sometimes, because they are easily cleaned and prove



Fig. 8—A macadam pathway with grass edgings

durable, they are found leading from the house to the vegetable garden. But they lack all elements of repose and there is no place for them within the borders of a formal garden.

As charming a pathway as any, and easily the cheapest, is one of fresh grass with edging to give crispness to its borders. Sometimes flat stepping stones placed the length of an easy step apart are set in flush with the grass of the path and such stones urge us on to every beauty which they pass or lead to.

Bricks, especially the soft-hued modern bricks, are far from uninviting for walks, and they can be laid in a bed of simple sand in fascinating tapestried designs which will never tire us.

Or, perhaps, we'll make an equally pleasant choice and use flat, irregular slabs of limestone placed with narrow strips of grass between them. If these stones are chipped on their outer edges to conform to the trim outlines of the path they cannot fail to be very attractive, indeed.

It seems hardly possible that any kind of paths could be among the best and also among the least desirable. Yet that is true of paths of gravel and paths of macadam as well. If the gravel is not of the proper sort or the work is ill done they are likely to become sticky when wet and therefore the garden cannot be as freely watered as it might otherwise be. However that may be, they have a pleasing and inviting tone, and are really excellent at all times if properly made.

Cinders are often used, but they have nothing to recommend them. They are dirty looking, easily scattered and simply honey-comb shoe leather.

Formal walks, of course, call for geometrical arrangement. The accompanying illustration shows some general types of walk

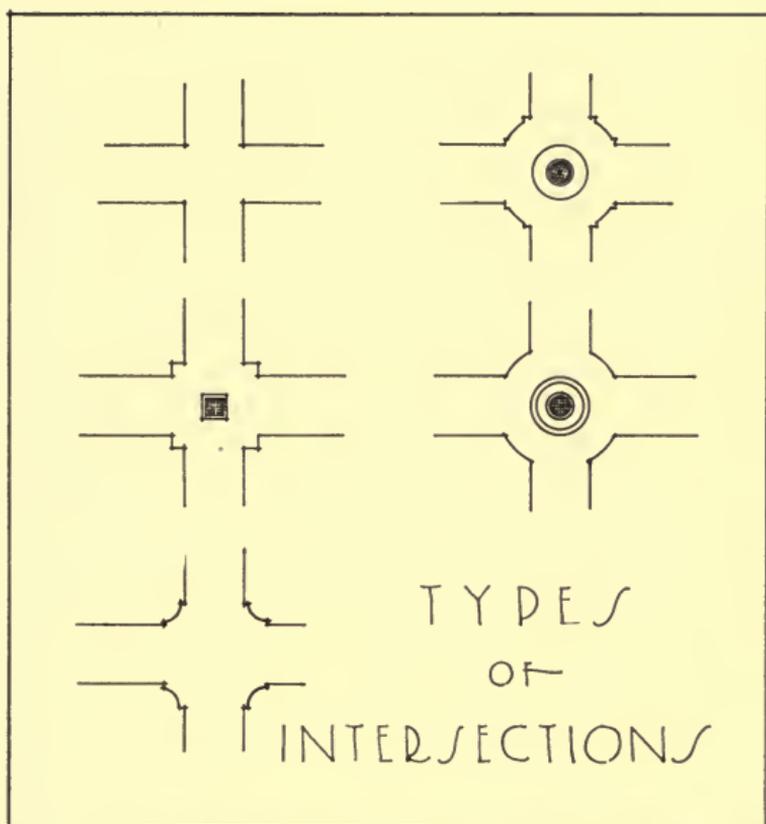


Fig. 9—Walk intersections should not fail for lack of crispness and snap which makes them properly formal

intersections. To be thoroughly in tune with such an arrangement these intersections should be laid out and developed accurately. They must not fail for lack of the crispness and snap which makes them properly formal.

The sane spirit of orderliness calls for edging for walks and boundaries. Plants seem to thrive best behind a good edging, attaining an appearance of added attractiveness.

There are, of course, edgings and edgings, and oftentimes they are nothing if not whimsical, ranging from battered tin cans and old bottles to the more attractive, but none the less misplaced sea shells. So, perhaps, we had better say there are edgings and good edgings.

A neat edging which cannot fail for charm is a strip of grass trimmed to a crisp edge. Some of the photographic glimpses published here will suggest the simple charm of such an edging.

Even stones laid side by side oftentimes do not lack in seemliness.

Perhaps even more attractive than all the rest is a low edging of box, closely trimmed. Unhappily box will not grow just anywhere and in the west we must fall back on the faithful Japanese barberry—an excellent substitute. Small plants should be used, set out four inches apart. Planted thus closely, and kept trimmed, we cannot fail to rejoice in the result.

And beyond the edgings let flowers border the walks and give charm to the boundaries. Their fragrance will call you often to your vegetable garden and make for you greater enjoyment of the periods you give to its cultivation.

