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COUNTRY LIFE

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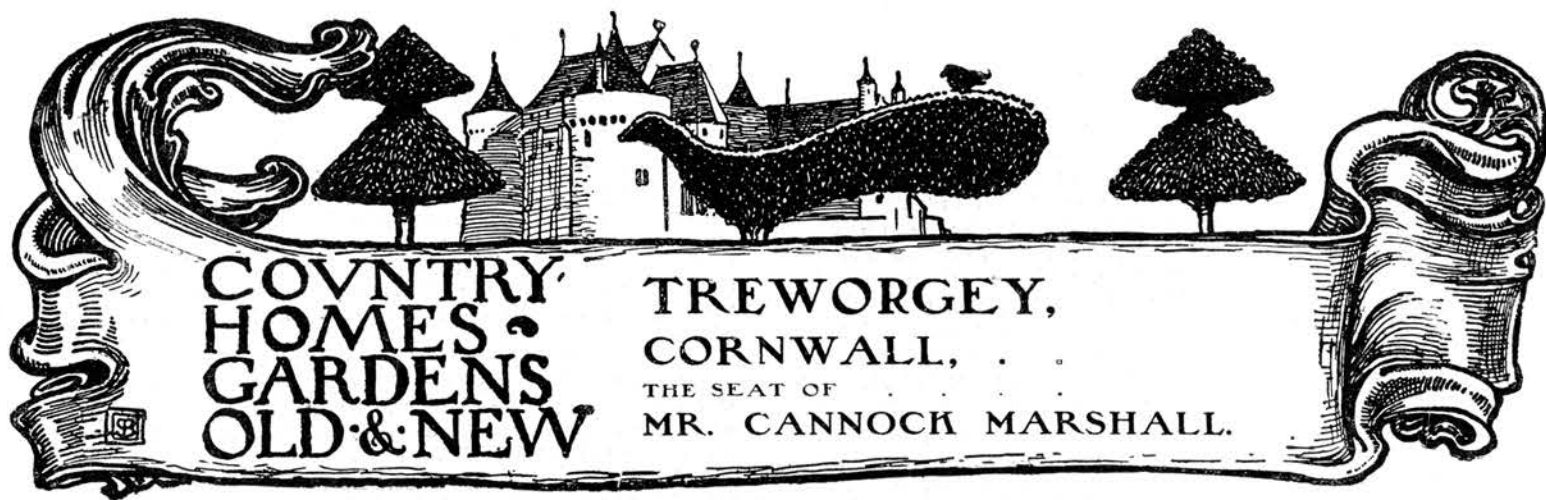
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H. WALTER BARNETT.

LADY MURIEL GORDON-LENOX.

1 Park Side, S.W.



THIS old-fashioned Cornish manor house, standing about a mile and a-half north-west of Liskeard, with a pleasant aspect to the front and the eternal granite hills behind, was an ancient seat of the Connocks, and is said to have been built in or about the year 1598. In the course of the three centuries which have since elapsed many changes have passed over the edifice, which will be noticed by the least discerning in our pictured representations of it. Now, indeed, it has little appearance of antiquity, but within and without there are features of interest, and the old wears something of the livery of the modern. The mansion is built of stone, of granite, we believe, but is faced with plaster, and its long range, with the modest classic porch in the middle and the low gable over it, has a character of simplicity and rural quaintness that is quite its own.

The great distinction is in the huge and singular yews, which are surely among the most curious in England, and the topiary sculptor has gone to work in a spirit of much originality. Although the district is hilly, the house stands upon a level space, with some four acres of ground about it, all pleasant and attractive, and a simple iron railing, with curious iron gate-posts, surmounted by vases, encloses a forecourt. Here are grass plats with four of the great yews, and two Roman soldiers keep guard upon pedestals, with most happy and distinctive effect.

