

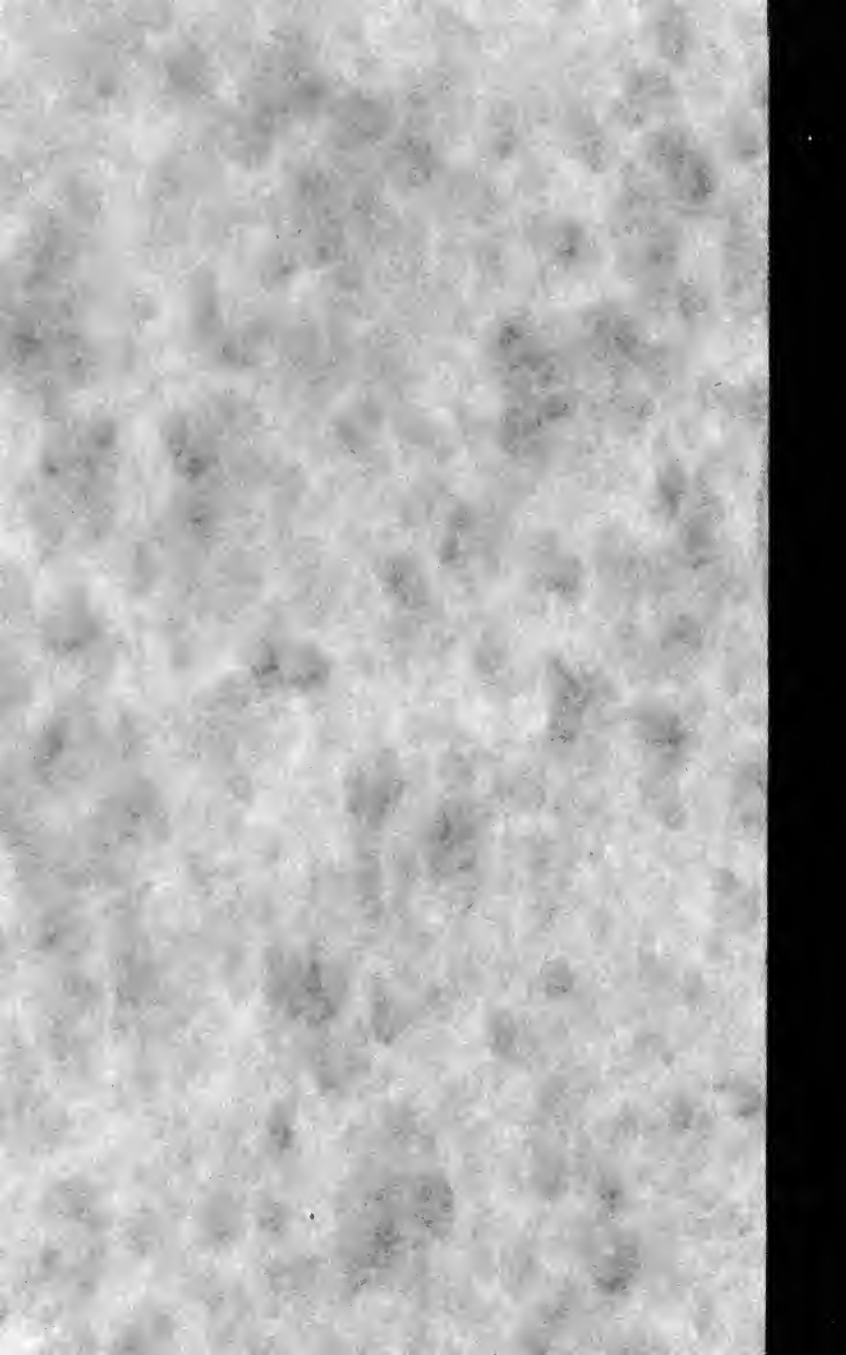
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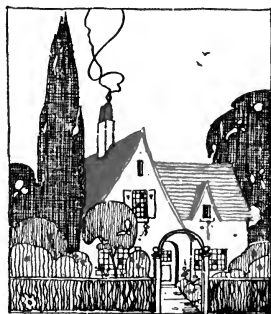
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Landscape Garden Series

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LANDSCAPE GARDEN SERIES



III. PLANTING THE HOME GROUNDS

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Fig. 1—Naturalistic planting

Root, Ralph Rodney

LANDSCAPE GARDEN SERIES

PLANTING THE HOME GROUNDS

BY

NOBLE P. HOLLISTER, B. S. IN L. G.



THE GARDEN PRESS
DAVENPORT, IOWA

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CHAPTER I

THE FUNCTION OF PLANT MATERIAL IN LANDSCAPE DESIGN

PLANT material is the medium which makes possible the realization of the third dimension of a landscape plan. It is the planting, in the last analysis, that makes for success or failure of a landscape design. In the successful design the planting articulates the whole scheme—makes the component parts cohere. Planting produces relief by giving elevation in place of flat monotony, and inspiring framed vistas in place of unbroken horizons. Color in flowers, foliage and fruit provides a means for producing charming contrasts with the quiet greens and browns of nature, delightful to the eye.

Though architectural features and earthwork are useful aids in the same respect as planting, they are seldom successful unless combined with planting. Inanimate forms or masses can be seemingly instilled with life when relieved by living plants.

The results produced by planting are so strikingly obvious that the layman is but indifferently impressed with the other factors of a successful landscape plan, and as a consequence, landscape development, whatever the type, finds favor or disfavor in the popular eye solely from the point of view of planting. This fact is a source of some discouragement to the intelligent designer, who realizes that good design is the real basis of his work, and cherishes that above all else. Without a good design as a basis for landscape development, plant material ceases to function as a delightful medium in which to "render" the plan, but serves instead as a means for covering up or blotting out unsightly mistakes.

According to natural sequence, the design is the most important factor in a landscape development, for unless an intelligent design is first prepared for the whole development, much time, labor and expense will be wasted. Planting is next in importance, for it is the material medium that gives life to the design. But so far as popular approval is concerned, the landscape architect realizes that practically his only source of satisfaction in working out a good design is his own artistic conscience, and that the public loudly praises a successful planting.



