

COUNTRY and SUBURBAN LIFE SUPPLEMENT

POINTS ABOUT THE MAKING OF A GARDEN

Expert Criticism of Gardens That Is Interesting and Suggestive

THE charge is made—by men whose knowledge of the matter would seem to give them the right to make it—that the dwellers in suburban homes do not, as a rule, exercise the best judgment in the making of gardens that are intended to be beautiful as well as useful. The criticisms made by the experts concerning this matter are suggestive and interesting.

There is declared to be little or no sympathy between the man who designs the garden and the man who designs the house, the result being a spoiled picture.

Again, the making of gardens is said to be intrusted to gardeners whose knowledge and experience are not sufficient to properly perform the task. The ordinary gardener—according to the more than ordinary ones—lacks art, perception and has various failings as, for example, crude ideas concerning the planting of trees and shrubs.

"Details are important," declares one authority. "It is upon detail and its suitability that the ultimate result will depend. The necessary man is he who can grasp and systematize a great mass of detail without losing sight of main principles and without losing his sense of perspective."

The ideal of beauty in gardens, in the opinion of this same authority, should not rest on the assumption that it is to be attained by superadded ornament—by such things as specimen trees or mean flower beds placed in impossible positions.

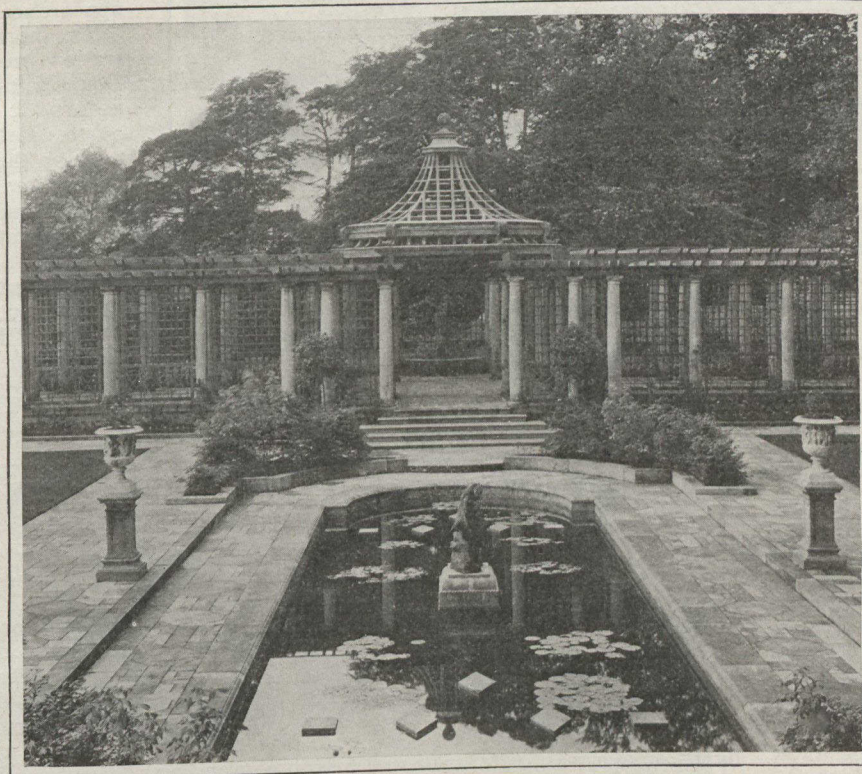
He is especially severe in his criticism of rustic designs.

"The stock pattern summer-houses, seats and other garden furniture made of round, unpeeled wood nailed to a rough framework were the invention of a period in which art expression reached a low ebb," he says. "These heavy yet flimsy erections with their sticky looking varnish and all absence of any recognition for the principles of design cannot be made to be anything but an eyesore and an evidence of bad taste. When new they look aggressively fresh, and the moment the newness fades they begin to look dilapidated."

