

**RURAL TASTE IN WESTERN
TOWNS AND COUNTRY
DISTRICTS: IN ITS RELATION TO
THE PRINCIPLES OF THE ART OF
LANDSCAPE GARDENING**

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Rural Taste in Western Towns and Country Districts: In Its Relation to the Principles of the Art of Landscape Gardening by Maximilian G. Kern

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MAXIMILIAN G. KERN

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RURAL TASTE

11299

In Western Towns and Country Districts.

IN ITS

RELATION TO THE PRINCIPLES OF THE ART

OF

LANDSCAPE GARDENING.

BY

MAXIMILIAN G. KERN.

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P R E F A C E .

The manuscript of this unassuming volume has been submitted to me not only for my opinion as to its rational connection with matters of education, but also for such emendations and suggestions as might be deemed necessary to the composition of one who is not a native of this country, and whose reading and thinking has been largely in foreign tongues.

Although previously but slightly acquainted with the theory of Landscape Gardening, I have become more and more interested in the development of the subject, and have laid the book down with a far clearer insight into the matter and a much higher appreciation of its real merits than I had thought possible of attainment without close and protracted study.

The work is written, not as are most books on similar subjects, by mere theorists, or for the sole use of the wealthy classes, who most largely patronize this art, and have unlimited means at their disposal for carrying into practical operation the suggestions contained therein ; but the writer is one of the few thoroughly educated, scientific Landscape Artists whose names are known in the history of the dissemination of this art, as expressed chiefly in the creation of the principal ornamental grounds of our country. His field of

operations has been in the west, and the leading public parks in the metropolis of our State owe their artistic development mainly to his intelligent labors.

His efforts to remove the subject from a purely professional basis and to place it on educational grounds, should therefore be considered doubly valuable, inasmuch as artistic ideas in this as in all other branches of education can be popularized only through educational means. Most heartily, therefore, do I commend the book to the teachers of the country, under whose guidance the thoughts of the youth committed to their instruction may be awakened to the consideration of a subject which, properly understood, would create a revolution in the general appearance of our rural homes, the grounds surrounding our schools and colleges, and especially of the cemeteries of our land, with which our most sacred feelings are so closely associated.

A. F. FLEET,

Professor of Greek.

University of Missouri.

PART FIRST.

MATTERS OF TASTE.

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INTRODUCTORY.

The subject discussed in the following pages is one of practical Art, available to all who wish to plan and to conduct rural improvements, embracing the design of grounds and the planting of trees, with a view to pictorial beauty and attractiveness to the public mind. The essence of the subject may appropriately be presented to the reader, by pointing him to Nature, the source from which Art, in its widest sense, has ever drawn its inspiration. The endless volume of scenery written by the hand of creative omnipotence, reveals to the reflecting mind the inmost thought of the Creator, infinite beauty and clearness, expressed throughout the entire realm of scenic nature. Well may this evidence of the thoughts of God join in with the anthems of praise proclaimed by the heavens and the starry firmament above.

These attributes of scenic nature are the basis from which man has derived his fundamental conceptions of the beautiful which have developed into the empire of Art and Culture, crowning the age in which we live; the leading pillar of the civilization of the race. Art claims to be an inspiration from on high. In order to deserve this exalted name, it must be firmly founded on the manifestations of the thoughts of God found in his handiwork, the charming scenery of nature which surrounds us on all sides. We may reverently believe that these ideas of creative wisdom were materialized in nature not merely for the abstract glory of the Creator himself, much less for the sole benefit of a carnal and greedy race of human beings, destined to populate this globe. They were to be the foundation on which the crowning triumph of creation, intellectual nature was to be reared, the central sun to illuminate the pathway of human progression. Its history verifies fully this assertion. The beauty of material nature has ever been the faithful instructor of the human mind. In the unknown past, darkened by mental depravity and ignorance, the charms of Nature were the cloud of light, kindly