Fig. 2—Gardenesque planting

Mankind instinctively admires all living things from the hand of the Creator. It is not for any individual of the fallible human race to assume that his sincerest efforts may compete with the works of the Maker.

It is essential, in view of these facts, that any person undertaking a landscape development either for himself or in service to others, must inform himself accurately and thoroughly as to plant material, and make use of it with sincere and intelligent purpose.

CHAPTER II

TYPES OF PLANTING

PLANTING design may be classified as of five general types, or styles, each distinguished from the others by differences in methods of grouping or arrangement, and to some extent according to the species of plants used and methods of cultivation and maintenance. These five groups are (1) formal, (2) informal, (3) naturalistic, (4) wild, (5) gardenesque. As these types are perhaps arbitrarily named, it is best to define them at some length.

Formal planting involves restraint. Plants of restrained symmetrical form are planted as specimens in geometrical lines or groups, or in masses restricted to geometrical form. Plants of this type with dense foliage of fine texture are best adapted to obtain the extreme in rigidity of line and mass. However, there are many species of varying leaf texture, but densely branched, whose habit of growth adheres to a restrained, symmetrical form, or permits pruning or clipping to mold them into the desired form, as in hedges or topiary work.

Formal planting naturally finds its principal employment where the general landscape design is along formal lines, although individual specimens of formal habit are often introduced into informal arrangements to accent certain features or to serve as features in themselves.

City and suburban places of limited area seem to be most intensively developed and easiest to maintain when designed and planted in the formal style. Such a planting produces an effect of dignity and orderliness in keeping with the prevailing types of architecture and the restraining lines of streets and property lines.

Large suburban and country places, parks, cemeteries, golf courses, etc., are seldom planted along formal lines throughout. As a rule, only the important buildings and their organized entourage are so designed and planted, and this depends entirely upon such factors as style of architecture, environment, and what use is made of buildings.

“Formality” in planting does not imply exclusively rigid plant forms or masses. It often involves simply symmetry or regularity of arrangement of plants, as specimens or in straight-edge borders or

masses, wherein the restraint in ground plan may be modified and relaxed in elevation by using plants of only moderately restrained habit. Here, again, the designer is governed by the style of architecture, environment, and individual taste. This modified formality of planting is often desirable to achieve harmony with the "domestic" types of architecture. French and Italian architecture call for the most rigid forms of planting. Other styles lend themselves to various degrees of modification or "softening".

Informal planting follows smooth, flowing, irregular lines whose curves are obviously studied and have a trim quality which stamps them as artificial as compared to outlines in Nature. Plants of either native or foreign origin are given equal preference, the main object being to achieve a pleasing mass with enough variety of leaf, flower and twig to avoid monotony. Variety is obtained by varying the sections that make up the whole, but not by varying the individual plants that compose any separate section. Emphasis at desired points is obtained by masses of plants strongly contrasting with adjacent masses or by individual specimens incorporated in the massed border in effective contrast therewith. Many plants adapted to specimen use in formal planting may be used en masse in informal planting, as their individuality is thus obscured by numbers.

Informal planting is possible, but wasteful of space and maintenance, on a small suburban or city place. It is difficult to plant a small place informally and justify the resulting effect by any other reason than that of individual fancy. On medium sized suburban or country places informal planting may be quite effective after the organization of areas directly influenced by the house is attended to, and it is not difficult to obtain transition from the formal planting about the house to the informal planting to define the open spaces extending out from the house and its immediate entourage. Parks and cemeteries are very effectively planted in this style, which admits of, and, indeed, requires maintenance in a degree of trimness approaching that of formal planting, especially when the land allotted for the development has little or no existing native growth to be emulated. In fact, the informal style as here defined has been so universally followed in park planting that it is commonly spoken of as "park-like" planting.

The aim in informal planting is to define and separate the areas blocked out in the general plan composition of the place so that the eye meets no resistance in straight edges or sharp corners, but carries along smoothly curving lines; the vistas, openings into adjoining areas and other points of interest being emphasized by specimens or groups of plants that attract the eye through contrast in form, color, or other quality or combination of qualities.



Fig. 3—Informal Planting

Naturalistic planting obviously contemplates the use of native plants as far as possible, although many plants of foreign origin resemble native plants in character and often seem to improve upon natives for certain situations. This type of planting differs from the informal in that it follows lines less obviously studied, and calls for greater individual variety. Instead of a mass effect composed of varying sections, the effect to be sought is a general continuity of mass, which, however, is not impressed upon the observer, due to a kaleidoscopic rotation of form, texture, height, and color, such as occurs in the seemingly haphazard compositions of nature. Masses of one plant species should occur only at infrequent intervals, and should be relieved by random individual specimens or small groups of contrasting plants. Instead of the long, sweeping curves of informal planting, a most irregular outline seeming to ramble carelessly is the aim, though the masses at the most advancing and retiring points should unobtrusively mark a graceful line defining the area under development.

Naturalistic planting is seldom adapted to small places unless they are set down in the midst of considerable native growth, in which case it may seem to promise the greater harmony with environment, provided that a suitable style of architecture is employed on the house. In country places, parks, and golf courses, the areas not adjacent to, and, therefore, not influenced by architectural works, may most happily be planted in naturalistic style. Cemeteries, on account of the commercial aspects of their development, do not permit of any general planting along naturalistic lines, but may satisfactorily be planted in a judicious combination of the informal and naturalistic, though the latter is

usually confined to a featured landscape development of limited areas not practical for burial purposes.

Although it is possible to achieve very successful imitations of Nature's compositions, the most optimistic enthusiast over this type of planting can hardly assert that the best efforts of men do not lack in some degree the spontaneity of Nature. The best way to achieve a perfect naturalistic planting composition is to seek it in Nature, and, having found it, acquire the land on which it stands and build a house of suitable style where the cherished picture is in full view.

