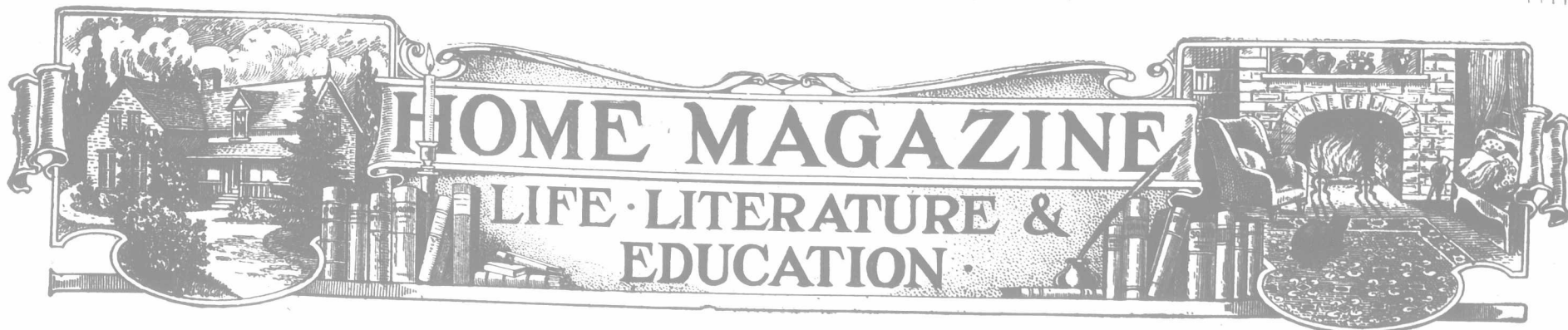




Say Not that He Is Old.

Say not that he is old because his hair is white;
The singing of the lark still fills him with delight;
Say not that he is old because upon his knee
His grandchild comes to lean;
His heart is brave and clean,
And beauty gives him glee.

Say not that he is old because his age is great;
He has not learned to sit alone and mourn his fate;
Say not that he is old because his eyes are dim;
Love still is in his soul,
And still a splendid goal
Is beckoning to him.

Say not that he is old because the grave has won
The friends his childhood knew, their earthly duties done;
Say not that he is old because his head is gray,
For Time has failed to steal
His courage or his zeal,
Or lure his hopes away.
—[S. E. Kiser, in Chicago Record-Herald.]

A Gardening Enthusiast.

Not long ago we had the pleasure of visiting the subject of this sketch and his fine garden in the southern part of this city. Mr. F— is a man well on in years, but a fine specimen of the Briton as he should be when "seventy years young"—tall, sturdy, nowhere more happy than in the garden which he has made a delight to all beholders.

A vegetable plot at the back, containing everything from lettuce to pole beans, some fruit trees and small-fruit bushes, demands a goodly share of his time, but it is in his fine lawn, separated from it by a hedge with an arched gateway cut through, that he seems to take most pride. The lawn is beautifully kept, and, as will be seen in our illustration, is surrounded by trees and a broad border of flowers, not a straight, stiff border, but one that runs irregularly, in little points and bays, after Nature's own pattern.

Nor does Mr. F—'s interest exhaust itself within the confines of his own garden plot. For years he has been one of the most faithful contributors to the flower shows held in the city, and very often he has been chosen to take charge of the tables, not only at the flower shows, but at the larger annual exhibitions of fruit and flowers of the Western Fair. A better choice, it may be remarked, could not be made, for it is eminently necessary that the men placed in charge at such places should be qualified to answer any questions asked them in regard to the culture of the specimens shown. Our exhibitions, small or large, should not be mere show-places; they should be distinctly educative.