Although the soil is stony, the trees are of considerable size, and the wooded outlook is very attractive. Before we leave the house, however, to enter the gardens, let us remember the low-ceiled rooms, some of them panelled, and the excellent staircase, with its Georgian columns and carved oak balustrades wearing a garb—for such things are—of paint, as well as a carved screen in the old drawing-room, belonging to the time of Chippendale, and looking like the work of that famous craftsman, and chairs that may more surely be attributed to him.

The box hedges are, like the yews, old and dense and fine, and of great thickness—veritable bastions of verdure they are—and a particularly noble one shelters the kitchen garden. The flower garden has nothing so remarkable as its mighty old yews, which are as big as hayricks, and resemble them somewhat in shape,

“If shape it can be called, that shape has none.”

These are huge billowy creations, extraordinary imaginings embodied in immemorial yew, defying description, but seen well in the pictures. In addition to the four in the forecourt, there are others on the rising ground to the left, where are terrace walks on the upper level, backed by several ragged old fir trees. There is no lack of flower growth, and the terrace walk is margined at intervals by vases full of the gayest denizens of





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THE ENTRANCE GATE.

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LOOKING SOUTH-EAST.

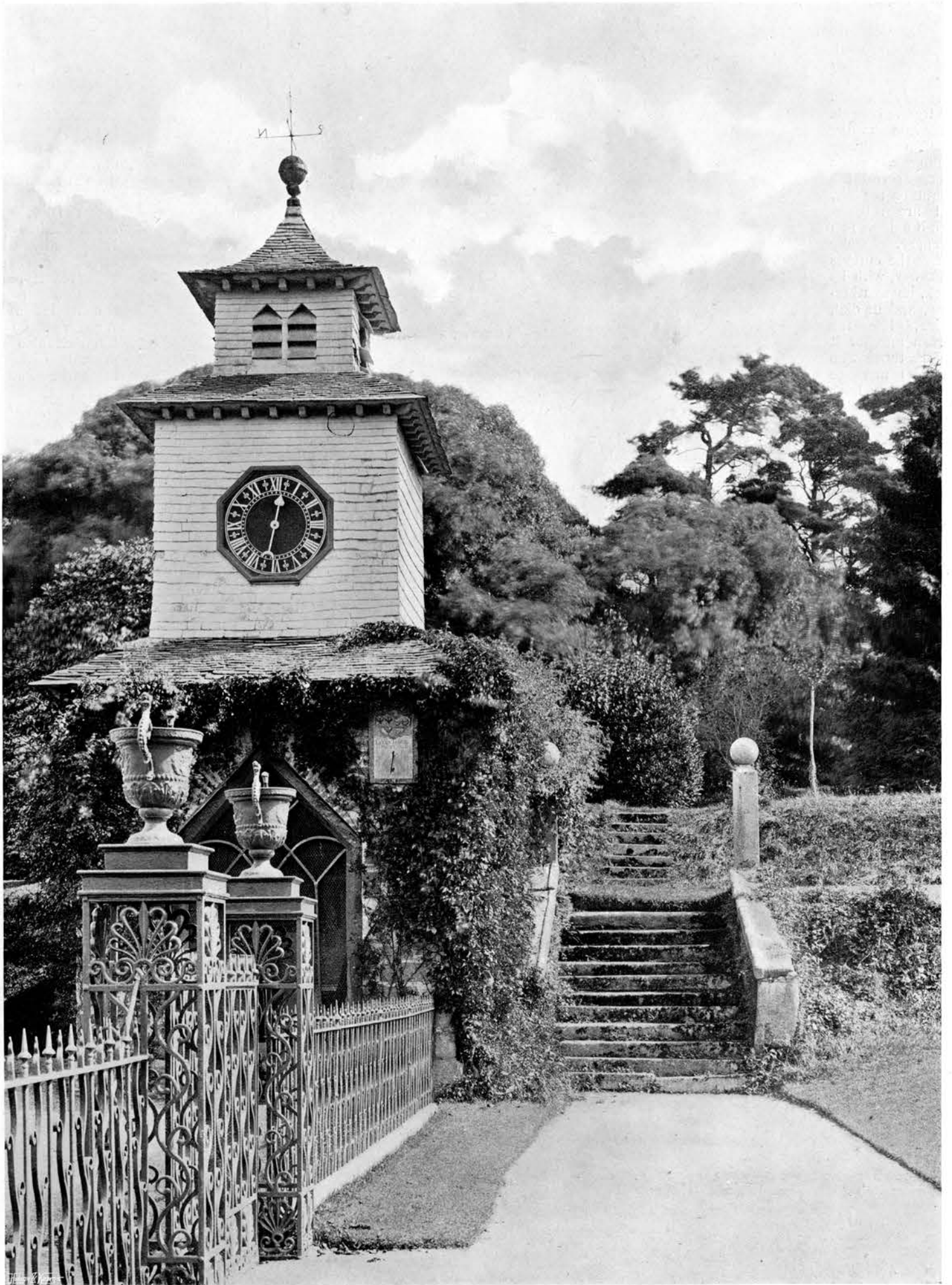
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TREWORGEY.