Wild planting. It seems inconsistent to include this style in this classification and then to intimate that such a planting is impossible. Nevertheless, it is true that when we consider literally the term "wild", human agency is not to be thought of as capable of achieving such a thing. We can imitate a "wild planting", but only Nature can be credited with original creations. Close observation of examples in Nature, and faithful reproduction of these examples, with studious attention to detail are necessary to produce a truly wild effect, and even then Nature and time must be relied upon for perfection.

Wild planting is done for the most part on large country estates and in parks. The usual reason for it is a desire to restore wild growth that has been destroyed, or to add to what may already exist, or rather to accelerate the ordinary progress of nature by artificial means.

Gardenesque planting, as defined for the purposes of this book, is becoming largely obsolete, due to the change of "fashion" or taste in landscape work. It is really a style in which interest is centered upon individual specimens of abnormally developed habit, strongly colored foliage, intensely brilliant flowers or other qualities that impress the observer mainly because they are not familiar to him. Such plants are sel'om in harmony with their environment, being either tender exotics from a far distant climate or else unnatural appearing products of horticultural ingenuity.

As may be surmised from its name, this type of planting involves the use of plants which are best adapted to gardens of formal design. The character of these plants makes them unsuitable for informal or naturalistic planting.

Up to the latter part of the nineteenth century this style of planting was much practised, being known also as "picturesque planting". Specimen plants or "pattern beds" of flowers were scattered over lawn areas, which, according to present day ideas, would be left open and free from planting.



Fig. 4—Formal Planting

In connection with conservatories and similar features in parks, or public gardens, this type of planting does not seem improper, for it has become established through common practice. Pattern beds of exotic flowers and specimens of curious plants produced by skillful gardeners seem acceptable if not carried too far from the feature which furnishes the excuse for their use. It seems obvious that since a conservatory houses rare exotic plants to a large extent, the area immediately surrounding it may be considered as an outdoor extension and devoted to a similar display of curiosities.

CHAPTER III

CLASSIFICATION OF PLANT MATERIAL FOR USE IN PLANTING DESIGN

GIVEN a thorough and accurate knowledge of plant material, the planting designer finds his work made much easier by a classification of this material according to physical characteristics, which determine the adaptability of any species to any particular use both from aesthetic and practical standpoints.

Plant material may first be classified under two main heads—woody and herbaceous. Woody plants include trees, shrubs, and vines, whose stems harden or become “woody”, and whose tops resume growth at the point where they stopped at the end of the preceding growing season. Herbaceous plants are those whose tops die back entirely each year, and whose stems are “soft”. In the case of annuals, the whole plant dies, leaving its seed for reproduction.

Woody plants are subdivided into deciduous and evergreen. Deciduous plants lose their leaves at the end of each growing season and renew them the next year. Evergreen plants have green leaves throughout the year. According to height and habit of growth woody plants are also classed as trees, shrubs and vines. Some trees are so small or slow of growth that they are used as large shrubs.

Evergreens are either “coniferous” or “broad-leaved”. Coniferous evergreens are those that bear cones, and incidentally most conifers have “needle” foliage. Broad-leaved evergreens do not bear cones, and they have broad leaves like deciduous plants. There are three plants known as “deciduous conifers”, two of which bear cones—the Tamarack, or Larch, and the Bald Cypress, and one of which bears drupes, the Ginkgo or Maidenhair Tree, all three being deciduous.

Most conifers are trees, but there are some dwarf varieties that are classed as “evergreen shrubs”; and the juvenile forms of the trees are used a great deal in plantings of medium height, with the intention of replacing them with new juvenile forms when they outgrow their purpose. Broad-leaved evergreens include trees, shrubs and vines, such as Magnolia, Rhododendron and Euonymus.

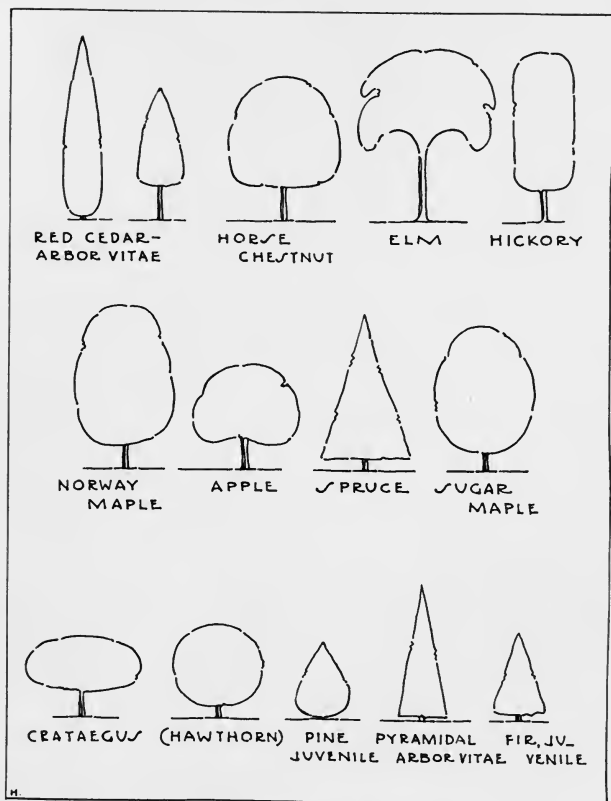


Fig. 5—Trees classified as to outline

Herbaceous plants are divided into groups, as perennials, biennials, annuals and bulbs. Perennials are plants whose tops die back, but whose roots live on from year to year, producing new tops each season. Biennials lose their tops but require two years to complete their life cycle and bear flowers. When reproduction is complete the plant dies. Annuals complete their life cycle in one year and die. Bulbs are fleshy roots or buds which are perennial, but in most cases must be taken up and stored over winter. There are three types of "bulbs".

A true *bulb*, such as the Tulip, is a bud composed of fleshy scales. A *corm*, such as the Gladiolus, is shaped like a bulb, but is solid. A *tuber*, such as the Dahlia, is solid, but is a long fleshy root of different shape from the Tulip or Gladiolus.