And now to come to a more pertinent point, even, than this—one could not but be impressed, in hearing Mr. F— talk and bearing witness to his enthusiasm, with the necessity of a special interest for men and women who have stepped out of the rushing highway of life into the quieter by-ways more fitting for those of the silvery hair. Many a man and woman who have worked hard all their early days have fancied

themselves contented to hand over farm or business to the son when he marries, and settle down in comparative do-nothingness for the remainder of their days. There has been so much rush and, perhaps, worry in the past that the path of idle loitering looks alluring. "Let John have the farm. We will go to town. We will have our own little house, and then—rest." And so a little house is bought, with a back yard just large enough for a clothes-line, for "John will bring in all the vegetables we need." The household gods are torn from the places where they have stood for so long; the moving follows; the furnishings are set in order in a place in which they do not and never will look at home—and then? Then—John, Sr., sits at the door, and wanders down street once or twice a day, aimlessly. Mary puts on her best gown of afternoons and crochets. Somehow the "retired" life does not seem as pleasant when one has come to it. True, there is little work to do, but is this sitting about rest? The body is still—too still, usually, for health—but the mind is busy, busy, longing for the old hills, the old fields, the old neighbors. What an event it is when neighbor Tom or James and his wife chance in and stay for dinner! And what an ache in the heart to see them go back again, in the cool of the evening, to the cattle and the horses, to tying up the plants and hoeing and watering them, now that the sun is down! How willingly now would John, Sr., and Mary give up this aimless sitting about for some of the old toil, a few of the old duties!

may be, and gardening is a pleasant work, permitting of such relaxation as those who are growing on in years may need.

Just a word more: might not the older folk who have elected to stay on the old farm undertake stirring up a new source of interest in their localities by holding flower shows in the schoolhouses (to which everyone in the section might be asked to contribute) say at least twice in the summer? The holding of such shows might work a revolution in the appearance of any district in a very short time, for to hold them at all means that there must be flowers, and shrubs, and vines at the individual homes. We leave the idea with you.

Little Trips Among Eminent Writers.

John Ruskin.

(Continued.)

Ruskin had, as has been seen, grown into a young man of talent, with a liberal education, a love for art, literature and science, and much personal charm. He had, moreover, been mellowed somewhat by the ill-success of his unfortunate attachment for Clothilde Domecq, who, merely laughing at his suit, had finally married a French Count; while his numerous trips to Europe in search of health had given him abundant opportunity for prosecuting his studies in art, mountain scenery, glaciers and architecture. He had also, as has been noted, been acquiring "Turners," and studying them

and Ruskin never became close friends.

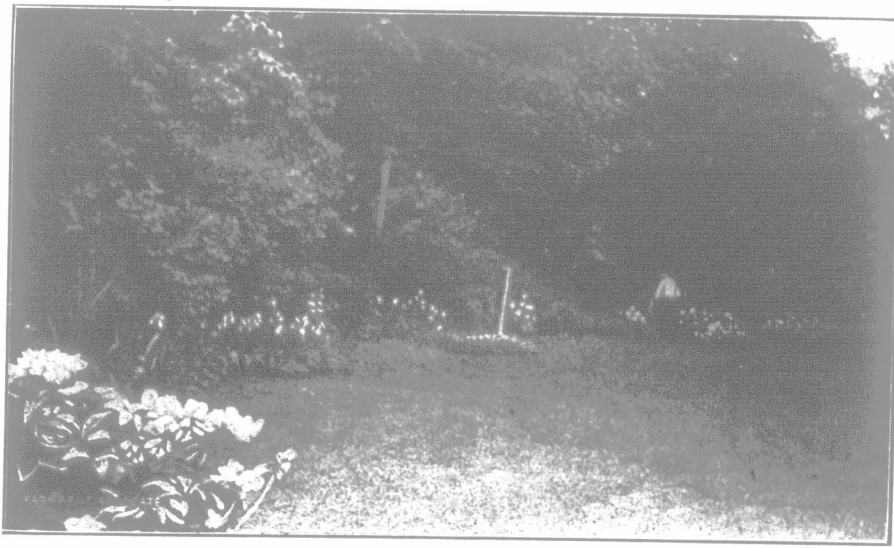
This time of work and impressions was assuredly laying up seed for future fruition. In the meantime, Ruskin was selecting his masters, Carlyle for philosophy, Byron for truth in many matters, Scott as an interpreter of medieval honor and ideals which it would be well to bring back to an all-too-careless, modern civilization. He was still practicing, too, with pen and pencil, in drawing, but he was not destined to become ever a great artist. The practice, however, was not wasted. Through it he developed still more his naturally acute faculty of observation, and reached fundamental truths and conclusions that fitted him all the better for his self-appointed role as art-critic, and as one who should do no little towards opening the eyes of the world to the beauty of nature, towards awakening higher ideals, and developing a new sympathy for suffering humanity.

