

Garden, Orchard and Forest.

English Roses.

FLORAL DECORATIONS OF LONDON—THE LIGHT AND THE BIRDS.

(From a correspondent of the N. Y. Tribune.)

English flowers, it must often have been noticed, are altogether exceptional for substance and pomp. The roses in particular—though many of them, it should be said, are of French breeds—surpass all competition. It may seem an extravagance to say so, but it is certainly true that these rich, firm, brilliant flowers affect you like creatures of flesh and blood. They are in this respect only to be described as like nothing in the world so much as the bright lips and blushing cheeks of the handsome English women who walk among them and vie with them in health and loveliness. It is easy thus to perceive the source of those elements of warmth and sumptuousness which are so conspicuous in the results of English taste. This is a land of flowers. Even in the busiest parts of London people decorate their houses with them, and set the sombre, fog-grimed fronts ablaze with scarlet and gold. These are the prevalent colors (so radically such that they have become national), and when placed against the black tint with which this climate stains the buildings, they have the advantage of a vivid contrast which much augments their splendor. All London wears "a suit of sables," variegated with a tracery of white, like lace upon a pall. In some instances the effect is splendidly pompous. There cannot be a grander artificial object in the world than the front of St. Paul's Cathedral, which is especially notable for this mysterious blending of light and shade. It is to be regretted that a climate which can thus beautify should also destroy; but there can be no doubt that the stones of England are rapidly defaced by the fogs. Already the delicate carvings on the Houses of Parliament are beginning to crumble. And yet, if one might judge the climate by this glittering July, England is a land of sunshine as well as of flowers. Light comes before 3 o'clock in the morning, and it lasts, through a dreamy and lovely "gloaming," till nearly 10 o'clock at night. The morning sky is usually light blue, dappled with slate-colored clouds. A few large stars are visible then, lingering to outface the dawn. Cool winds whisper, and presently they rouse the great, sleepy old elms; and then the rooks—which are low comedians of the air in this region—begin to grumble; and then the sun leaps above the horizon, and we sweep into a day of golden, breezy cheerfulness and comfort, the like of which is never known in New York between late June and early October. Sometimes the whole twenty-four hours have drifted past, as if in a dream of light and fragrance and music. In a recent moonlight time there was scarce any darkness at all; and more than once or twice, I have lain awake all night—within three miles of Charing Cross—listening to the twitter of small birds and the song of the nightingale, which is like the lapse and fall of silver water. It used to be difficult to understand why the London season should begin in May and run on through the summer; it is not at all difficult to understand the matter now. Meantime the sky is softly blue and full of magnificent bronze clouds; the air is cool, and in the environs of the city is odorous with the scent of new-mown hay; and the grass and trees in the parks—those copious and splendid lungs of London—are green, dewy, sweet and beautiful.

Persons "to the manor born" were lately calling the season "backward," and they went so far as to grumble at the hawthorn as being less brilliant than in former seasons. But, in fact, to the unfamiliar sense this bush of odorous coral has been delicious. You know it, doubtless, as one of the sweetest beauties of rural England. It deserves its reputation. We have nothing comparable with it in North America, unless, perhaps, it be the elder of our wild woods; and even that, with all its fragrance, lacks equal charm of color. They use the hawthorn or some kindred shrub for hedges in this country, and hence their fields are seldom disfigured with fences. As you ride through the land you see miles and miles of meadow traversed by these green and blooming hedges, and you find that they give the country a charm which is quite incommunicable in words. The green of the foliage—enriched by an uncommonly humid air and burnished by the sun—is just now in perfection, while the flowers are out in such abundance that the whole realm is one blaze

of color. I saw the other day, near Oxford, on the crest of a hill, at least three thousand square yards of scarlet poppies. You can easily imagine what a glorious dash of color that was, in a green landscape lit by the afternoon sun! Nobody could help loving a land that woos him with such beauty.

Value and Protection of Shade Trees.

The protection of shade trees requires more attention than is often given. We have just seen one of a handsome row of maple shade trees destroyed by barking by a horse that had been tied to it. After receiving the injury it lingered on for some years, and now when about twelve years planted it snapped across at the injured part from being unable to resist a gust of wind. The following brief item from the Germantown Telegraph is applicable to more places than the Quaker City:

Some few dwellings never had a tree around them, and the owners have lived year in and year out, till by either keeping all the windows tightly closed in summer, or defying the sun and heat to do its worst on them, they have become as pale as a stick of blanched celery, or as brown as a coffee-bean, as the case may be. These persons have a confused sense of inconvenience by the summer heat or sun, but with their physical feelings dulled they are not likely to feel or appreciate the grateful shade of a living tree.

Most of us, however, have at some time or another enjoyed the luxury, and it is a matter of surprise, with this fact before us, that so few take any thought or care to preserve the luxury from harm. There are in the great city of Philadelphia some sixty thousand houses fronting on streets. Of these almost all at some time or another had trees set in front of them. At the same time we should say at a rough guess not ten per cent. are still existing. Why? Some say trees will not grow in cities. This is nonsense so far as the smokeless city of Philadelphia is concerned. Almost all have been killed by insects or horses, and while insects are generally credited with a good deal of mischief, really the horse has done the most of it. There is a great deal of this to be seen in Germantown and the surrounding districts.

