

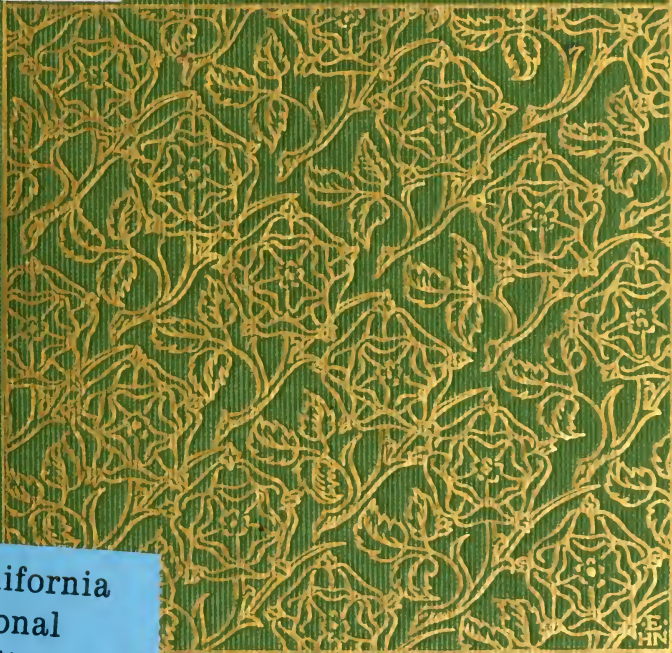
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An Essay by
Francis Bacon



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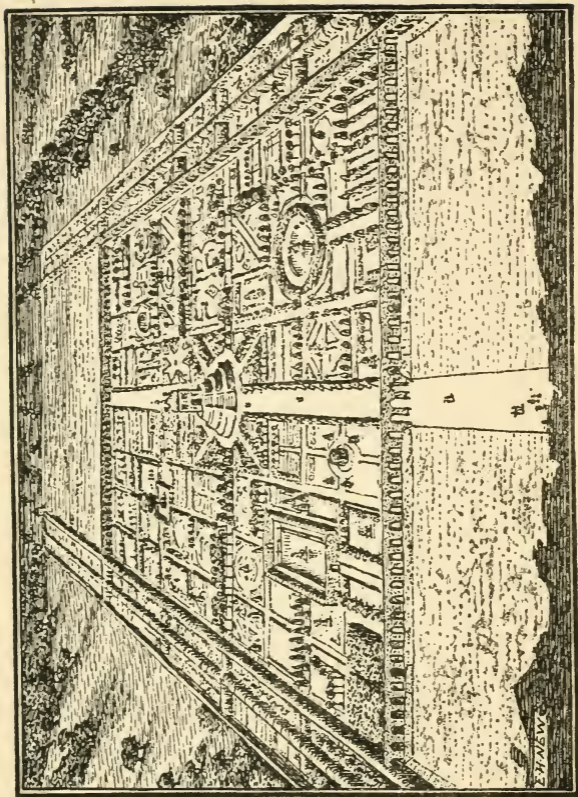
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Of
GARDENS

An Essay

By

Francis Bacon

With *Introduction* by HELEN MILMAN
and *Frontispiece* and *Cover Design* by
EDMUND H. NEW



John Lane

LONDON & NEW YORK

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Of *Gardens*

Introduction

“Any garden whatsoever is but Nature idealized.”

BACON wrote an ideal garden sketch which we as a nation treasure in our store-house of literary gems. It comes after the Essay “Of Building,” and is the prince’s garden to the prince’s palace which he reared with such consummate art. A lover, longing to beautify a bare patch, turns with a sigh from the rapturous picture of thirty acres laid out and planted with no thought of cost; but the last words of the essay bring sweet comfort even to one who revels in the peace and beauty of an acre, for one acre where love

grows with the flowers can contain a whole world.

Month by month Bacon plants for you his garden and tells of flowers and trees which blossom in his ideal spot. We, too, to-day have "Roses of all kinds" and all the flowers he boasts of, but had he been more of a true gardener and less of an ideal literary genius, he could have gathered together a sweeter story of a year. Mr. W. Aldis Wright tells us in a note that in two copies of the Edition of 1625 the following sentence is substituted for the words at the end of his season's calendar. "Thus, if you will, you may have the Golden Age againe, and a Spring all the Yeare long." The Golden

Age we would all fain have, but — Spring all the year? That is a graver question, for if the seasons lost themselves in an Eternal Spring we should sigh for our roses in vain, in vain.