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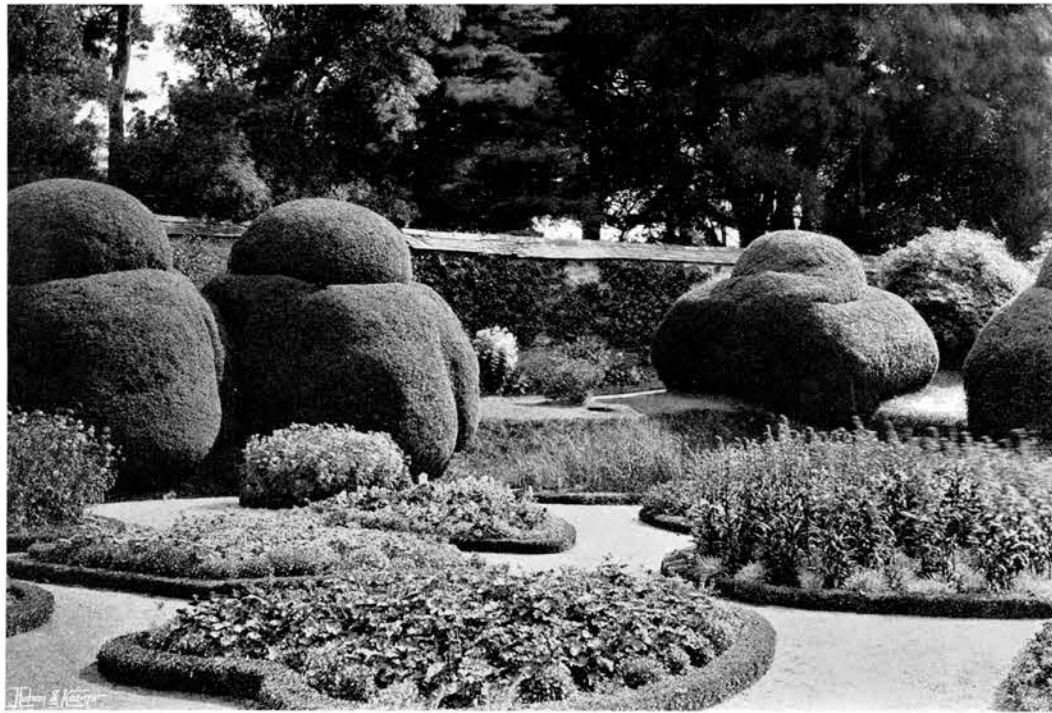


gardens. The Roman soldiers, with helm, breast-plate, buskins, and spear, have a beautiful outlook over their domain of the forecourt, and beyond it they gaze upon the terraced ridges and the trees. Outside the iron railing runs a pathway leading to stairs which ascend the height on the left, and are all enriched with greenery. Thereby stands the curious old tower, with its clock, its weather-vane, and its dial, which, like the garden monitor it is, tells those who read its message that "Every hour shortens life"—a saying that is true indeed, but is not always thought of, until some "horologe of the garden world," as Lamb calls the dial, holds out its warning.