The information that should be recorded as briefly as possible in a plant classification can be grouped under the following heads:

1. *Name*—(All known scientific and common names).
2. *Form*—(Height, shape or silhouette, texture, density, method of branching).
3. *Color*—(Leaf—color, seasonal changes, duration).
(Flower—color, time, duration).
(Fruit—color, time, duration, special attraction).
(Twig—color, picturesque and protective features).
4. *Hardiness*—(Resistance to climatic conditions; rate of growth; soil, sun or shade requirements; liability to injury by insects or diseases).
5. *Use*—(Aesthetic and practical uses of proved success).

For purposes of study, or for general record in a professional office, it is an excellent plan to prepare a card file, in which the data above outlined for each species may be entered on cards. Auxiliary files may then be compiled in which the plants are arranged according to the color of flower, color of leaf, use, or other qualities which may be given first consideration in choice of species for a particular purpose.

For quick reference in planting design, condensed lists of plants adapted for various special purposes are most convenient. For example, in planting a flower garden, lists of flowers of certain colors enable the designer to determine quickly what plants will give him the desired color scheme to perfection, the choice of any species being subject to approval from considerations of height, time of bloom, hardiness, etc., which can easily be determined from the general classification lists or from special lists based on such qualifications.

Bailey's Encyclopedia of Horticulture, descriptive nursery catalogues, and various books descriptive of plants, coupled with actual observation the year round, are the best sources for study of plant material.

CHAPTER IV

PLANT COMPOSITION

PLANT composition, simply defined, is the arrangement of plant material to achieve a pleasing effect of unity and harmony. The planting designer gives himself wholly to aesthetic considerations first, in choosing his material, and then tests his choice according to practical considerations of hardiness and special utility, substituting alternative choices where necessary.

The two main qualities of plants that govern their choice for a desired composition are *form* and *color*. According to general practice in planting design, where flower interest is of secondary importance, form exerts the only influence of which the designer is conscious in selecting species. Color may be said to be a factor of equally great influence, but as a rule it is only the landscape painter, not the landscape designer, who senses this fact. On the other hand, where flower interest is of primary importance, color is usually the more conscious consideration of the designer, and form is subordinated. In both instances this involuntary subordination of either color or form amounts to a degree of neglect that is to be regretted.

It seems logical that of these two qualities color should be discussed first, for were it not for the fact that all objects possess color, we could not recognize their form—we could not even see them.

The reason we are able to see any object is that it reflects light. Light is composed of colors, as is demonstrated by the simple and familiar experiment of the glass prism, which breaks up light rays and projects their component colors on a screen. These colors are called the colors of the spectrum.

Objects that appear white reflect light unbroken—they do not absorb any of the color elements. Objects that appear black do not reflect light. *Objects that appear red reflect the red element of light, absorbing the remaining elements.* The chemical structure of any object is the basis that determines what colors it may absorb or reflect.

With this understanding we can easily realize that objects possess form simply through the contrast of their color masses.

Color possesses three qualities: *hue*, *intensity* and *value*, and we describe any given color in terms of these qualities. *Hue* is the elementary quality which gives a color its name, as red, yellow, blue, green. *Intensity* is the degree of brilliancy or fullness of a color, as bright yellow, pale yellow. *Value* is determined by the amount of light reflected. Two objects of the same hue and intensity will have different values when one is directly exposed to light while the other stands in shadow. A plant with leaves so arranged that a large portion of its leaf surface does not reflect light gives an impression of lower value than one with loosely scattered leaves whose entire surface reflects light.

In studying plant material for landscape use the average observer concerns himself with variety of hue and intensity only in regard to flowers. The foliage of all plants is green, with a few exceptions, and the slight variation of green hues and intensities is practically ignored, value being the only quality recognized—and that subconsciously, for most designers think in terms of form without realizing that form owes its very existence to color.

Close study of the various parts of any plant, particularly of leaves and flowers, discloses that each separate part has its individual hue, intensity, and value. However, in a landscape planting we admire these details only upon close contemplation. In compositions we consider only the qualities of the complete plant as seen at a distance.

The process of forming plant compositions on a basis of form, with some attention to color value, and the short-lived flower interest, seems to guarantee on the average a fairly satisfying result; yet the desired quality of restful, complete unity and harmony in most cases eludes the grasp of the planting designer who ignores the variations in hue and intensity of leaf color, however slight they may be. There are red greens, blue greens, yellow greens, purple greens, gray greens, of varying intensity. Observation teaches that blue greens and yellow greens do not harmonize, although the discord is not easily noted except in the highest degrees of intensity and value.

The green in leaves is due to chlorophyll which is a vital factor in growth processes. There are additional "accidental" colors, due to chemical elements in other cell bodies and in the sap, which assert themselves only at the start of the growing season or after growth has ceased. So long as growth is well under way, chlorophyll is dominant, but is tempered by the "accidental" colors in a degree that varies according to the activity of the chlorophyll. In midsummer, when growth is at its fullest, these accidental colors are seldom in evidence.

Flowers, on the other hand, rarely contain much chlorophyll, as their function is to attract pollinating agents and insure reproduction.

Hence the accidental colors predominate in flowers. Wherever chlorophyll is lacking or failing in its function the accidental colors gain the ascendancy.

It follows that if we study foliage hues in early spring and fall, and arrange our plant material to be in complete harmony at those seasons, it will be in harmony the year round. But there are other limitations, and chief of these is *value*.

Color value, or the degree of light or shade of a plant, is largely determined by texture and density of foliage. For example, the Yew has a close, fine texture, and the many fine twigs produce great density, so that this plant has probably the lowest value of any we know. The Elm is a good medium value, and the Cut-Leaved White Birch is a good example of high value. With these extremes as a basis, the observing student of plant material can determine the relative color value of any species. In this connection it should be noted that hue and intensity sometimes modify the value impression of a plant. For example, blue seems darker than yellow. Bright red seems darker than pink.

