

SONG OF THE BRIDEGROOM.

BY LEIGH CLIFFE, ESQ.

The blush is on thy cheek, and thy hand is trembling still,
Like a blossom to the breeze, and I feel thy bosom thrill:
The tear is in thine eye, and a sigh burst from thy breast,
Oh! tell me, dearest, truly, what 'tis disturbs thy rest?
Is parting from thy mother a source of grief to thee?
Cast all thy fears away, my love, and cling through life to me.

For I have vowed to cherish thee beneath the holy fane,
In health and pleasure's happy hours, and in the time of pain,
And the bells are ringing still so joyously and gay,
To greet with many a merry chime thee on thy wedding day,
And thy Sister with a laughing eye has whispered a farewell,
Then wherefore art thou sad, my love, the hidden secret tell?

Again thy smile returns as the sunbeam after rain,
Beams forth afresh more brilliantly upon the dewy plain;
Thou creep'st like a timid dove to nestle on my breast,
And there repose, my only love, both blessing me and blest;
Believe me I will never prove a source of grief to thee,
Cast all thy fears away, my love, and cling through life to me.

FLOWER GARDENS OF THE ANCIENTS.

BY JAMES MACAULEY, ESQ. M. A.

This very interesting paper, full of the lore of classic gardening, graces the pages of the *Magazine of Natural History*.

"It is always asserted by modern writers on gardening, that the ancients did not cultivate flowers as a source of amusement.—In the descriptions, it is said, of all the most famous gardens of antiquity which have come down to us, we read merely of their fruits and their shade; and when flowers are mentioned, they are always reared for some special purpose, such as to supply their feasts, or their votive offerings.

Considered merely as an useful art, gardening must be one of the earliest cultivated; but as a refined source of pleasure, it is not till civilization and elegance are far advanced among a people, that they can enjoy the poetry or the pleasure of the artificial associations of nature. Hence this question is interesting, as illustrating the manners and the tastes of the times referred to.

Negative proofs are not sufficient to determine the point. To show that the gardens of the Hesperides contained nothing but oranges, or that of King Alcinoüs (Odys. vii.) nothing but a few fruit-trees and pot-herbs, does not disprove the opinion that others cultivated flowers as a source of pleasure.

Before speaking of the Roman flower-gardens, I would offer a few remarks on those of Greece and the east.

From the little mutability of oriental customs, their ancient gardening did not probably differ much from that of modern times. The descriptions given by Naundrell, Russell, and other travellers, agree with what we read in the Scriptures of the Hebrew gardens three thousand years ago.

Solomon, who had so extensive a knowledge of the vegetable kingdom, that he knew plants from the cedar of Lebanon to the moss on the wall, enumerates gardening among the pleasures he had tasted in his search after happiness: "I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards; I made me gardens and orchards."—Eccles. ii: 14.

From Xenophon and other writers we have a few notices of the Persian gardens. Xenophon relates that Cyrus was much devoted to the pleasures of gardening; and wherever he resided, or whatever part of his dominions he visited, he took care that the gardens should be filled with every thing both beautiful and useful, which the soil could produce. These were sometimes only hunting-parks, or inclosed forests, but there were also flower-gardens among them. Cicero ("De Senectute") relates the following anecdote of Cyrus. When Lysander the Spartan came to him with presents to Sardis, Cyrus showed him all his treasures and his gardens;—and when Lysander was struck with the height of the trees, and the arrangement and fine cultivation of the grounds, and the sweetness of the odours which were breathed upon them from the flowers, ("suavitate odorum quæ afflarentur e floribus," he said, that he admired not only the diligence but the skill of the man, who had contrived and laid out the garden, And Cyrus answered, "Atqui ego omnia ista sum dimensus; mei sunt ordines; mea descriptio; multa etiam istarum arborum meum munus sunt satis."

One of the earliest and best known of all the Grecian gardens is that of King Alcinoüs, described in the *Odyssey*. "What," says Sir Robert Walpole, "was that hoisted paradise with which

—— the Gods ordained
To grace Alcinoüs and his happy land?"