From flowers Bacon carries us in thought to the Breath of Flowers; a beautiful description of the scent. I, for one, plead ignorance to the knowledge that dead strawberry leaves yield a “most Excellent Cordiall Smell”; but the thought of tender perfume filling the air as the result of plants being “Troden upon and Crushed” will find an echo of sympathy in many hearts, aye, in many lives. There is many a sprig of “Burnet, Wilde-Time,

and Water-Mints" in the Master's Hand, though we only take note of the lilies and roses as we tread life's garden.

There were three parts in this wonderful garden, a Green, a main garden, and a wilderness, and I venture to think, although we hold with formal gardening, that one's thoughts linger longest in the tangle of sweet briar, honeysuckle "and the Ground set with Violets." Coloured glass for the "Sunne to Play upon" is no joy in these days.

It is well that Bacon assured us that a garden should have peace. It must have more, it must have Mystery, and this is an element missing in these thirty acres. Would

*they be found in the sun and shadow?
or in the breath of the west wind?
or songs of birds? or in the running
water? — Perhaps.*

*Wheresoever the sun shone, shade
was to be created; where wind blew,
shelter. And there were to be no wet
feet in Bacon's garden. A princess
must be able to step in dainty satin
slippers where fancy led her. He
spared no cost. Yet as we read we
feel for certain that he left no orders
that his heart should be buried in his
garden, for he possesseth not (I say
it in all gentleness), however splen-
didly he writes, a garden soul.*

*The Essay is "a master-piece"; it
opens with a note of praise, it ends
in peace. It is written in stately*

measure, and the writing is as fresh to-day, and comes home to all of us as it did of yore. Do you wonder why? Because behind clipt yews, and stately hedges, and covert alleys, Nature holds her sway, and Nature ever plays on the heart-strings of the world.

HELEN MILMAN
(Mrs. Caldwell Crofton)

Of Gardens

GOD Almighty first Planted a Garden. And indeed, it is the Purest of Humane pleasures.

It is the Greatest Refreshment to the Spirits of Man ; Without which, Buildings and Pallaces are but Grosse Handy-works: And a Man shall ever see, that when Ages grow to Civility and Elegancie, Men come to Build Stately, sooner then to Garden Finely: As if Gardening were the Greater Perfection. I doe hold it, in the Royall Ordering of Gardens, there ought to be Gardens, for all the Moneths in the Yeare: In which, severally, Things of Beautie, may be then in Season. For December, and January, and the

Latter Part of November, you must take such Things, as are Greene all Winter; Holly; Ivy; Bayes; Juniper; Cipresse Trees; Eugh; Pine-Apple-Trees; Firre-Trees; Rose-Mary; Lavander; Periwinkle, the White, the Purple, and the Blewe; Germander; Flagges; Orange-Trees; Limon-Trees; And Mirtles, if they be stooved; & Sweet Marjoram warme set. There followeth, for the latter Part of January, and February, the Mezerion Tree, which then blossomes; Crocus Vernus, both the Yellow, and the Gray; Prime-Roses; Anemones; The Early Tulippa; Hiacynthus Orientalis; Chamairis; Frettellaria. For March, There come Violets, specially the Single Blew, which are the Earliest; The Yellow Daffadill; The Dazie; The Almond-

Tree in Blossome; The Peach-Tree in Blossome; The Cornelian-Tree in Blossome; Sweet-Briar. In Aprill follow, The Double white Violet; The Wall-flower; The Stock-Gilly-Flower; The Couslip; Flower-Delices, & Lillies of all Natures; Rosemary Flowers; The Tulippa; The Double Piony; The Pale Daffadill; The French Honny-Suckle; The Cherry-Tree in Blossome; The Dammasin, and Plum-Trees in Blossome; The White-Thorne in Leaf; The Lelacke Tree. In May, and June, come Pincks of all sorts, Specially the Blush Pincke; Roses of all kinds, except the Muske, which comes later; Hony-Suckles; Strawberries; Buglosse; Columbine; The French Mary-gold; Flos Africanus; Cherry-Tree in Fruit; Ribes; Figges in Fruit;