The disposition of plants according to color rests entirely with the designer, and the success or failure depends on his individual taste. In a general way, the chief "rule of thumb" that may be formulated is that whatever the type of planting, a particular hue, intensity or value, or combination of these qualities should be unobtrusively in evidence throughout the whole effect, just as a certain theme carries through a musical composition. Monotony should be precluded, or variety introduced, by gentle contrasts of color qualities, the bold and striking contrasts being confined to points requiring accent, or special attraction for the eye for special reasons.

Simultaneously with, and as a result of color contrast, we have contrast of form. The principle just stated for the use of color qualities applies also to the use of form characteristics in composition.

The characteristics of form are silhouette, or outline, and horizontal and vertical axes, with foliage texture and method of branching as modifying features of secondary importance. The silhouette, or outline, is determined by the contrast of the color mass of a plant with the color masses surrounding it. In drawing objects we frequently indicate this outline by drawing it, although no line actually exists. In a general way, plant outlines form circles, triangles, and parallelograms.

Horizontal and vertical axes refer to imaginary lines connecting points of greatest breadth and height, parallel and perpendicular to the ground line, respectively. The horizontal axis varies in height above



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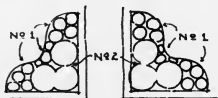
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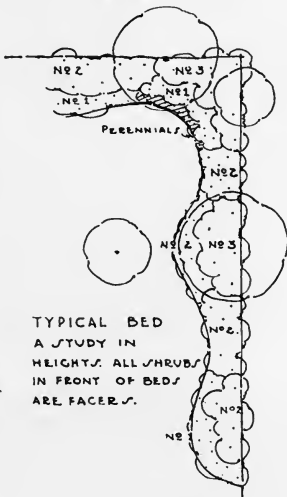
CLASSIFICATION - SIZE OF SHRUBS



PLANTING AT CORNER OF WALK. ALL SHRUBS ARE FACERS LEAVE 1 FT. WOOD STRIP.



PERENNIALS AS FACERS.



TYPICAL BED
A STUDY IN HEIGHTS. ALL SHRUBS IN FRONT OF BEDS ARE FACERS.

PLANTING SUGGESTIONS.

Fig. 6

the ground, but the vertical axis may be assumed in all plants to pass through the center of the plant.

The psychological effect of color and form on the consciousness of human beings must be carefully considered and should be played upon to the fullest advantage in plant composition. It is well known that red, yellow and orange, for example, create a sensation of gayety, cheerfulness, warmth. These colors are known as advancing colors, because they have a greater wave length and meet the eye more quickly than blue or purple, which are therefore known as retreating colors. Gray is neutral and therefore more retreating than blue or purple. The "advance" of any of these colors may be quickened or retarded by varying intensity or value.

Thus in any planting composition the apparent length of a vista may be increased by keeping advancing colors of high intensity and high value in the foreground, and grading hues, intensities and values out toward the limits of the vista until at the farthest point the most retreating hues, the lowest intensities, and lowest values predominate. To shorten apparent distance this process is reversed. Both leaf color and flower color are to be considered.

It also seems logical that near the house or any spot in which individuals carry on the process of "living", the colors that give a sense of warmth, cheerfulness and gayety should be much in evidence, though they should be displayed against a background of quieter, neutral colors which should be in the major proportion. Proper balance is essential. Too much advancing color confuses; too much neutrality is disappointing and depressing.

Similarly, plants are massed at certain points to screen out objects whose form or color mass create discord in the effect of a composition. In the flower garden, careful attention is given to harmony of color, the aim being to keep harmonious colors together, and to separate colors that are not in harmony by masses of neutral colors.

It should be noted here that too often a garden is planned without sufficient thought for leaf color as a means for preserving the coherence of plant masses. Most herbaceous plants, with the exception of annuals, have a comparatively short period of bloom, at the end of which many wither and leave gaps. This can be provided against in one of two ways: either by use of annuals that can be kept in reserve ready to be transplanted in full growth, or by building the composition on a foundation of permanent leaf color interest. There are a number of herbaceous plants with lasting foliage which may be used to form the bulk of the design of flower masses and still allow a satisfying suc-

cession of bloom through the season. Most notable of these are the Peony, Phlox, and Iris, which grade in leaf color value respectively low, medium and high, as well as furnishing a pleasing variation in form, not to speak of a wide range of color hues and intensities, and succession of bloom.

Form characteristics react similarly on the observer. The axial characteristics are perhaps most noticeable. Plants whose horizontal axis is much longer than the vertical seem to parallel the horizon or ground line and increase the feeling of breadth. When placed near a building they make it seem higher than it is, for the vertical lines of the building are in opposition to the plant line. Plants whose vertical axis is the longer are in opposition to the horizon and destroy breadth. Placed near a building, they make it seem lower, creating opposition to the horizontal lines of the building.

Plants of rectangular outline are in opposition if the one has a strong vertical axis, the other a strong horizontal axis. Plants of the same axial character but of varying outline are not in opposition, but contrast, so that a plant of triangular outline may be used as an accent in a group of round-shaped plants.

It should always be the aim of the designer to effect transition wherever diametrically opposed forms, lines or colors are brought together. It is for this reason that shrubs are planted against a house—to soften the sharp opposition of vertical house line and horizontal ground line. Similarly we observe the “1, 2, 3”, of shrub heights in the informal types of planting, placing the higher growing plants in the background, the medium heights or “fillers” next in front, and the low “facer” shrubs in front of the “fillers”, so that there is a gradual transition from the height of the background shrubs to the ground level.

Method of branching is often a strong modifying factor in form effect. In the Tupelo tree the vertical axis is dominant, but the branches are horizontal with a slight downward tendency at the ends, so that the Tupelo is in sharp contrast with other trees of similar height and axial characteristic. The general effect of the tree is horizontal rather than vertical.

Character is ascribed to individual species mainly through their methods of branching. The Elm is said to be graceful, stately. The Weeping Willow is restful. The Oak is sturdy. Plants are also considered to be peculiarly expressive of the country in which they are native when they emphasize the horizon character or topography of that country.

