PICTURESQUE GARDEN FEATURES SUITABLE FOR MODERN HOMES: BY ELIZABETH C. GRAHAM

HOME-MAKERS all over the country are beginning to realize that the garden features that make for beauty are not only available for the large country estate, but for the tiny cottage in village or suburb as well. Formerly it seemed essential, in order to have picturesque gates and fountains, pergolas and garden seats, to employ a high-priced architect to draw up elaborate plans and to watch the development of them. Here and there, it is true, in an old-fashioned farm-house garden rustic seats and grape arbors were to be found, but usually the latter were erected merely to support a grape-vine. No thought of beauty went into their construction, and as a rule they were not available for even a moment’s rest or joy. They were too low for a tall person to stand erect in, and rarely did they shelter a seat or a bench.

Nowadays home-makers as well as architects are giving careful attention to the subject of garden architecture. It is not always necessary to engage professional skill in order to make individual and beautiful the environment of a home. The personality and taste of the owner are more apt to be expressed most faithfully when he does the planning and actual work himself. Neither is it necessary for the grounds to be extensive in order to make them charming. A little time and ingenuity will often work wonders, and wherever there is a bit of open ground around a house there is opportunity for some garden feature that will add to the outdoor beauty of a home.

An interesting design is shown in the picture of a gate at the side of a driveway.
The heavy pillars at either side of the walk are built of field stone and brick, and the tile roof is most picturesque and craftsmanlike. The heavy chimneylike column at the left is covered with a tracery of clinging vines that push little tendrils of green into the crevices between the stones, and a wrought-iron bracket on which to hang a lantern to light the driveway swings out from the top of the column.

Another picture of a gateway shows a rather unusual garden feature. It is a covered seat by the side of a driveway, and is built like a hooded gate, with a seat where the gate would ordinarily be. The columns and base are of field stone roughly shaped; the beams that support the tile roof on one side are embedded in a block of concrete, and on the other they rest on a high piller of the cut stone. A row of heavy square pickets extends across the center of the long plank that forms the seat and serves as a back for both sides of it. This is an ideal spot for resting or reading on a warm day, and the vines that are beginning to creep over the corner of the roof will in time add further grace and shelter to the structure.

Another picture shown is of a cool and shady veranda that surely must afford rare opportunity for outdoor living. The type of construction is suggestive of Colonial architecture, an effect which is heightened by the two old hickory chairs and the high-backed white wooden seat. The wide brick floor is raised above the level of the garden and the brick walk at the side by a layer of field stone, and suggests the softness and coolness of moss. The actual construction is most simple, just a pergola roof supported on four white turned columns and covered by a mass of clustering, twining vines that admit refreshing breezes but shut out the scorching rays of the sun.

An unusual setting for an outdoor fountain built of rough field stone, brick and redwood beams is shown in another picture. This particular fountain is in the center of a patio, but it would be quite as interesting and effective if placed in a garden. The construction suggests a massive pergola with four heavy columns of field stone supporting the open roof. Two low steps of brick lead to a wooden seat, above which on a raised floor of brick is the fountain bowl. On either side of the steps are planted masses of flowers and vines that cling to the base of the stone columns and lend color and fragrance to the whole patio.

The little pergola built of cedar boles with the bark left on is an interesting design for the man who wishes to construct his own garden features. The man who made this
one cut down the trees himself and left the logs as nearly as possible in their natural state. This style of pergola is especially suited to the simple shingled bungalow adjoining, and is quite in keeping with the Japanese garden to which it marks the entrance.

The planning of garden features is a source of never-failing pleasure, and in the building of them lies even a deeper joy. Many a man has found healthful exercise in the laying of stone walls, the hewing down of trees to make a grape arbor or a pergola, and the building of stone steps and garden gates has often been the means of cementing pride and interest in the appearance of the home. Children also can take an active interest in beautifying the surroundings of the home. The long evenings in wintertime can be devoted to the planning of some special garden beauty, and the joyous vacation days that follow in the summer can be profitably spent in working out the plans. Children love to be useful, if the usefulness is not confined to unlovely tasks that usually fall to them to do. The drudgery of washing dishes and carrying wood and water offers no interest for children, for these tasks have achieved nothing definite when they are finished, and often they create in childish minds a distaste for work in any form. Children are naturally constructive; they instinctively love to build,—witness the building blocks that hold so many little ones enthralled even before they are able to walk. And surely no little boy ever spent a summer near a brook without wanting to build a dam in it.

Of course, much of the actual work of constructing garden features is too heavy for little hands to do, but there are many steps that little feet are willing to take. The children can run through the fields and locate stones that are suitable for use; they can lift the smaller ones on a wheelbarrow or cart and push or pull them to a convenient place, and they can even sort the stones that are not too unwieldy and get them ready for laying.

Work of this sort keeps children in the open air, keeps them interested and busy, and often lays the foundation for a lasting appreciation of labor as a vital developing force, not merely something to be slighted or shunned.