The house and its garden will not further detain us. Their features are disclosed admirably in the pictures. Let us now look a little into the descent of the place—how it came to the hands that possess it. In this little western world, this parish of St. Cleer, arrived one Cannock, or Connock, it is said from Wiltshire, in the time of Henry VIII., being, it is stated, a successful tanner who established himself pleasurably in Cornwall. He it was who is believed to have built the house,

and it remained with his descendants, who married into the families of Burgoyne, Courteney, and Heale, and grew to consequence in the shire. John Cannock was Receiver of the Duchy of Cornwall in 1532, which may well have been an office of profit, and he represented Liskeard in Parliament in 1554, and again in 1570. His family possessed considerable property, and exercised much local influence. Another John Cannock also represented Liskeard in three Parliaments, those of 1660, 1679, and 1685. A century

passed, and Nicholas Cannock, who died in 1757, was the last of his name, and bequeathed the estate to his widow, who built almshouses on St. Cleer Common. She survived her husband more than forty years, and died in 1804, leaving Treworrey House to her sister, Mrs. Inch, and afterwards to the latter's daughter, Miss Anne Inch, who died unmarried, and was succeeded in the ownership by her nephew, Mr. William Marshall, a gentleman descended from an ancient family of Devonshire, who was High Sheriff of Cornwall in 1843. This gentleman married Everilda, daughter of the Rev. Robert Palk Carrington, and was the father of the present owner of Treworrey.



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UNDER THE ILEX.

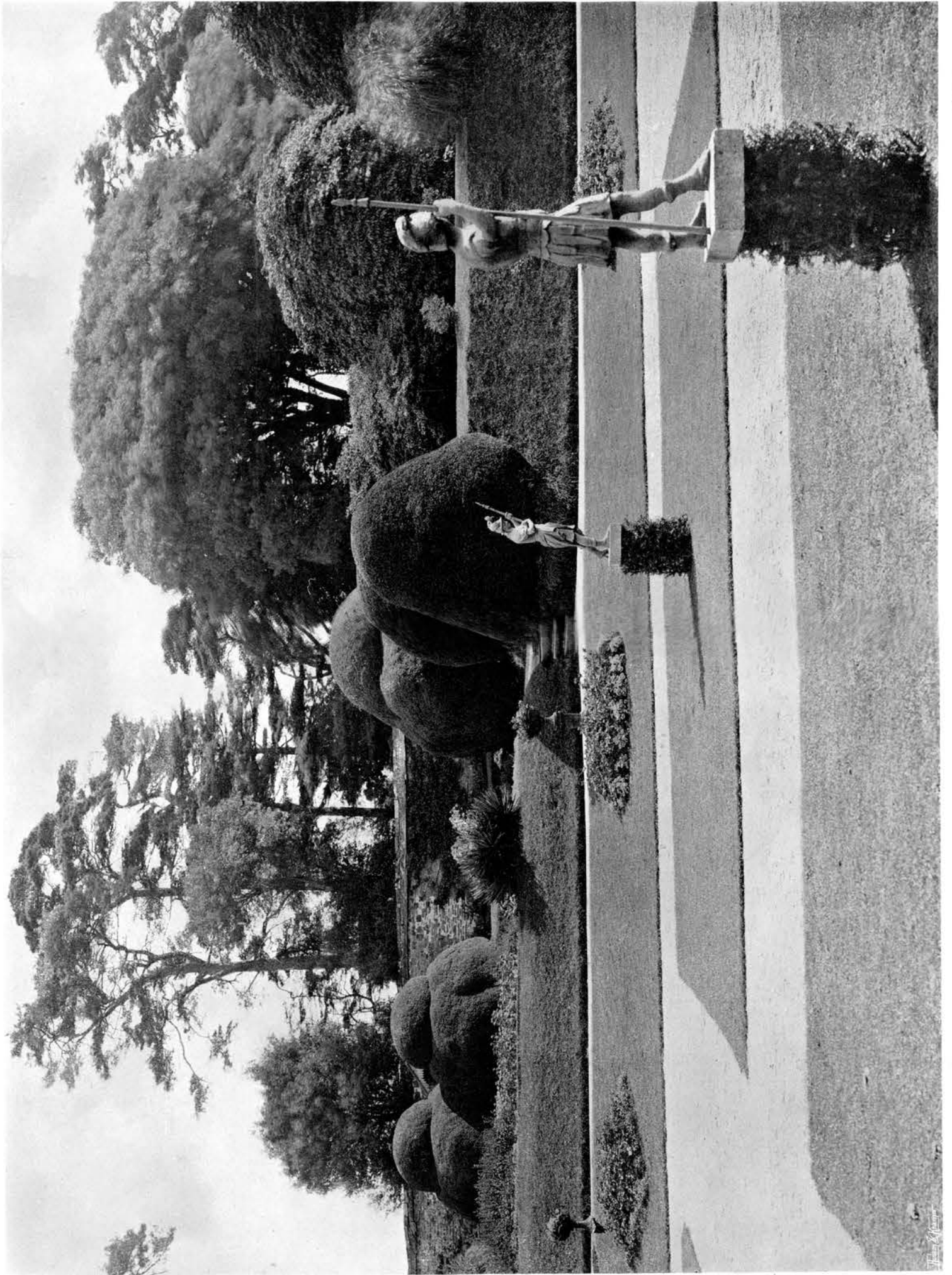
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GRADATION OF YEWS.