Plants whose branches or twigs are erect or ascending in habit or growth, and whose outline is restrained and symmetrical, seem adapted for formal effects. Examples are Rose of Sharon and Winged Burning Bush.

Leaf texture suggests a classification of plants for various types of composition. The fine, or high class, plants include those of dense habit and smooth texture. Medium class plants are those of fairly dense habit, but whose texture is somewhat broken or coarsened by openness of habit and rather coarse or rough leaves. Low class, or coarse, plants are those of very open or straggling habit, and coarse leaves. Red Cedar or Japanese Barberry are examples of high class plants. Lilac and Golden Bell are of the medium class. Catalpa and Ninebark are examples of coarse plants.

CHAPTER V

SOURCES OF PLANT MATERIAL

IT is obvious that the species of plants native to any locality are best adapted for landscape use in that locality from every point of view, but we never fully appreciate the things we see about us every day, so there is a constant demand for new plants with striking leaf, flower or form interest that is unfamiliar to native plant material. Hence it is not surprising that the majority of plants used today in most sections of the country are of foreign origin. The history of plant discoveries and improvements is full of romance. Explorers have delved into the far corners of the earth for new plants.

At first people traded seeds or cuttings and raised their own plants, but increasing demand soon resulted in the establishment of nurseries, where reproduction and cultivation is accomplished on a wholesale basis, and plants are grown with ease in transplanting as the principal end in view. Today the nursery business is unable to supply the demand for plant material, as the advantages of planting good nursery grown plants are generally known.

Seeds are also raised in great quantities, and can be bought cheaply. Unfortunately the quality is not standardized, and on account of varying climatic conditions from year to year it is impossible for any grower to maintain standard and quantity of production at the same time. Hence it is necessary to keep well informed of the success of various seedsmen with different kinds of seed from year to year.

Collected plants or seeds, *i. e.*, those collected from wild or natural plantations, are seldom as satisfactory as nursery grown material, for they have not the vigor attained by nursery plants or seeds as a result of careful growing under the most favorable conditions, for the special purpose of planting to obtain immediate results in flourishing growth and well developed foliage and flowers in profusion.

In the early days of American horticulture, nursery growers did their own propagating to a large extent, but with the increasing demand for stock, and in view of the quick profits to be made from imported plants propagated and grown with cheap labor and more favorable soil and climatic conditions, we became largely dependent upon Europe

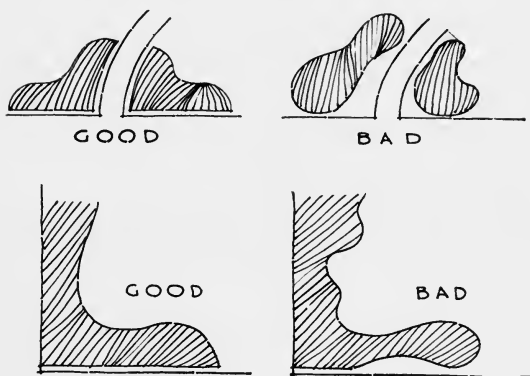


Fig. 7—Planting beds should not be meaningless in outline

for nursery stock, seeds and bulbs. Incidentally we acquired a host of destructive insects and diseases which became very serious, in some instances practically wiping out some of our most desirable native species.

Consequently a quarantine law was passed which barred most of these plant importations, and aroused a storm of protest. Although it seems probable that this embargo will be removed or modified in time, it is possible that American horticulture will in the end benefit from being forced to stand on its own feet, and revive the art of propagation. The shortage of plant material resulting from the quarantine is a considerable handicap to planting designers.

CHAPTER VI

PLANTING THE HOME GROUNDS

IT is regrettable that of all phases of landscape work the least attention is given to the "home grounds", or small residence property, and yet this problem more directly affects the majority of citizens than any other. Few such places are thoughtfully planted, because few of them are developed according to an intelligent comprehensive plan.

The general principle of "home grounds" design is that the house is designed to fit the lot and in consequence the lot provides space for the extension of the various rooms of the house. One may live so much more comfortably and happily if it is possible to expand the various living rooms and service rooms to include the portions of the lot adjacent to them. With this idea in mind, we can assume that the planting will serve two general purposes—that of furnishing the "walls" or defining lines around our "expanded" house and between the "outdoor rooms", and also to provide the "furnishings" of the various "rooms".

In erecting these "walls" of living green, it is only necessary to follow the same principles of design as in the walls of the house itself, to obtain unity and harmony. There must be reasonable density and trimness. The walls must be of pleasing color, and the same general color qualities must prevail throughout. Just as we avoid monotony in wall surfaces of stone, brick, or wood, by appropriate introduction of ornament, openings, and variation of texture in fabric, so in our plant walls we introduce variations in form, height, texture and color.

Since the front lawn area is generally the public area or "reception room", it should be kept open up to the house. That is, no plant "walls" should be erected except those at the boundaries of the property. In some cases all the people on a street eliminate the "walls" around their public areas, so that the longitudinal view of the street becomes more dignified by the effect of great width, the houses being set back at an uniform distance. Trees in the public area serve four purposes: (1) screen objectionable surroundings; (2) furnish shade for lawn, street and house; (3) frame the view of the house;

(4) for individual beauty. For shade or screen purposes, long-lived trees of fairly rapid growth and luxuriant, restful green foliage are desirable. For framing the view of the house the length and width of the approach and the general scale of the whole place determine whether high or low trees are used, and what form is best.

Trees used purely as decorative "furnishings" for the public area must not contrast too sharply in form or color with those used for shade, screening or framing. It is better to keep trees of special interest at the sides, where they may serve as accents in the border planting.

Around the house itself and around or in the private areas or "outdoor rooms", trees are used for seven purposes: (1) to screen unpleasant surroundings from view; (2) to frame or call attention to attractive views; (3) to furnish a setting or background for the house, —i. e., provide transition between rigid architectural lines or masses and the sky, other buildings or similar sharply contrasting backgrounds; (4) for shading house or private areas; (5) as protection against wind, dust, etc.; (6) to furnish the private areas (here again it is best to keep such "decorative furnishings" for the most part out of the center of the private areas and employ them as accents at proper points in the border planting); (7) for their individual beauty, flowers, or fruit.

