THE EFFECT OF GARDENING UPON THE MIND.

A taste for gardening is one of the elemental impulses of humanity. There are individuals without it, as there are people without sight or hearing or a sense of smell; but, on the whole, to dig comes naturally to man, and at some time or other in the course of his existence the desire to own a portion of the earth's surface is apt to seize upon him and demand satisfaction.

This impulse is of maturity rather than of youth, for gardening in its larger sense is a thoughtful pursuit, appealing to the broader qualities of the understanding. It is not merely the desire for healthful exercise which stirs a man, but also the wish to learn the secrets of our common mother, to force her hand, as it were, and compel her to reward his toil. The fable of the giant Antæus, who renewed his strength when he came in contact with the earth, has a subtle meaning, for it is by this contact that many weary souls have found rest and arisen refreshed...


VARIOUS MOTIVES FOR GARDENING.

W e have just received a letter from a valued correspondent in which he says that he cannot understand the insistence of Garden and Forest upon planning and planting for general effect. He delights in his garden, but his pleasure is not associated in any degree with the landscape as he understands it. He loves plants, he appreciates the beauty of flowers, he enjoys their companionship and he reads with interest everything that is said about new or old ones which any way broadens his knowledge of their habits and helps him to cultivate them more successfully. He finds abundant comfort in gardening of this kind, but he sees nothing to attract him in landscape-gardening. No doubt, this statement represents the innermost feeling of many people who take a genuine interest in horticulture, and it is often expressed to us in one way or another. With people of this taste and temperament the garden exists for its plants, and the plants are not grown for the sake of the garden. That is, a garden in this view is a place where a collection of plants is carefully attended and enjoyed for their individual beauty and other interesting qualities, and with no purpose of forming, in connection with the house, any picture which is to be studied and enjoyed as a whole. Perhaps the majority of all who are interested in gardens sympathize with the view of our correspondent, and they find a real pleasure, and pleasure of a most refining and refreshing kind, in their practice. It is our belief, however, that they might do all this, and at the same time gain a new and ever-growing satisfaction if they gave thought to the general modeling and arrangement of the whole scene as well as to its individual details.

[Editorial. Garden and Forest 9 (1896): 341]

One beautiful way in which flowers can be used, especially those distinguished for the brightness and clearness of their coloring or for their tall stalks, is to plant them in moss and among wild vegetation along the edge of a brook or some other piece of water. The reflections in the water and the play of their movements thus doubled clothes with a new charm this scene which is altogether natural.