

The Wilderness. By Boris Pilniak. Alfred A. Knopf.

The Clock. By Aleksei Remizov. Alfred A. Knopf.

THE LOVESOME SPOT

By Richardson Wright

FORMAL design is axiomatic wherever gardens played a part in domestic and artistic evolutions. From the beginning gardens were made not to imitate nature but to challenge her. This type of design goes far back into the race roots. The formalism of Italian gardens carried on the heritage of Greece; French gardens learned formalism from Italy; and English gardens, in turn, from France. In Spain formalism came through the Moors, who transplanted the idea from the Persians, those same Persians who, going eastward, took formal garden design into India. And the Persians, for their formal designs, were indebted to the Egyptians! In America garden design, like its sister art, architecture, is a synthesis of all the experiments and achievements of the past.

This universal concept of garden design is evident in the three sumptuous books under consideration. M. Forestier, who has to his credit many fine gardens in France and Spain, and who created the *roseraie* at the Bagatelle in Paris, offers what he calls "a notebook of plans and sketches". This work, originally published in France some years back, has been capably translated by Helen Morgenthau Fox. Plot plans and perspective drawings show variously sized garden problems. Details of garden architecture — steps, summer houses, seats, fountains, pavements — are drawn in practical detail. Plant lists are included. The book is

ideal for those who plan to design a garden, whether large or small, and for those who study landscape architecture, since each detail is so beautifully and helpfully explained. The gardens, of course, bear the heritage of La Notre in the geometrical formalism of their design. In the main the plant material suggested by M. Forestier is used in this country or equally good substitutions can be found; certainly the type of design he suggests fits our suburban problems exactly. It is adaptable to many kinds of houses in practically all sections of the country.

Miss Nichols's "Spanish and Portuguese Gardens" is another inspiring aid to garden design. Of late there has been a revival in California and in Florida of what is termed Mediterranean architecture — Spanish and Italian types of houses. For such houses the gardens of the Iberian Peninsula are a natural concomitant. They are Moorish gardens, enclosed, formal, precise, dependent upon water, color, architecture, and a studied design for their effects. Heretofore this style of garden has been practically unknown to American gardeners. The oriental word for a garden is "a paradise"; it was a place to live in. The newer gardens of Spain — and the author assures us many are being made today — are recreating this Eden spirit.

Apart from its architecture, the pronounced feature of the garden of the Iberian Peninsula is water. The hot climate made the water tank and the water channel as necessary in Spain as it did in India. Likewise the same brilliant arrangement of color that is found in the rugs of Persia and India is found in the flowers and architecture of Spanish gardens. Miss Nichols surveys each of these features in her study of the oriental background and in explaining the Moorish transition of them

to Spain. She describes the pleasure grounds of the Renaissance, gardens of Majorca, the eighteenth century developments in Spain, the smaller gardens and patios and the Portuguese pleasure. Her lists of the plant material used in these gardens constitute an especially illuminating feature of the book. The illustrations have been selected and reproduced with great care.

"Beautiful Gardens in America" is a revised and enlarged edition of a previous work by Miss Shelton. It is an indication of the amazing improvement both in gardens and in garden interest that has taken place in this country in the past ten years. Introductory chapters speak of the problems of climate met in this country and give historic data where necessary; otherwise this is a picture book, a rich, inspiring, and helpful display of gardens from every section of the country. The variety of these gardens is impressive. Italian types are here, Spanish, English, Dutch, naturalistic, water gardens, rock gardens; but in all design is evident. In short, it seems that American garden owners are at last impressed with the necessity for laying out a garden in a well defined design. The variety of flowers, trees, and shrubs is also a commendable feature, for despite a prohibitive embargo against plant importation, we manage to make gardens in this country that compare favorably with gardens in the Old World.

These three volumes can be recommended for that section of the library which, in country houses today, has

become both necessary and popular — the garden shelves. They are authoritative, inspiring, immensely helpful.

RESTORATION OF A SUPERMAN

By Charles R. Walker

THOUGH not equaling the bulbous masses of proletarian literature, there is a growing body of writing definitely devoted to what Nietzsche used to call a "master morality". In all the democracies of recent times, not excepting our own, there have been intellectuals, of course, who worshiped the aristocratic ideal, preaching the sole and everlasting validity of strength, energy, and blood. But no one ever preached with an intenser passion or a wider erudition than Arthur Gobineau, author of the "*Essai sur l'Inégalité des Races Humaines*" and citizen of France during the deadly mediocrities of the early French republic. The Count's essay was translated as a slavery tract in the middle of the last century and printed in America. But from then till now, when "*The Golden Flower*" appears in a translation by Ben Ray Redman, few Americans have acquainted themselves with the French superman.

"*The Golden Flower*" is a series of five essays, each designed as a preface to one of the five parts of Gobineau's extraordinary rhapsody in dramatic form, "*The Renaissance*". It was omitted from the original edition of "*The Renaissance*" — a unique work of great energy — and was printed in Germany for the first time in 1918, and in France in 1924. Though rather too ecstatic in parts, there are segments of thought of extraordinary power, like the famous and significant passage that

Gardens. By J. C. N. Forestier. Charles Scribner's Sons.

Spanish and Portuguese Gardens. By Rose Standish Nichols. Houghton Mifflin Company.

Beautiful Gardens in America. By Louise Shelton. Charles Scribner's Sons.