Shrubs are used in the public area principally to define the limits of the area—denote the "walls" of the "reception room". They also serve to screen the surroundings from the house, and give a feeling of individual privacy. Perhaps a few specimens with special interest are used as "decorative furnishings", but they should be kept to the borders the same as specimen trees. A simple, dignified expanse of lawn leading up to the house makes the most pleasing approach.

About the house and in the private areas shrubs continue to serve for defining areas, screening one area from another (e. g., service from recreation area) and for screening the surroundings from the house to obtain privacy and close out unpleasant views. In addition transition between vertical house line and horizontal ground line is effected by a so-called "foundation planting" of shrubbery. Transition is also happily obtained by shrubbery where awkward changes in grade, in architectural forms or where faults in design and construction occur.

Shrubs for "decorative furnishings" are used in private areas and near the house more than in the public area, for it is natural to reserve most of our treasured objects of beauty for the more intimate portion of our home. The most desirable specimens are often incorporated in the garden.

If the planting is to be formal throughout, the shrub borders are either clipped hedges or borders of unclipped but dense, restrained plants in straight or curvilinear lines. Specimens are employed to accent corners, openings, or views, or to suggest definition of areas. These accents may contrast with the general border masses in color or form. Evergreen and deciduous plants furnish pleasing contrasts in value. With the exception of these accents, there should be no variation of species in any formal border whose length is visible from within the area defined by it. Exceptions to this occur where a low hedge of one species is planted across the front of the property, and a higher growing hedge of another species is used along the two sides and in front of the private areas near the house to obtain privacy; or where a hedge of one height is used along the sides as far as the back, and a higher hedge is used across the back as a screen. Also, in a garden, a high hedge of one species is used as a screen or background, while a lower hedge of another species is used to outline beds or borders.

For informal planting, the general mass of the border follows the basic formal lines of the design. The borders defining the lot lines parallel them on the outside edge, and the informal type of flowing curved lines are developed on the inside edge. Where these lines swell the width of the border, a corresponding increase of height in plants is called for, and such changes should occur at points where accents are needed to emphasize division of the lot into the various areas.

In considering the outlook from the house, perspective by color should be planned in the borders defining the lot lines. In general the planting near the house should have red greens and yellow greens predominating, and the purple greens, blue greens and gray greens should be carried out to the more distant points. Even if there is not space to work out the full range of colors, an effort should be made to keep blue greens and gray greens at a distance. The ranging of values will also aid in this respect.

Borders should not be broken up by too much variety in color or form. It is far better to use only one species, where the length of the border is limited. Specimen trees or shrubs placed in the border, or in front of it, at accent points, often supply sufficient variety on small places.

Planting for transition about the house perhaps receives more attention than any other phase of planting on home grounds. Even the most indifferent home owners seem to realize the need for "foundation planting". Such a planting must harmonize with the house and ground in color qualities. Strong contrasts are to be avoided except where accents are required. Fairly compact plants are best suited for this

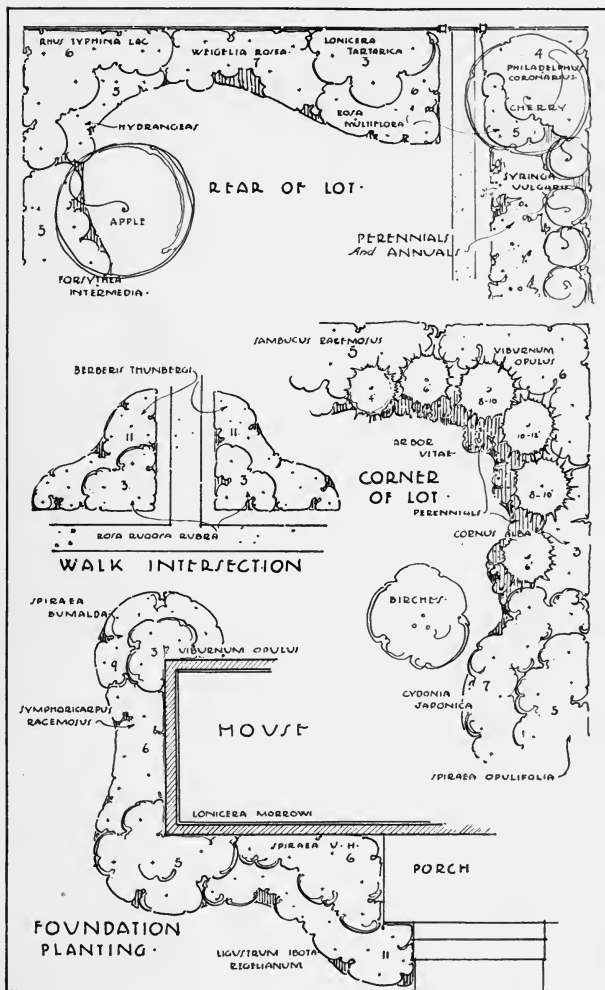


Fig. 8—Plant selections for typical problems

type of planting, and preferably those that "face" themselves down to the ground as there is not always room for three rows of plants graded from high or background shrubs down to low "facer" shrubs. If the plantings exceed about ten feet in width about a house they seem to lose scale and make the house appear inaccessible.

Evergreens are especially rich for planting about the house. Beds of several "fancy" varieties are seldom in good taste. Dignified forms and moderate color contrasts are best, and only a few varieties should be employed. A mingling of evergreens with deciduous plants whose flowers, twigs or fruits make pleasing contrast with the lower values of the evergreens, produces a very cheerful effect the year round.

Vines are useful to relieve the expanse of house walls, soften rigid lines, and furnish privacy for porches, arbors and pergolas, not to speak of their individual interest. They are also used on lattice fences or trellises as a screen where there is not room for a screen of shrubs or trees. They are helpful in covering banks and unsightly objects, and for flat planting effects.

