

worthy of imitation in our own country, is the tasteful manner in which the railroad companies keep the enclosed spaces on either side of the tracks. The spare ground is laid down to grass, which is mowed twice a year, leaving a fine turf for hundreds of miles on a stretch. This, in connection with depots built of stone, from handsome designs, and the walls of such buildings not unfrequently hidden from sight by the luxuriant growth of ivy, and other climbing vines, with a tastefully laid out flower garden near by—and often I have seen the name of the station, from the car window, in growing flowers of brilliant colors.

The natural advantages of the mild and moist English climate, make it comparatively easy work for the English gardener to produce and keep up a succession of fine effects. Among the most noticeable in all well kept gardens, parks and pleasure grounds, is the exquisitely fine character of the turf, looking in midsummer a fresh, green, closely shaved, soft, velvety and elastic to the foot. One who has not seen a well tended English lawn, cannot conceive how much it adds to the finish of a country home. In all country places having any pretensions, the "ribbon" style of arranging flowers is quite common; and where the plants have been set with a view to the harmony of colors, this style proves a great success. Then follows the plan of massing colors. Beds cut out in graceful and artistic shapes, planted with a single variety of flowers, or a bed of ornamental-leaved plants. The geranium, golden feather (*Pyrethrum*), dwarf nasturtium, mignonette, lobelia and coleus are often used for this purpose. While in some of the best kept places, long beds of dark blood-leaved beets were grown for ornamental purposes, and contiguous to other plants, one could hardly imagine they would harmonize and give such richness to the whole.

WINDOW GARDENING.

There is no doubt that the mass of the English people enjoy and cultivate flowers more generally than the Americans. This fact is demonstrated in the extent that "Window Gardening" is practiced in and about every village, town and city; among the poor, as well as the rich, are to be seen structures on the window sills, kept constantly filled with flowering and ornamental leaved plants through the whole season. In the more wealthy neighborhoods, these window structures are elegant in the make and finish, and in places the whole front of a house would seem ablaze with bright colors and climbing vines. Through the mechanic and laborers' quarters, there would be a less gorgeous display; but even in the most wretched hovels, where the poor are compelled to live, it was

quite common to see, in a back alley, on the sill of a window, four or five stories up, a single plant of geranium, or a pot of mignonette, that had been carefully tended by its owner. The demand is so large for this class of plants, that they are propagated by the million, and sold at very low rates, when compared with our prices for the same kind and quality of plants. Fuchsias, strong, stocky plants, for twelve cents apiece; geranium, balsams, calceolaries, etc., etc., at from four to six cents, or one-sixth of what they would cost here. In London, propagators from the suburbs send thousands of these flowering plants, every morning, to Covent Garden market; from here they are distributed, by men, women and boys, to all parts of the city, each of whom has his own customers, and keeps them supplied with whatever kinds they want, not only for window decoration, but also for garden culture.

Where there was such a demand for annuals, there must be some place where the seeds were grown in great quantity. A visit to the flower farm of Dunnett & Beale, at Dedham, Essex county, soon solved this inquiry. Here I saw more than two hundred acres exclusively devoted to raising flower seeds; and at the time of my visit, the bulk of the past season's crop was in full blossom, presenting a display well worth a trip across the Atlantic to see. This, however, is a mere skeleton of one branch of the commercial florist's business on the other side of the Atlantic.

FINE PLANTS.

On a visit to the mammoth establishments of James Veitch & Son, Wm. Bull, E. G. Henderson & Co., Wm. Rolleston & Sons, R. A. Prance, George Jackman & Co., Wm. Paul, Thomas Rivers, and hundreds of others in the suburbs of London, one can see a choicer and very much more expensive class of plants, where the price of single specimens will range from \$5 to \$60 apiece, and plenty of demand for this class of stock. I saw in one of these establishments a dozen of large Azaleas sold for \$60 apiece, to go to St. Petersburg, for embellishing a banquet hall next season. In another, I saw fifty pot grape vines, in fruit, at \$12 apiece, for a dinner party of a wealthy Londoner. Nor were these rare cases, for one familiar with plants need only examine the stock to judge of its value. The horticultural societies are far-sighted enough to offer large money premiums for fine plants, and the exhibitions that I attended seemed to warrant this course. At the exhibition of the Royal Botanical Gardens, I saw more and choicer plants shown by a single exhibitor, than I ever saw by one Society, including all exhibitors in this country. Just imagine Fuchsias six feet high, and four or five in diameter,

completely covered with flowers; Erica Candolleana, six feet in diameter and three in height; Allamanda grandiflora, a mass of flowers; Pelargoniums, more than seven feet in diameter; also, John Waterer & Sons' collection of Azaleas and Rhododendrons, the finest in the United Kingdom; in fact, these would make an attractive exhibition without further accession.

ROSES.

In England the Rose seems to have attained perfection, and the demand is very large. In walking over the grounds with one nurseryman in the suburbs of London, he showed me his stock of forty acres of standard roses, and he assured me he was not one of the largest growers. At the rose show at Sydenham Palace, the cut roses were arranged in shallow boxes filled with moss, each box holding forty roses. These boxes were placed in a line, and this line extended just half a mile, and the large size of the roses was quite as surprising to me as that of the whole exhibition. Another and very interesting feature of this show, and one that I hope to see some day adopted by our own Societies, was that of offering liberal premiums for dressing breakfast, lunch and dinner tables with flowers. Here the tables in each class were set, ready for a meal, with the plants arranged by the competitors, which in this instance were about forty in number. For this purpose the different varieties of the Fern were arranged with graceful and pleasing effect. In fact, this part of the exhibition was more attractive to me than that of the roses.

The London Horticultural Society's exhibition was smaller than I had reason to suppose, from its standing and antiquity; still, the collection of Jackman's Clematis, in size, variety and brilliancy of colors, more than paid me for my visit. This, with the hospitable reception from the active members of this representative Society, will always be remembered by me with pleasure.

GARDENING.

In what may be termed ornamental gardening, the English are far in advance of us, but in the more practical part we take the lead by at least twenty years. During my stay in England, I visited many of the largest and best-managed vegetable farms in the vicinity of London, and I was surprised to witness their primitive methods, both in their cropping and tedious way of doing the work. It is quite within bounds to say, that a man familiar with trucking in New Jersey will do a third more work in a given time than a man in the same position in an English garden. The ordinary implements used by the latter are clumsy and unnecessarily heavy, and this weight has