Raspes; Vine Flowers; Lavender in Flowers; The Sweet Satyrian, with the White Flower; Herba Muscaria; Liliū Convallium; The Apple-tree in Blossome. In July, come Gilly-Flowers of all Varieties; Muske Roses; The Lime-Tree in blossome; Early Peares, and Plummes in Fruit; Ginnitings; Quadlins. In August, come Plummes of all sorts in Fruit; Peares; Apricockes; Berberies; Filberds; Muske-Melons; Monks Hoods, of all colours. In September, come Grapes; Apples; Poppies of all colours; Peaches; Melo-Cotones; Nectarines; Cornelians; Wardens; Quinces. In October, and the beginning of November, come Services; Medlars; Bullises; Roses Cut or Removed to come late; Hollyokes; and such like. These Particulars are for

the Climate of London; But my meaning is Perceived, that you may have Ver Perpetuum, as the Place affords.

And because, the Breath of Flowers, is farre Sweeter in the Aire, (where it comes and Goes, like the Warbling of Musick) then in the hand, therefore nothing is more fit for that delight, then to know, what be the Flowers, and Plants, that doe best perfume the Aire. Roses Damask & Red, are fast Flowers of their Smels; So that; you may walke by a whole Row of them, and finde Nothing of their Sweetnesse; Yea though it be, in a Mornings Dew. Bayes likewise yeeld no Smell, as they grow. Rosemary little; Nor Sweet-Marjoram. That, which above all Others, yeelds the Sweetest Smell in the Aire, is the

Violet; Specially the White-double-Violet, which comes twice a Yeare; About the middle of Aprill, and about Bartholomew-tide. Next to that is, the Muske-Rose. Then the Strawberry-Leaves dying, which [? yeeld] a most Excellent Cordiall Smell. Then the Flower of the Vines; It is a little dust, like the dust of a Bent, which growes upon the Cluster, in the First comming forth. Then Sweet Briar. Then Wall-Flowers, which are very Delightfull, to be set under a Parler, or Lower Chamber Window. Then Pincks, and Gilly-Flowers, specially the Matted Pinck, & Clove Gilly-flower. Then the Flowers of the Lime tree. Then the Hony-Suckles, so they be somewhat a farre off. Of Beane Flowers I speake not, because they are Field Flowers.

But those which Perfume the Aire most delightfully, not passed by as the rest, but being Troden upon and Crushed, are Three: That is Burnet, Wilde-Time, and Water-Mints. Therefore, you are to set whole Allies of them, to have the Pleasure, when you walke or tread.

For Gardens, (Speaking of those, which are indeed Prince-like, as we have done of Buildings) the Contents, ought not well to be, under Thirty Acres of Ground; And to be divided into three Parts: A Greene in the Entrance; A Heath or Desart in the Going forth; And the Maine Garden in the midst; Besides Alleys, on both Sides. And I like well, that Foure Acres of Ground, be assigned to the Greene; Six to the Heath; Foure and Foure to either Side; And

Twelve to the Maine Garden. The Greene hath two pleasures; The one, because nothing is more Pleasant to the Eye, then Greene Grasse kept finely shorne; The other, because it will give you a faire Alley in the midst, by which you may go in front upon a Stately Hedge, which is to inclose the Garden. But, because the Alley will be long, and in great Heat of the Yeare, or Day, you ought not to buy the shade in the Garden, by Going in the Sunne thorow the Greene, therefore you are, of either Side the Greene, to Plant a Covert Alley, upon Carpenters Worke, about Twelve Foot in Height, by which you may goe in Shade, into the Garden. As for the Making of Knots, or Figures, with Divers Coloured Earths, that they may lie under the Windowes of

the House, on that Side, which the Garden stands, they be but Toyes: You may see as good Sightes, many times, in Tarts. The Garden is best to be Square; Incompassed, on all the Foure Sides, with a Stately Arched Hedge. The Arches to be upon Pillars, of Carpenters Worke, of some Ten Foot high, and Six Foot broad: And the Spaces between, of the same Dimension, with the Breadth of the Arch. Over the Arches, let there bee an Entire Hedge, of some Foure Foot High, framed also upon Carpenters Worke: And upon the Upper Hedge, over every Arch, a little Turret, with a Belly, enough to receive a Cage of Birds: And over every Space, betweene the Arches, some other little Figure, with Broad Plates of Round Coloured Glasse,