One by one the revelations came to him, as they do, doubtless, to all of us, and nowhere is the quality of his genius more manifest than in this, that he recognized at once these revelations would not let them go. To others, the same thoughts or impressions might have been as ripples on the sea, now here, now gone, deemed of too little importance to be of worth. To him they were events, the water-marks of an ever-advancing level. He seized upon them, acted upon them, considered them of enough importance for the most minute recording, as, for instance, in the case of Norwood ivy.

One day, he tells us, while drawing a tree with ivy on it (at Tulse Hill, May, 1842), it suddenly dawned upon him that the old, conventional methods of the teachers in art were not to be relied upon, that truth of impression, and that alone, should be aimed at.

Not long afterwards he drew a little aspen. "At last the tree was there," he says, "and everything that I had thought before about trees nowhere. The Norwood ivy had not abased me in that final manner, because one had always felt that ivy was an ornamental creature, and expected it to behave prettily on occasion. But that all the trees of the wood should be beautiful—more than Gothic tracery, more than Greek vase-imagery, more than the daintiest embroiderers of the East could embroider, or the artfullest painters of the West could limn—this was indeed an end to all former thoughts with me, an insight into a new, sylvan world." "Be true to nature, true to yourself," he began to preach to the artists, in veritable war-call of independence of thought and action, "knowing what you admire, and painting that, refusing the hypocrisy of 'grand style' or 'high art'—then vital art will be produced."

So we find that he has resolved to teach breaking away from artificiality in art—that all true artists must cut loose from tradition and found their work on sincerity and truth. Later, as we shall find, his teachings extend to life itself. As yet he is finding his feet as an observer, rather than as creator. He will detect the wrong, and point out the right. "I should have been more crushed by this result," he says (he is speaking of the choosing of Edmund Oldfield's design, rather than his, for the win-



Mr. F—'s Fine Lawn, with Irregular Flower Border.

We have always held that, for ninety-nine people out of one hundred it is a great mistake to retire from the farm to the city or town. Better, if possible, keep a few acres of the old home and build an extra, small house, that one may live and die in the old home environment, with the neighbors and the children near, and that one may have enough of the familiar old work to do.

But if it seems desirable to move to town or village, then there is but one wise course—for anyone, at least, who has become used to the land and has learned to love growing things—that is to buy a lot large enough to give occupation and interest, one that will leave no time for sitting lonely in the sun, twiddling one's thumbs, and growing rapidly old. Only interest and exercise can keep one young, no matter how old one

at every opportunity, while new inspiration had come to him in a meeting with the artist himself, whom he found to be—instead of an ill-mannered boor, as reported—"a somewhat eccentric, keen-mannered, matter-of-fact, English-mannered—gentleman; good-natured evidently, bad-tempered evidently, hating humbug of all sorts, shrewd, perhaps a little selfish, highly intellectual, the powers of the mind not brought out with any delight in their manifestation or intention of display, but flashing out occasionally in a word or a look." A clever summing-up this, surely, for so young a critic, even though the subject were the man whose cause he had championed in the face of the world, and by reason of whose influence he had begun to write his first notable contribution to art-criticism and literature. And yet Turner