Why, divested of harmonious Greek and bewitching poetry, it was a small orchard and vineyard, with some beds of herbs, and two fountains that watered them, inclosed within a quick-set hedge! Of course, the whole scene is a mere romantic creation of the poet; but, in describing it, he would be guided by what actually existed in nature, and, perhaps, took his idea of the garden for some particular spot with which he was acquainted. It is described as consisting of four acres, surrounded by a fence, and adjoining the gates of the palace. It contained a few trees for shade and for fruits, and two fountains; one for the palace,

and the other for the garden. But then he thus ends the simple and beautiful picture of the place with these lines:—"And there are beautiful plots of all kinds of plants at the extreme borders of the garden, flowering all the year round."

The Athenians always had flower gardens attached to their country-houses, one of which Anacharsis visited. "After having crossed a court-yard, full of fowls and other domestic birds, we visited the stables, sheepfolds, and likewise the flower-garden; in which we successively saw bloom narcissuses, hyacinths, irises, violets of different colours, roses of various species, and all kinds of odoriferous plants."*

There was at Athens a public flower-market, and there were persons whose trade it was to make bouquets, and to construct letters with flowers symbolical of certain sentiments; as is still done in oriental countries.

The gardens of Epicurus, and the other philosophers, were mere groves and shaded walks, where the disciples were wont to listen to the lessons of their masters:

"Atque inter sylvas academi querere verum."

We are not to look for ornamental gardening in the early history of the Romans, as the soil of their little *horti* was cultivated merely for the sake of procuring the necessaries of life. Excellence in war and in agriculture were the chief virtues as well as duties of the citizens; and we find *bonus agricola* and *bonus colonus* used as synonymous with a good man. Some of the noblest families of Rome derived their names from particular grains, such as the *Lentuli*, *Pisones*, *Fabii*, and many others. The story of Cincinnatus being found by the messengers of the senate at the plough, is well known; and Curius, after triumphing over the Samnites, the Sabines, and Pyrrhus, spent his old age in the labours of the field. So late as the Punic wars, Regulus, in the midst of his victories in Africa, wrote to the senate, that his steward had left his service, and stolen his implements of agriculture; and begged leave of absence from the army, to see about his affairs, and prevent his family from starving. The senate took the business in hand, recovered his tools, and supported his wife and children till his return.

It was not till they had come much in contact with the Greeks that the Romans would be anxious about pleasure or elegance in their gardens; for it was thence they derived their taste for all the arts of peace:

"Græcia capta ferum victorem cepit: et artes
Intulit agresti Latio."

Even in later Roman authors the allusion to gardening often relate more to the general pleasures and occupations of a country life, than to the special cultivation of flowers. But this is the richest theme in all ages, inasmuch as the subordinate display of human art in gardening is eclipsed from the eye of the poet by the beauties of nature even there displayed. The scene of the "Song of Solomon" is laid in a garden; but the finest allusions which it contains are to the general appearance of nature. For example: "Arise my love, my fair one, and come away. For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over, and gone: the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land; the fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grapes give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away."—And, again: "Come, let us go forth into the field; let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vine flourish, whether the tender grape appear, and the pomegranates bud forth: there will I give thee my loves."

Our own poets, when they paint a modern garden, dwell most on its shade and freshness, its verdure and music, without descending to particular description. Examples of this must occur to every one. The garden of the Corycian old man, described in the fourth *Georgic*, and other similar classical scenes, are sometimes quoted as proving the absence of flowers as part of the ornaments of an ancient garden. But we must not thus judge from negative or detached instances: we might as well argue the poverty of that of Horace, merely from what he says in his invitation to Phyllis:—

—— "Est in horto
Phylli, nectentis apium coronis:
Est hederæ vis
Multa, quæ crines religata fulges."

He mentions only what was connected with his drinking invitation; the parsley being supposed to ward off intoxication, and the ivy being the sacred plant of Bacchus.

Nor is the garden of Lucullus which is so often referred to, to be regarded as a specimen either of the art or the taste of his time. We are told of its terraces and fish-ponds, its statues and sumptuous temples, and not of the cultivation of flowers; but this was alluded to by his own contemporaries. Cicero records that Lucullus was often blamed for the vast extravagance displayed in his Tusculan villa; and says, that he used to excuse himself by pointing to two neighbours, a knight and a freedman, who tried to vie with him in the splendour of their gardens.