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ACROSS THE LAWN.

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YEWS LIKE CONCERTINAS.

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THE UPPER GARDEN.

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Something may now be said about the interests of this remarkable district. The parish takes its name from St. Cleer, or St. Clare, and a large part of it consists of wild and extensive moors and commons, while great hills behind rise to the height of Brown Willy. Places, indeed, are so elevated hereabout that a view is commanded of Devonshire from Hartland to Plymouth, and both Dartmoor and Exmoor are in sight. About a mile north of the church of St. Cleer granite hills make their appearance, and run across the parish in a curved line, and, south of the granite, masses of compact and quartzose felspar protrude, while near the church hornblende slate prevails. A little further south, on the ridge of a barren down, masses of hornblende project, and there are loose blocks upon the hill and in the adjoining valley. Varieties of the same rock are found further south again in the parish. It is characteristic of Cornwall that, with its rocky soil and barren uplands, it unites romantic valleys and rich woods, and many such pleasant places as we see at Treworrey.

This is the district of the Caradon copper-mines, of the fine cromlech known as Trevethy Quoit, of the celebrated Cheese-wring, and of the ancient upright stones known as the Hurlers, which once comprised three contiguous circles of stones from 3ft. to 5ft. high. There is also an ancient well, dedicated to St. Cleer, with a baptistery or chapel, by which it was once enclosed, and there is an ancient cross completing the group. The chapel was destroyed during the fanatical stirrings of the Civil War, but was restored in 1864, as a memorial of the Rev. John Jope, who for sixty-seven years had been vicar of St. Cleer. There were virtues in the water, and it is said to have been used as a "bowsening" resort for curing mental ills and ministering to minds diseased.

Treworrey House stands, therefore, in a country characteristic of Cornwall, and with special interests of its own. It is a land of wide prospects and of great winds, and yet, in the hollows, Nature flourishes in all her green luxuriance.

