

the object of contemplation, we can not mistake the indications of a true poetic inspiration.

We would gladly instance the pleasantly-situated villas on the Pincian Hill, at Tusculum and Tibur, on the promontory of Misenum, and at Putcoli and Baiæ, as proofs of a love of nature among the Romans, had not these buildings, like those of Scæurus and Mæcenas, of Lucullus and Adrian, been overstocked with edifices designed for pomp and display; temples, theaters, and race-courses alternating with aviaries, and houses for rearing snails and dormice. The elder Scipio had surrounded his simpler country house at Liturnum with towers in the castellated style. The name of Matius, a friend of Augustus, has come down to us as that of the person who, in his love for unnatural stiffness, first caused trees to be cut in imitation of architectural and plastic patterns. The letters of the younger Pliny give us a charming description of two of his numerous villas, Laurentinum and Tusculum.* Although, in these two buildings, surrounded by cut box-trees, we meet with a greater number of objects crowded together than we, with our ideas of nature, would esteem in accordance with good taste, yet these descriptions, as well as the imitation of the Valley of Tempe in the Tiburtine villa of Adrian, show us that a love for the free enjoyment of nature was not wholly lost sight of by the Roman citizens in their love of art, and in their anxious solicitude for their personal comfort in adapting the locality of their country houses to the prevailing relations of the sun and winds. It is gratifying to be able to add that this enjoyment was less disturbed on the estates of Pliny than elsewhere by the revolting features of slavery. This wealthy man was not only one of the most learned of his age,

* Plin., *Epist.*, ii., 17; v., 6; ix., 17; Plin., *Hist. Nat.*, xii., 6; Hirt, *Gesch. der Baukunst bei den Alten*, bd. ii., s. 241, 291, 376. The villa Laurentina of the younger Pliny was situated near the present Torre di Paterno, in the littoral valley of Palombara, east of Ostia. See *Viaggio da Ostia a la villa di Plinio*, 1802, p. 9, and *Le Laurentin*, by Haudelcourt, 1838, p. 62. A deep feeling for nature is expressed in the few lines which Pliny wrote from Laurentinum to Minutius Fundanus: "*Mecum tantum et cum libellis loquor. Rectam sinceramque vitam! dulce otium honestumque! O mare, o littus, verum secretumque μυστικόν! quam multa invenitis, quam multa dictatis!*" (i., 9). Hirt was persuaded that the origin in Italy, during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, of that stiff and systematic style of gardening long known as the French, in contradistinction to the freer mode of landscape gardening of the English, and the early taste for wearisome and regular lines, is to be ascribed to a wish of imitating that which Pliny the younger has described in his letters (*Geschichte der Baukunst bei den Alten*, th. ii., s. 366).