

**GARDEN-CRAFT OLD AND  
NEW, WITH A  
MEMORIAL NOTICE BY  
THE REV. E. F. RUSSELL**

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Garden-craft old and new, with a memorial notice by the rev. E. F. Russell by John D. Sedding

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**JOHN D. SEDDING**

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A GARDEN ENCLOSED.

GARDEN-CRAFT  
OLD AND NEW

BY  
JOHN D. SEDDING

WITH A MEMORIAL NOTICE  
BY THE REV. E. F. RUSSELL



JOHN LANE: THE BODLEY HEAD  
LONDON AND NEW YORK MCMIII



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## PREFACE.

"WHAT am I to say for my book?" asks Mr Stevenson in the Preface to "An Inland Voyage." "Caleb and Joshua brought back from Palestine a formidable bunch of grapes; alas! my book produces naught so nourishing; and, for the matter of that, we live in an age when people prefer a definition to any quantity of fruit."

As this apology is so uncalled for in the case of this fruitful little volume, I would venture to purloin it, and apply it where it is wholly suitable. Here, the critic will say, is an architect who makes gardens for the houses he builds, writing upon his proper craft, pandering to that popular preference for a definition of which Mr Stevenson speaks, by offering descriptions of what he thinks a fine garden should be, instead of useful figured plans of its beauties!

And yet, to tell truth, it is more my subject than myself that is to blame if my book be unpractical. Once upon a time complete in itself, as a brief treatise upon the technics of gardening delivered to my brethren of the Art-worker's Guild a year ago, the essay had no sooner arrived with me at home, than it fell to pieces, lost gravity and compactness, and became a garden-plaything—a sort of

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gardener's "open letter," to take loose pages as fancies occurred. So have these errant thoughts, jotted down in the broken leisure of a busy life, grown solid unawares and expanded into a would-be-serious contribution to garden-literature.

Following upon the original lines of the *Essay on the For and Against of Modern Gardening*, I became the more confirmed as to the general rightness of the old ways of applying Art, and of interpreting Nature the more I studied old gardens and the point of view of their makers; until I now appear as advocate of old types of design, which, I am persuaded, are more consonant with the traditions of English life, and more suitable to an English homestead than some now in vogue.

The old-fashioned garden, whatever its failings in the eyes of the modern landscape-gardener (great is the poverty of his invention), represents one of the pleasures of England, one of the charms of that quiet beautiful life of bygone times that I, for one, would fain see revived. And judged even as pieces of handicraft, apart from their poetic interest, these gardens are worthy of careful study. They embody ideas of ancient worth; they evidence fine aims and heroic efforts; they exemplify traditions that are the net result of a long probation. Better still, they render into tangible shapes old moods of mind that English landscape has inspired; they testify to old devotion to the scenery of our native land, and illustrate old attempts to idealise its pleasant traits.

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*Because the old gardens are what they are—beautiful yesterday, beautiful to-day, and beautiful always—we do well to turn to them, not to copy their exact lines, nor to limit ourselves to the range of their ornament and effects, but to glean hints for our garden-enterprise to-day, to drink of their spirit, to gain impulsion from them. As often as not, the forgotten field proves the richest of pastures.*

J. D. S.

THE CROFT, WEST WICKHAM, KENT,  
Oct. 8, 1890.