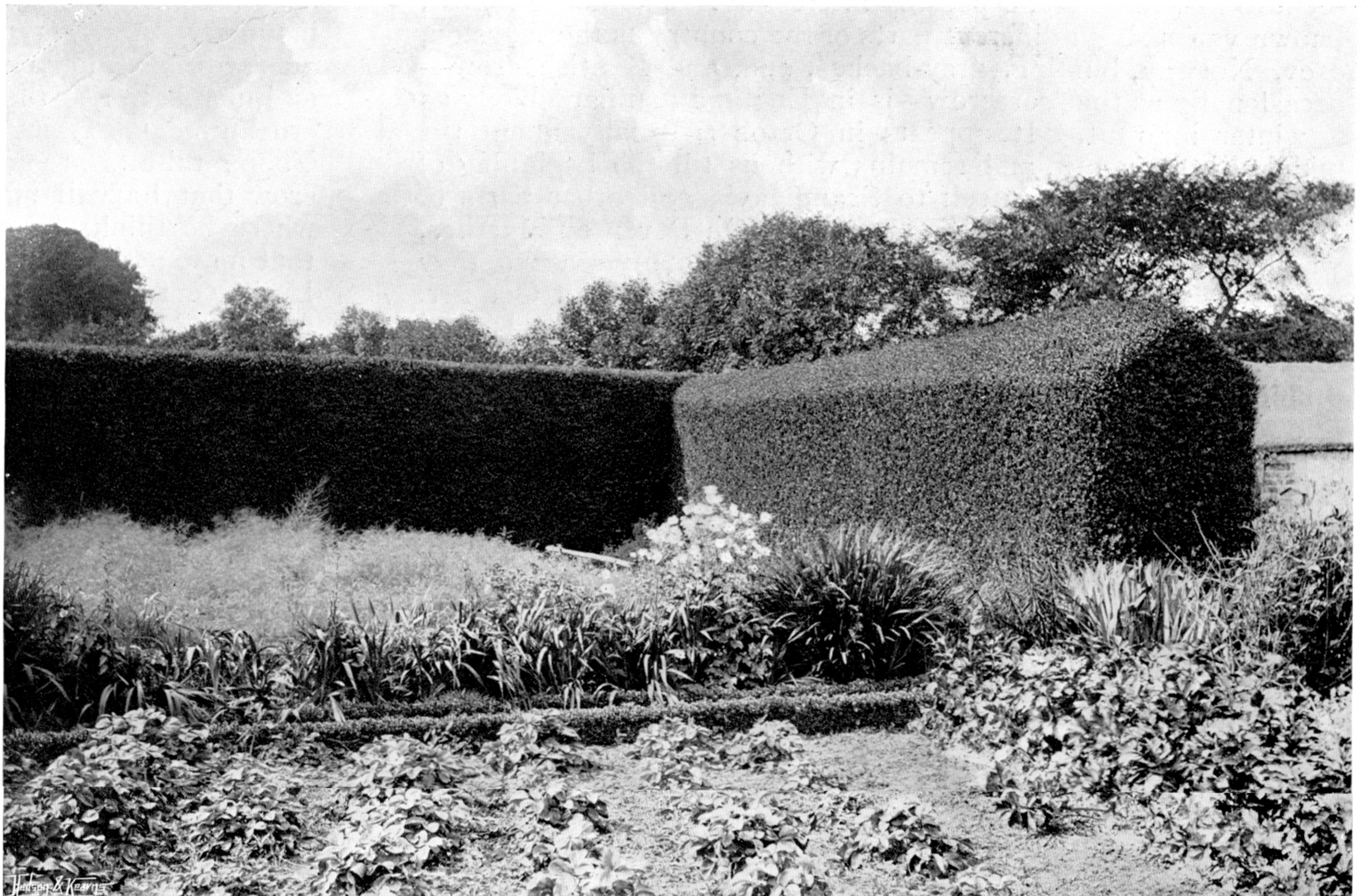
PARKS AND NURSERIES.