Prosaic place that it was wont to be, what artistry can now be wrought within its borders. Old fashioned flowers, how few fail to love them! Would we not revel in fresh sweet borders of fragrant mignonette and gay-rimmed blossoms of Sweet William, of dancing phlox and low-growing poppies and all the rest which our grandmothers loved and our parents loved and which the world will love forever?

Along garden wall or latticed fence, where sweet-scented clematis and other vines scatter white stars and green leaves and

leave them dancing, how fair would be stately larkspur with its scepters of truest blue and great single hollyhocks breathing all the spirit of old-time romance, making it live again for us, and casting a shadowy blessing on the humble blossoms—none the less fair—which grow there before them, happy at their feet.

CHAPTER V

THE MAGIC OF ARCHITECTURE

A VEGETABLE garden demands its hours of healthy labor. In return it yields a goodly satisfaction. If it be beautiful it will offer its hours of rest also. A formal garden need not be a place for formality; we should run in any time for work or play, roll up our sleeves and be content.

But if it is to have so pleasant an air of homliness, we will want it to be a bit secluded. Some of us may even be in a mood for the garden wall of romance.

Often, however, a wall will prove too costly or be otherwise impractical. Yet there is no need to deny ourselves the privacy

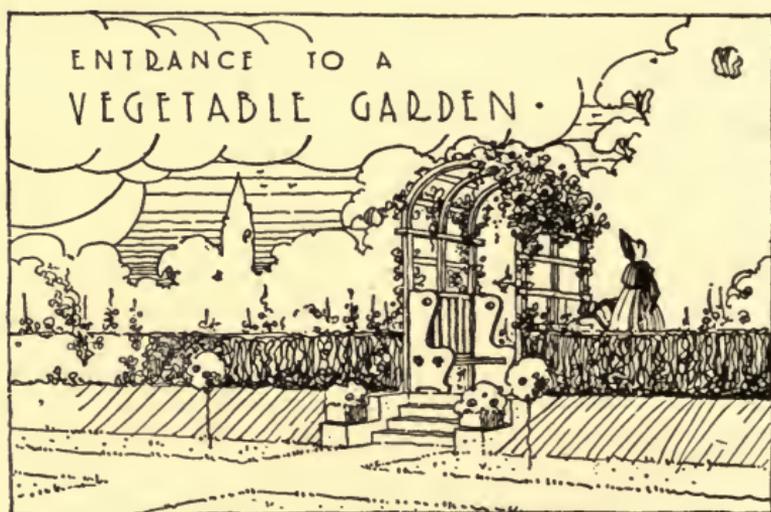


Fig. 10

we seek. Many flowering shrubs grow tall and yet yield a very real joy of their own. Let them weave an emerald screen for you, spreading here and there, from time to time, a tracery of floral ornament.

Or, should we prefer both beauty and service in our barrier, we might make it up of orchard trees with small fruits planted beneath them. What a feast of fragrance would welcome us in spring, what a wealth of delicate color! We often wonder if there is anything quite as fair as fruit trees in the spring. Peach blossoms, plum blossoms, how beautiful they are! And nothing is more attractive than an apple tree in springtime—unless, perchance, it is a crab apple. And the whole world sings of the magic of the cherry blossoms.

Shrubbery and trees are real friends to us always. They are willing to help us in many ways. If an ugly view obtrudes itself, or, if we have some utility building which just wont fit in, these same growing things will quickly hide it and give us back our peace of mind.

Even should we have a garden wall, shrubbery and vines should grow before it or clamber over it. A lattice fence can be made a fascinating enclosure, too; there are so many little touches of architectural design which can make it beautiful. Even a simple one, the cost of which is trivial, can weave its spell. And while our shrubbery and vines are offering little save promises for the future, our lattice will be offering its own attractiveness. Even a board fence can be made good to look at if well designed.

A formal vegetable garden, however, does not demand formal planting for the entire home grounds. It is easy to wed a formal

garden of this sort to the most naturalistic of schemes. A clipped hedge would be admirably suited to a formal scheme and will work in nicely with most informal schemes, but clipped hedges can easily be replaced by natural hedges where they are likely to prove more in tune. And natural hedges can be made rarely beautiful, offering new and changing joys throughout the year, from the varying specimens woven together there.