gilt, for the Sunne, to Play upon. But this Hedge I entend to be, raised upon a Bancke, not Steepe, but gently Slope, of some Six Foot, set all with Flowers. Also I understand, that this Square of the Garden, should not be the whole Breadth of the Ground, but to leave, on either Side, Ground enough, for diversity of Side Alleys: Unto which, the Two Covert Alleys of the Greene, may deliver you. But there must be, no Alleys with Hedges, at either End, of this great Inclosure: Not at the Hither End, for letting your Prospect upon this Faire Hedge from the Greene; Nor at the Further End, for letting your Prospect from the Hedge, through the Arches, upon the Heath.

For the Ordering of the Ground, within the Great Hedge, I leave it to

Variety of Device; Advising nevertheless, that whatsoever forme you cast it into, first it be not too Busie, or full of Worke. Wherein I, for my part, doe not like Images Cut out in Juniper, or other Garden stuffe: They be for Children. Little low Hedges, Round, like Welts, with some Pretty Pyramides, I like well: And in some Places, Faire Columnes upon Frames of Carpenters Worke. I would also, have the Alleys, Spacious and Faire. You may have Closer Alleys upon the Side Grounds, but none in the Maine Garden. I wish also, in the very Middle, a Faire Mount, with three Ascents, and Alleys, enough for foure to walke a breast; Which I would have to be Perfect Circles, without any Bulwarkes, or Imbosments; And the

Whole Mount, to be Thirty Foot high; And some fine Banqueting House, with some Chimneys neatly cast, and without too much Glasse.

For Fountaines, they are a great Beauty, and Refreshment; But Pooles marre all, and make the Garden unwholsome, and full of Flies, and Frogs. Fountaines I intend to be of two Natures: The One, that Sprinckleth or Spouteth Water; The Other a Faire Receipt of Water, of some Thirty or Forty Foot Square, but without Fish, or Slime, or Mud. For the first, the Ornaments of Images Gilt, or of Marble, which are in use, doe well: But the maine Matter is, so to Convey the Water, as it never Stay, either in the Bowles, or in the Cesterne; That the Water be never by Rest Discoloured, Greene,

or Red, or the like; Or gather any Mossinesse or Putrefaction. Besides that, it is to be cleansed every day by the Hand. Also some Steps up to it, and some Fine Pavement about it, doth well. As for the other Kinde of Fountaine, which we may call a Bathing Poole, it may admit much Curiosity, and Beauty; wherewith we will not trouble our selves: As, that the Bottome be finely Paved, And with Images: The sides likewise; And withall Embellished with Coloured Glasse, and such Things of Lustre; Encompassed also, with fine Railes of Low Statua's. But the Maine Point is the same, which we mentioned, in the former Kinde of Fountaine; which is, that the Water be in Perpetuall Motion, Fed by a Water higher then the Poole, and Delivered

into it by faire Spouts, and then discharged away under Ground, by some Equalitie of Bores, that it stay little. And for fine Devices, of Arching Water without Spilling, and Making it rise in severall Formes, (of Feathers, Drinking Glasses, Canopies, and the like,) they be pretty things to looke on, but Nothing to Health and Sweetnesse.

For the Heath, which was the Third Part of our Plot, I wish it to be framed, as much as may be, to a Naturall wildnesse. Trees I would have none in it; But some Thickets, made onely of Sweet-Briar, and Honny-suckle, and some Wilde Vine amongst; And the Ground set with Violets, Strawberries, and Prime-Roses. For these are Sweet, and prosper in the Shade. And these to be in the Heath, here and

there, not in any Order. I like also little Heaps, in the Nature of Mole-hils, (such as are in Wilde Heaths) to be set, some with Wilde Thyme; Some with Pincks; Some with Germander, that gives a good Flower to the Eye; Some with Periwinkle; Some with Violets; Some with Strawberries; Some with Couslips; Some with Daisies; Some with Red-Roses; Some with Liliū Convallium; Some with Sweet-Williams Red; Some with Beares-Foot; And the like Low Flowers, being withal Sweet, and Sightly. Part of which Heapes, to be with Standards, of little Bushes, prickt upon their Top, and Part without. The Standards to be Roses; Juniper; Holly; Beare-berries (but here and there, because of the Smell of their Blossome;) Red Currans;

Goose-berries ; Rose-Mary ; Bayes ; Sweet-Briar ; and such like. But these Standards, to be kept with Cutting, that they grow not out of Course.

