Botany and Horticulture

Until the nineteenth century, the investigation of natural phenomena, plants and animals was considered either the preserve of elite scholars or a pastime for the leisured upper classes. As increasing academic rigour and systematisation was brought to the study of 'natural history', its subdisciplines were adopted into university curricula, and learned societies (such as the Royal Horticultural Society, founded in 1804) were established to support research in these areas. A related development was strong enthusiasm for exotic garden plants, which resulted in plant collecting expeditions to every corner of the globe, sometimes with tragic consequences. This series includes accounts of some of those expeditions, detailed reference works on the flora of different regions, and practical advice for amateur and professional gardeners.

The Gentlewoman’s Book of Gardening

The ‘Victoria Library for Gentlewomen’, a series of books ‘Under the Patronage of H.M. the Queen and H.R.H. the Princess of Wales’, edited by W. H. Davenport Adams (1828–91), provided information and advice on various topics for those who aspired to gentlewomanly status. Davenport Adams himself was a journalist and author of popular science and history works, but little is known of the two authors of this 1892 work. Edith L. Chamberlain was a minor novelist who had also published a book on the dialect of west Worcestershire, and Fanny Douglas worked with Davenport Adams on other titles in the series. This book follows the fashion of late nineteenth-century works (often by women) which combine descriptions of gardens and gardening with historical and literary references. It is unusual in that its final chapter describes ways for educated ‘gentlewomen’ to enter gardening as a profession – a radical suggestion for the period.
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The Gentlewoman’s Book of Gardening

Edith L. Chamberlain
Fanny Douglas
BOOK OF GARDENING

THE VICTORIAN LIBRARY FOR GENTLEWOMEN

Edited by W. H. Daventry Adams
1892

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FANNY DOUGLAS
AND
EDITH L. CHAMBERLAIN

BOOK OF GARDENING

GENTLEWOMAN'S
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