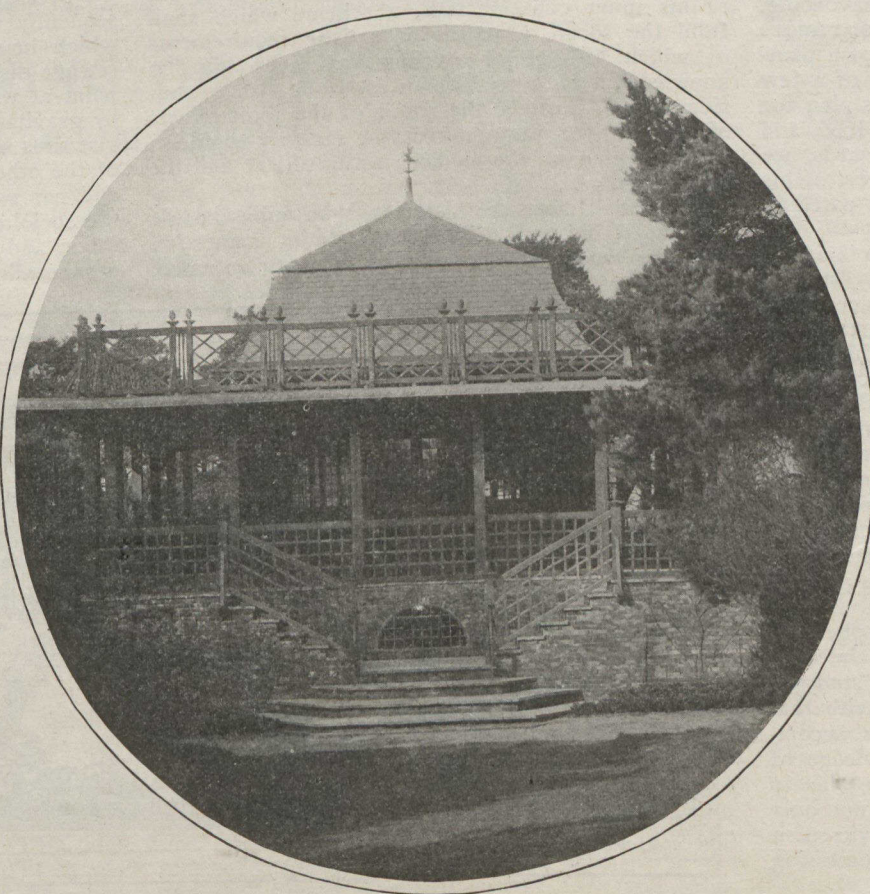
Also he strongly protests "against the practice of dotting urns, statuary and other sculptured stonework about natural lawns."

"Such features," he says, "should form a part of a definite architectural scheme or should form part of the design for a formal garden. Spread about in unsuitable and isolated positions their beauty is lost and they clash with and mar the sylvan loveliness surrounding them."

In preparing to make a garden, as in setting about so many other things in these days of great knowledge and



The pergola and the pond are features of English gardens.



Type of an English garden house in which tea is served.

specialization, the owner is likely to become almost frightened by the great amount of variety of ready-made advice which is revealed by a study of the subject. Often the way out appears to be to turn the whole matter over to an experienced landscape gardener and give him a free hand. But the man who really loves his garden and takes pride in it will usually not be satisfied if he adopts that course. He wants the garden to be to some extent an expression of himself and he wants to have a hand in the planning of it.

So the best course appears to be part way between doing it all himself and having nothing at all to do with it. Much has been written on garden making and a good percentage of it is worth reading. The services of a good landscape gardener are not by any means to be despised, but a study of the matter will make it possible to more fully appreciate the work of the expert and will aid in finding out wherein the ideas of the expert cannot be modified or departed from so that the individuality of the owner of the garden may find expression.

A garden should be in keeping both in material and in treatment, with the district in which it is situated. Strength and simplicity of treatment are necessary and extreme formalism is to be avoided. Many gardens give the impression of being crowded. Indeed in the making of a garden there are more things to avoid doing than there are things to do.

In Great Britain the making of beautiful gardens has received great attention. The size of the estates there and the wealth of the owners make possible things that can reasonably be attempted by but few people in Canada. Usually the work is delegated to a landscape gardener, or landscape architect, as the expert garden maker there is called. Some of the creations of those landscape architects are such as would appear crowded and stiff if attempted by men of less experience. But the better landscape architects of the Old Land are real experts. They have a broad outlook, and their treatment of each part of the garden is in keeping with the garden as a whole. Moreover, they plan their gardens so that whatever they do will fit in acceptably with the size and character of the buildings and with the outstanding features not only of the garden itself, but of the district in which it is located. In Canada the science of landscape architecture is not as far advanced as it is in Great Britain, but as this country grows older greater progress is being made in the proper planning of gardens.

The gardens of the Old Land are planned for the use and delight of