In Latin authors, the word *Hortus* seems to have four distinct significations. First, a garden, analogous to the gardens of the

Tuilleries and the Luxembourg, at Paris, composed chiefly of shaded walks, with statues, water-works, and other ornaments. Such were the gardens of Lucullus, Cæsar, Pompey, Mæcenas, and the rich Patricians, who used to seek popularity by throwing them open to the people. The second signification is, a little farm, or any place for the cultivation of esculent vegetables. Perhaps the garden of the Corycian old man was only one of these; but they seldom contained such a variety as we find there. In the laws of the twelve tribes, *hortus* is always put for a farm or a villa. The third sort of *hortus* was devoted to the cultivation of those flowers, which were used at festivals and ceremonies, and for similar special purposes. Such were the "*biferi rosarii Pasti*;" and gardens of this sort surrounded the city, to supply the markets. It is to these three species of *horti* alone that modern authors refer; but there are many allusions in the Classics, showing that the Romans had flower gardens for pleasure as well as utility. Such were the "*delicati horti*," the "*venusti hortuli*" of private individuals, which we read of in Tibullus, Phædrus, Martial, and other authors, who occasionally refer to the domestic manners of the Romans. If they cultivated their flowers for the purposes alluded to, a single dinner party, or a few chaplets would have stripped bare the whole garden.

The citizens of Rome used to cultivate plants in the balconies of their houses, (Hor. I. Ep. x. etc.) and to rear flowers in boxes and flower-pots, which were called "*Horti imaginarii*." (Pliny.) It is not likely that the rich would do this, merely to procure materials for their votive offerings, or to supply the ornaments for their entertainments, when these could be easily purchased at the public markets. It shows that a taste for their cultivation, as objects of amusement, did prevail, which followed them even amidst the "fumum, et opes, strepitumque Romæ."

There are, also, small garden-grounds attached to the houses in many of the streets of Herculaneum, which, from their size and their position in a great city, could not have been used, either for the cultivation of the festal flowers, or of esculent vegetables, and probably contained only a few beds of flowers for ornament."

THE STEAM-ENGINE.

(From a luminous paper, entitled "Ocean Steamers," in the Monthly Chronicle.)

"Within the memory of persons who have not yet passed the meridian of life, the possibility of traversing by the steam-engine the channels and seas that surround and intersect these islands, was regarded as the dream of enthusiasts. Nautical men, and men of science, rejected such speculations with equal incredulity, and with little less than scorn for the understandings of those who could for a moment entertain them. Yet have we lived to witness the steam-engine traversing, not these channels and seas alone, but sweeping the face of the waters round every coast in Europe. The seas which interpose between our Asiatic dominions and Egypt, and those which separate our own shores from our West-India possessions, have offered an equally ineffectual barrier to its power. Nor have the terrors of the Pacific prevented the "Enterprise" from doubling the Cape, and reaching the shores of India. If steam be not used as the only means of connecting the most distant habitable points of our planet, it is not because it is inadequate to the accomplishment of that end, but because the supply of the material from which at the present moment it derives its powers is restricted by local and accidental circumstances."*

The irresistible energy of British enterprise, aided by the inexhaustible resources of national art and science, is rapidly enlarging these limits, not indeed as yet by the discovery of a new element of power, (though even that may not be far distant,) but by economising the consumption, and improving the application of the combustible, to the properties of which the nation is already so largely indebted for her greatness.

When we pause and look back upon the birth and growth of steam power, it is impossible not to be filled with astonishment at the colossal magnitude to which it has already attained, though it cannot be justly regarded as having passed the state of adolescence. It is little more than sixty years since Watt found the steam-engine a mere pump, (and not a very perfect one,) used for the drainage of mines; and within a few short years afterwards, he bestowed upon it powers, the extent and influence of which on the well-being of the human race have thrown into the shade every other production of art or science. Whether we regard the history of this invention as to time or place, the effects which it has produced, or the means by which it has produced these effects, we find every thing to gratify our national pride, excite our wonder, and command our admiration.

Within the last century the steam-engine had its birth, and was cradled in Britain. The offspring of British genius, it was fostered by British enterprise, and supported by British capital. It has grown with a rapidity which has no example in the annals of mechanical invention to its present giant stature. To enumerate its effect would be to count almost every comfort and every lux-

* For authorities see "Voyage d'Anacharsis," tome v. p. 20.

* Lardner on the Steam-Engine, 6th edit. London, 1836. Also, Edinburgh Review, October, 1832, p. 104.