For the Side Grounds, you are to fill them with Varietie of Alleys, Private, to give a full Shade ; Some of them, wheresoever the Sun be. You are to frame some of them likewise for Shelter, that when the Wind blows Sharpe, you may walke, as in a Gallery. And those Alleys must be likewise hedged, at both Ends, to keepe out the Wind ; And these Closer Alleys, must bee ever finely Gravelled, and no Grasse, because of Going wet. In many of these Alleys likewise, you are to set Fruit-Trees of all Sorts ; As well upon the Walles, as in Ranges. And this would be generally observed, that the Borders, wherin you plant

your Fruit-Trees, be Faire and Large, and Low, and not Steepe; And Set with Fine Flowers, but thin and sparingly, lest they Deceive the Trees. At the End of both the Side Grounds, I would have a Mount of some Pretty Height, leaving the Wall of the Enclosure Brest high, to looke abroad into the Fields.

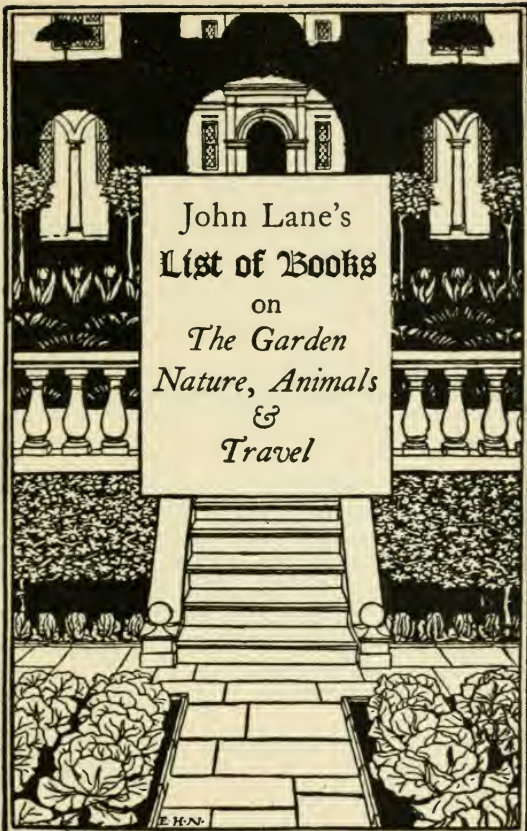
For the Maine Garden, I doe not Deny, but there should besome Faire Alleys, ranged on both Sides, with Fruit Trees; And some Pretty Tufts of Fruit Trees, And Arbours with Seats, set in some Decent Order; But these to be, by no Meanes, set too thicke; But to leave the Maine Garden, so as it be not close, but the Aire Open and Free. For as for Shade, I would have you rest, upon the Alleys of the Side Grounds, there to

walke, if you be Disposed, in the Heat of the Yeare, or day; But to make Account, that the Maine Garden, is for the more Temperate Parts of the yeare; And in the Heat of Summer, for the Morning, and the Evening, or Over-cast Dayes.

For Aviaries, I like them not, except they be of that Largenesse, as they may be Turffed, and have Living Plants, and Bushes, set in them; That the Birds may have more Scope, and Naturall Neastling, and that no Foulenesse appeare, in the Floare of the Aviary. So I have made a Plat-forme of a Princely Garden, Partly by Precept, Partly by Drawing, not a Modeil, but some generall Lines of it; And in this I have spared for no Cost. But it is Nothing, for Great Princes, that for the most Part, tak-

ing Advice with Workmen, with no
Lesse Cost, set their Things together;
And sometimes adde Statua's,
and such Things, for State,
and Magnificence, but
nothing to the true
Pleasure of a
Garden.





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