

SCIENCE

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THE SOCIAL, EDUCATIONAL, AND SCIENTIFIC VALUE OF BOTANIC GARDENS¹

It is a noteworthy fact that the United States is beginning to appreciate botanic gardens. This appreciation may be relatively superficial as yet, but the superficial is usually the preliminary step that leads to the fundamental. The desirability of botanic gardens was not obvious when large areas in a state of nature were available to almost every one; but when we developed congested populations in cities and made artificial most of our open areas, the thought of botanic gardens began to take form.

Those of you who have traveled in Europe must have been impressed by the multiplicity of such gardens. They began there in the form of monastic gardens, in which the so-called "simples," used in primitive medicine, were cultivated. Then they came out into the open as city gardens, chiefly for the enjoyment of the people and to beautify the city. Finally, they became also scientific, and gradually led to such great establishments as the botanic gardens at Rome, Geneva, and Paris, the great modern gardens on the outskirts of Berlin and Munich, and that greatest of all garden establishments, the Kew Gardens of London. These are but conspicuous illustrations of what almost every European city had developed before we began to think of garden establishments.

I wish to speak of three conspicuous con-

MSS. intended for publication and books, etc., intended for review should be sent to Professor J. McKeen Cattell, Garrison-on-Hudson, N. Y.

¹ Address delivered at the dedication of the laboratory building and plant houses of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, April 19, 1917.