

THE ENGLISH FLOWER GARDEN

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The English Flower Garden by Henry A. Bright

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HENRY A. BRIGHT

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WITH ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES

BY

HENRY A. BRIGHT

AUTHOR OF "A YEAR IN A LANCASHIRE GARDEN."



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PREFACE.

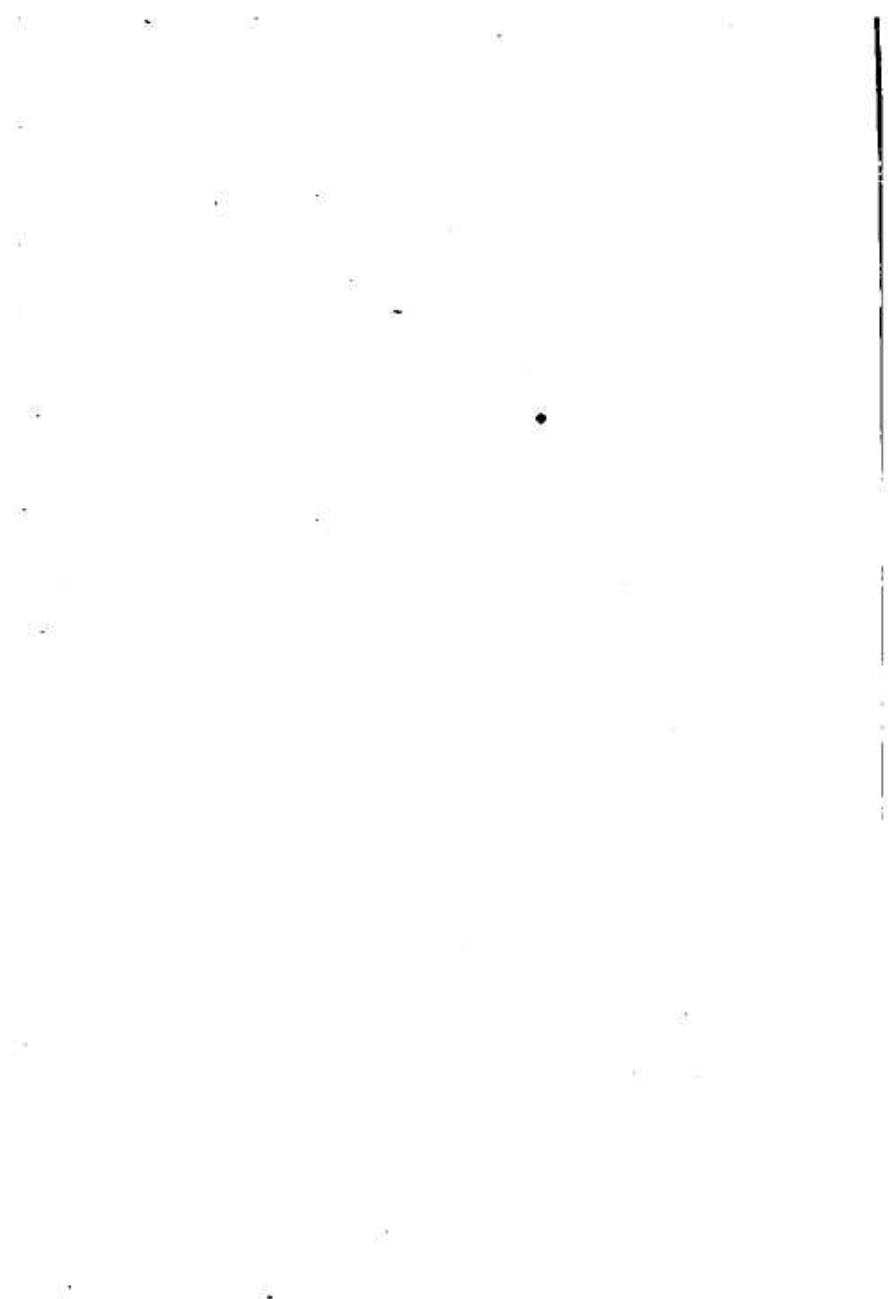
IT is just a year ago since this Essay on "The English Flower Garden" was published in the *Quarterly Review*.

It was written with a twofold object: to give in the smallest compass an outline history of English gardens, and to show once again what makes the true charm and happiness of a garden. Many—perhaps too partial—friends have urged me to reprint this article. They have reminded me that, when the immediate circulation of any one number of a Review has ceased, its articles are virtually lost and buried, and they assure me that there are readers who may not have already seen, and who would yet care to read, this Essay. I hardly know how this may be, but I do know

how very much I am indebted to the proprietor of the *Quarterly* for his great kindness in allowing me the opportunity of this reprint. Should this little book succeed in retaining the friends that *A Year in a Lancashire Garden* was happy enough to make, it will indeed be fortunate. It has been to me a matter of no little surprise (as, naturally, of pleasure) to find from the generous notices of the Press and from numerous private letters from owners of gardens, to whom I am entirely a stranger, that the views I have expressed as to the necessity of a reform in our gardens are very widely held. So long as a garden is only regarded as a means for displaying masses of gay colouring, half the delight and all the real interest of it are gone. It is only when we learn to make friends of individual plants, and recall their history and associations, that a garden becomes a pleasure for the intellect as well as for the senses. But I do not wish to carry my opinions to any extravagant length. It is Voltaire, I think, who says that "a man may have preferences but

no exclusions," and I certainly would exclude nothing that is good in the present system. Bedding-out is occasionally very effective and sometimes necessary; and, on the other hand, a garden—such as I saw suggested somewhere the other day—which should contain only flowers known to Chaucer, would be extremely disappointing. However, bedding-out can take very good care of itself, and Chaucerian gardens will not be largely popular. Meanwhile, I sincerely hope that flowering shrubs and hardy herbaceous plants may be far more generally grown and cared for than they are at present.

It has seemed on the whole best to leave this Essay as it was written. I have made a few verbal corrections and inserted one or two short sentences, and that is all. I have, however, added illustrative Notes on points which seemed of some little interest.



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