Yes, indeed, a walled garden can be made a magic place; and where walls or thick shrubbery are all about us, lo, we find

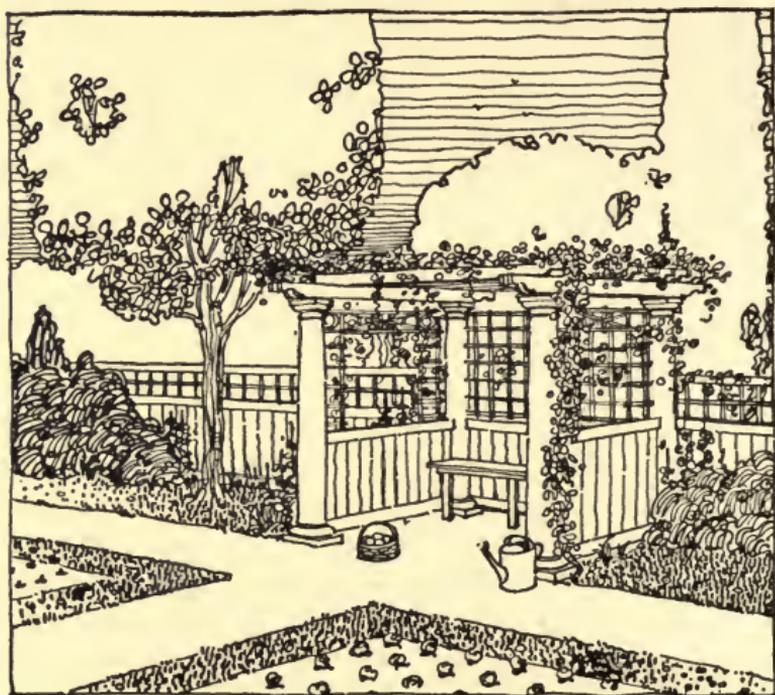


Fig. 11—There are other happy features which have their charm, such as seats here and there along the wall, inviting us to rest, or a pergola set up in some seemly place and vine embowered



Fig. 12—An elaborate garden design, though attractive, is harder to maintain than one of simple straight lines

ourselves in a world apart and the cares of the world fall from us, and, for the time at least, we are content.

So let us build a fair world within our surrounding walls. We must not crowd it with features; but there are sure to be places for several of the happy accessories which we see or dream of in gardens.

Many a romance has woven itself around a sundial. Someway the sundial is to a garden what the fireplace is to the cottage. The sun and the passing hours bring growth and life and weave beauty for us in gardens. A sundial is an altar of thanksgiving for the blessing. And it is easy to give architectural beauty to that little altar. By all means let us have a

sundial, a garden heart where those who pass may pause and note the heart-beats and read the message it is wont to offer one.

And if one is a real garden champion he is sure to be a bird-lover. If song-birds visit us they come to help, and many a troublous insect band is vanquished through their aid. Best of all, they are beautiful, and when the sky is be-clouded and the sundial paints no timely shadows they pause and sing for us and bring back all the cheer. And because we would be kind to them, because we revel in their pretty splashing in the water, we build bird baths for them and perchance a rustic cottage or two, high in the trees so they may live near their mirrored pool and stay and bless the growing garden. And, as we aim always for a vegetable garden beautiful, our bird baths must be sightly, too.

Still larger pools which reflect sky and clouds and foliage are also appropriate if well placed. We may even plant lilies and other aquatics in them, but tall flowers growing beside them are really just as attractive, for they give happy color to the reflected picture.

There are other happy features which have their charm, such as seats here and there along the wall, inviting us to rest, or a pergola set up in some seemly place and vine-embowered. Good designs can give much beauty to such things. And, if we would seek use, as well as beauty, from our pergola, we can be sure that there are some varieties of grape vines willing to clamber over it and offer us their fruit. If we have a lattice screen or a trellised wall they will grow there, too.

The new vegetable garden need not be father's garden alone. The whole family can share in its creation as well as in its

products, with a parterre set aside for the especial attention of each member. The school garden with its individual plots has already proven a real success and so it is certain that the child at home will revel in its "ownership" of a parterre, cultivating a love for nature and for tidiness which will be valuable always and everywhere. Aged folks sometimes fairly yearn for occupation, some pleasant task really their own—a source of gentle exercise and of pride. They will appreciate a parterre, also.

And because joy in gardens is so general, a vegetable garden beautiful is quite as appropriate for other places as for the private home. Neighbors can band together in a community garden, clubs can go forth *en masse* to conquer the goodly



Fig. 13—And because the joy in gardening is so general, a vegetable garden is quite as appropriate for other places as for the private home

vegetable, and those who dwell at old folks' homes or orphanages, along with those who go to private schools, can have their gardens, too.

We have chatted with you about the joys of beauty in a vegetable garden, and we have set down simple sketches to help you build one all your own. We paused before an old garden and entered at the gate. The hinges creaked and we noticed its sad decrepitude. Some day, perhaps, we'll come upon *your* garden, and, unknown, pause beside the gateway. We are sure it will not be old or dirty. We are sure that, looking through, we will find nothing suggestive of old tin cans and scattered rubbish. The gateway will be beautiful, because beautiful types of gateways are so many that you are sure to build one. Birds and beauty, nature at her best, will abound within. And, best of all, we will find *you* there—because you will love your garden. And we will come in at the gate and rest awhile and chat.

SB
472
R85
V.8

THE LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
Santa Barbara

THIS BOOK IS DUE ON THE LAST DATE
STAMPED BELOW.

Series 9482

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



A 000 559 443 7