We know some feel indignant and ask for a "law" against tying horses to trees. But who is going to execute the law? Ten chances to one the offender is some good natured but thoughtless friend of the family, and you would hardly prosecute him. The police can hardly do so, as it seems to be understood that, except in actual breaches of the peace, they can only arrest by warrant duly sworn out by the injured parties. Perhaps you see this, and so set up regular hitching posts before your door, but the "wise man is merciful to his beast," and so he ties his horse under the shade of a tree, though there are a score of other hitching-places conveniently near.

The security is not in laws or hitching-posts, but in proper guards about each tree. How to do this is so simple and easy a matter that it need not be printed out here. Surely it is only necessary to show the absurdity of spending much money and many years in having shade trees at our door, and then leaving them to the chance of utter destruction by the first horse that comes along, in order to set people to thinking that they had better do something to preserve the blessing they will certainly mourn for when gone.

Care of Orchards.

The complaint is quite common that orchards are not productive. Trees seem to be out of health, or for some other reason they are to an unprofitable extent barren. Now, the question is, what is to be done with such orchards to make them productive, and what to others that are now productive to keep them so? Much, of course, depends on the characteristics of the varieties planted. Some kinds are shy bearers in any and all soil, and no kind of treatment can make them prolific. Too often orchards are largely made up of these unproductive kinds. Unless the excellence in quality will justify keeping these light bearing varieties, it will be best to top-graft them with some prolific variety. Much also depends on the natural quality and condition of the soil.

Some soils are well adapted to the healthful growth of fruit trees, while others are not at all suited to their wants. With these last the first thing to be done is to renovate them by under-draining, subsoiling, manuring, etc., which should be done before the trees are planted. No fruit

tree should ever be planted in a soil that is inclined to be wet and soggy a considerable portion of the time. Trees will not thrive in a soil where their roots are immersed in water any great part of the time. Nor will they succeed in a very poor, thin soil. And here is probably the real source of a large part of the complaint about unfruitful orchards. Fruit trees are too frequently required to work without the raw material to work on—to make bricks—without straw—or in other words, produce fruit without the substance at hand from which to form the fruit. The amount of material required to form the tree growth and a crop of fruit on an acre of orchard is considerable. If 40 trees grow to an acre and produce on an average of but 6 bushels per tree, it will give 240 bushels per acre, which any one may see is far below what a good orchard should produce. This would remove 388 pounds of the mineral constituents of the soil, besides a large amount of the volatile elements. It is quite evident that this process, continued for a few years without a renewal of these elements by the application of fertilizers, must soon result in the exhaustion of the most fertile soil. But besides this, many farmers try to get an additional crop of grain, hay, roots, etc., and yet seem to forget that the soil can be exhausted. As well might one expect to draw continually on a bank account, without making any new deposits, and never exhaust or overdraw his deposits, as to think that such a process of depletion can go on for a great length of time without being followed by exhaustion. And right here lies the difficulty in a great majority of cases of unfruitful orchards. In order to restore the fruitfulness of such orchards, it is absolutely essential that the fertility of the soil should be restored. This restoring process should be brought about by the application of fertilizers in liberal abundance. It is possible, perhaps, to get the soil of an orchard too rich, causing too rank a growth and thus making trees tender, but the greater danger is in the other direction. No one need fear to keep the soil of his orchard rich, as rich as he would for raising vegetables in the garden.

A very excellent way to care for an orchard is to set it in clover or blue grass, and keep hogs or sheep enough in it to keep the crop eaten down. They will eat up nearly all worm-falls and keep insect enemies in check. Hogs, if permitted to root, will destroy many grubs, beetles, etc., besides loosening the soil around the roots, without cutting or breaking them as a plow will. Under this system the droppings of the animal will make a good fertilizer, besides which a good top-dressing of barnyard manure should be given once a year. When an orchard has lost its vigor and productiveness it may often be restored by plowing under a good coat of manure. A good crop of buckwheat, rye or clover plowed under green will prove an excellent restorative to exhausted soils. — Ohio Farmer.

Small Fruit Notes.

It is strange the blackberry is not more extensively planted where it succeeds well. After a plantation is once started, it requires but very little care and attention. Nipping back the new growth while growing, and cleaning between the rows two or three times in the spring and early summer, is all that is necessary. They do better on light, porous soil, and should not be worked among late in the season, as it promotes late growth and tenderness of plant. They yield so abundantly and sell at such high rates, and can be harvested at such low rates, that they prove one of the most profitable crops grown where they do not winter-kill. On our farm at Palmyra we have some eight acres, and they have proved the most profitable to us of any fruit we have grown. The Lawton is the old stand-by with us, it is so productive and so large. In such States as Virginia, Maryland, Kentucky, Missouri, and in favorable localities North, where the peach thrives, the blackberry crop is exceedingly profitable, and black and red raspberries, too, if grown in the States named, for Northern markets, pay. Currants do not seem to succeed well south of a certain latitude, only in particular sections. We would advise none to plant largely of these before first looking around and inquiring if any person has tried them and succeeded. After all the hue and cry about new strawberries, we find nothing better than the old, tried sorts, and would not advise our readers to plant largely of the new, highly-praised kinds, until knowing that they have been generally tested. We know that this advice won't suit some who have new sorts to sell, but it is the interest of our readers generally that we