LONDON parks are so precious to the public that any needless interference with their breadth, airiness, and beauty of surface is a serious loss; but let anyone go to the centre of Hyde Park now, and he will see how the heart of the park is disfigured and cut up to make a large nursery garden not really needed for the beauty or planting of the park. If one Chief Commissioner has the right to commit such an outrage without public consent or notice, any other may have the same power for evil. For no weightier reason than to improve the view from the late Mr. Albert Grant's house at Kensington, the old gardener's house at the corner of Kensington Gardens was removed and a suburban villa put in the middle of the park instead of it. The old house could not have been in a better place, as it did not interfere with the beauty or breadth of the park, but you cannot plant a London villa in a park without also adding to it the walks and roads necessary for its service. The objections to what is now being done are: (1) the loss of area in the centre of the park, (2) stiff banks, (3) false lines out of harmony with the naturally beautiful surface of the park, and (4) the dreadful and inevitable addition to the mass of spiked iron railings. Even those who admire or who endure the sight of iron railings would be almost alarmed if they knew how many miles of them there are in Hyde Park—a waste of good metal and labour, as half of them are needless. If the footways by the drive at the Serpentine must be fortified by lines of ponderous and hideous iron posts and rails, why not the far more crowded streets? They destroy the good effect of the Serpentine from many points of view. If the park is only to be considered as a run for town-imprisoned dogs, the railings must be kept, but even from that point of view quite half of the iron might be done away with. Park or garden beauty that can only be seen through spiked railings is bought at too high a price.

As to the stiff banks now being formed, the natural surface is so good that any attempts to alter it are needless, and sure to end in ugliness. The practice in the London parks of raising mounds is against all good work in landscape gardening. It is assumed by the mound-makers that the ground is not right for their purpose, and so dumplings of earth are thrown up here and there to change the natural form of the ground. Anyone going

through the parks will be able to judge whether anything is gained by this distortion of the surface. Piling mounds of earth round trees is a sure way of hiding the beautiful form of the stem as it arises from the earth, often with a wide-spreading base, and where this needless work has been done the base of the tree is often hidden, and the stem comes out of the ground like a broom-handle. Anyone now walking along the Bayswater side of the park may see the stiff bank round the nursery the whole way along. There a long gentle vale (rightly kept unplanted) which starts from the Marble Arch and goes down westward, and used to recede in the distance, as it should always, but is now barred by this rigid bank. In valleys like that of the Thames there is no planting either of tree, flower, or shrub that is one whit advanced by the creation of artificial mounds. The true way is to see and feel the beauty of the natural form of the ground, to keep it jealously, and to plant it rightly.

And what is the excuse for the present injury to the park? To grow a number of "bedding" and annual plants in order to make a summer show by Park Lane, weather permitting. It is not right to criticise if we cannot offer any better suggestion. The better way is to plant the park as a whole and on an enduring system. The energy which is bestowed on ephemeral plants which perish every year, might, in that way, make Hyde Park as instructive, in its way, as Kew. The soil and surface are better than at Kew, and even under our smoke-cloud a great number of the hardy trees and shrubs of Europe and northern countries could be grown there. As it is, much of the labour is lost with the first frosts, and the weary wasteful round has to be gone all over again, to produce bad carpeting in summer and



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BOX HEDGES IN KITCHEN GARDEN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

bare graves in winter. Let any of your readers go and see the beds in Park Lane now, and say if that be the right aspect for a park or garden at any time of the year. Anything uglier than the aspect of these places, even in the middle of the summer of the past year, can hardly be imagined in the form of a garden. Yet we have to reckon with such seasons. It is a costly and inartistic system, and wrong in every way for our climate, for colour, or for effect. It is often said in large gardens that are devoted to this system that we cannot get away from it; but our fathers had good gardens before "bedding" was invented, and picturesque grouping is far better. In a northern country like ours, in which frosts occur even in summer, it is folly to trust to tender plants alone. Nor is sticking palms about a right way to decorate an English park. Even in the South of France, where there is a climate to encourage them, they look out of place. In our climate they are about the worst things that could be chosen. Last summer the plants used for colour effect in the parks were in many places a complete failure, and yet all the choicest, the best nourished, and the sunniest spots are given up to these wretched exotics. With so many dull days these bad colours were depressing in the extreme. Shocking combinations of colour were also seen, such as blue lobelia, scarlet geranium, mauve verbena, with purple and variegated fuchsias, all crowded together within an area of a few feet, distressing in their warring shades. But granting for a moment that the exotic system now in use is the only one worthy of these parks, is it right to disfigure them with large nurseries in order to carry it out? No; it should be done as in Paris, at Auteuil, where there is a large establishment for the general use of the parks, thus saving them from any needless disfigurement, and supplying