Roses of the garden type should be restricted to gardens. These include, Tea Roses, Hybrid Teas, and Hybrid Perpetuals. There are some species of the "bush" type, such as Rugosa Rose, available for border planting. Climbing Roses are adapted for varied purposes.

Flowers may be planted in borders, to serve as "facers" for shrubs; along paths connecting "outdoor living rooms"; or massed in beds of formal design. There is little aesthetic satisfaction to be derived from the bean-shaped "informal" beds affected by some designers, even though the amenities are preserved to the extent of keeping them well back from the centers of open spaces.

Perennials are perhaps best adapted for use for home grounds, as their permanent character saves much labor, and avoids the frequent disappointment experienced from annuals, as seed quality varies from year to year and some failures are to be expected. Preference should be given to perennials of lasting foliage quality, and these should be arranged with an eye for harmony in leaf color with the shrub masses that serve as a background. If flowers and vegetables are combined in one garden, an effort should be made to arrange the vegetables for the best foliage effect possible. Where flowers are used in conjunction with shrub borders the theory of perspective by color should be followed as in leaf color—advancing colors near the house, and retreating colors carried out to the distant nooks and corners.

Bulb plants are very effective for early spring effect, and some of them, particularly Crocus and Narcissus, can be planted in colonies

similar to those formed by wild flowers in natural course. This method of planting is termed "Naturalizing". Such plantations can be left to themselves, as the tops soon disappear after flowering and the lawn is not injured.

Annuals are best confined to garden beds or borders. They are valuable for cut flowers and continuous bloom, and often prove convenient aids for repairing gaps left by perennials that have "gone by" and withered down.

In planting perennials in conjunction with shrub borders, or in borders next to a hedge of shrubs, the extended growth of the shrub-berry must be taken into account. The roots especially cause trouble if the perennials are too close, for they rob the perennials of plant nourishment. Bush honeysuckle is one of the worst offenders in this respect. In such instances one must either put a curb about 18 inches deep between the shrubs and perennials, or keep the perennials well out from the shrubs,—about three feet.

The average distance apart for planting shrubs attaining a height of 1 to 4 feet and which can be classified as No. 1 shrubs, is about $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet. For filler shrubs, or No. 2's, growing from 4 to 8 feet, the distance is about 4 feet. For large background plants, or No. 3's, growing from 8 to 15 feet, the distance should be at least 5 feet. Most planters in practise decrease these distances so that the planting will look well filled up for immediate effect. Hedges that are intended for height of 4 feet or more should be planted with plants about 18 inches apart. From 1 to 4 feet in height the distance should not be more than 1 foot. For low clipped edging hedges, plants should be 6 inches apart. A double row makes a broader and denser hedge than a single row.

Anyone who undertakes to design his own place, should study other places with an observing eye, reasoning out the proper width for walks and drives, and the amount of outdoor extension he should provide for his house according to his ideas of living. He should note what plants produce the most pleasing effects for places similar to his own, and whether they grow well in his locality, not to speak of names and other features. In the next booklet, we will present a series of lists of plants for various purposes, but it must be remembered that this can be only general in scope, and the plants recommended may sometimes fail of their purpose in certain localities because of local conditions.

CHAPTER VII

SINCERITY IN PLANTING

IN planting design, as in all other artistic professions, or in fact in all trades and crafts, there are persons who through lack of scruple or understanding in regard to truly satisfying composition, execute work that is palpably insincere or stupid in the eyes of anyone capable of perception of aesthetic merit, not to speak of practical errors.

Some errors may be excused by virtue of the well-known human capacity for error. In view of the manifold qualifications or limitations of plant species for various purposes, it may reasonably be expected that errors will be committed. Sometimes the errors result in a better effect than the designer has visualized, and he receives applause that he knows he has not earned. On the other hand, people are quick to censure the unhappy accidents in no uncertain terms.

Sincerity in planting specifies the use of plants consistent with the highest standards possible of attainment in aesthetic perfection and practical efficiency in whatever problem the designer has before him. Harmony must be maintained between plant colors and forms, and architectural colors and forms. In any certain type of planting, as formal, informal or naturalistic, the plants used must be "in character".

Probably the greatest crime committed against sincerity in plant composition is the indiscriminate use of vivid colors in leaf or flower, and forms that are abnormal or in abrupt opposition to their environment. Two notorious human fallibilities make such misdemeanors possible—dull color perception, and a passion for the unusual. No other explanation can excuse bright red geraniums in round or crescent-shaped beds, or vivid Blue Spruces or Weeping Mulberries, placed in the center of a "front yard" which was all too small in the beginning, before being choked up or shattered by such disrupting objects.

It should be understood that there is no quarrel with the various bright red, yellow, blue or purple leaves and flowers in themselves. No man can consider himself qualified to criticize Nature. Even the distorted forms produced by horticultural ingenuity are justly a source of pride in human achievement. For many years nurserymen sold plants of this nature in tremendous quantities. They merely catered to public

demand, and sold the public what it wanted, and they prospered thereby. Their sincerity as growers of plants of good quality was not to be questioned.

The installation of landscape service was an inevitable development in the nursery business—a natural consequence of the desire to increase volume of sales. Those who built up such landscape service on a sound and permanent basis succeeded because they realized the necessity for sincerity not only in growing and selling stock but also in adhering to the principles of good taste. Unfortunately there have been many nurserymen who have followed the example set by the leaders in this field of business expansion, but without realizing the need for sincerity in design. There is an effort under way to standardize the nursery business on a national scale, and it is to be hoped that in the process this regrettable shortcoming will be corrected.

Sincerity in planting further demands that plants be used that are hardy in every respect. Whenever they must be protected or nurtured for any reason, it should be clearly understood by all concerned. No plants should be used in any composition whose future growth will destroy that composition as originally conceived. If plants are deliberately used for temporary effect, this should be plainly specified.

Care should be taken to avoid the use of plants known to be sure hosts to insect or disease scourges, or else to provide for proper measures of prevention and control.

In these practical requirements of sincerity, the nurseryman or gardener who works daily among plants has the advantage over some landscape designers who lack thorough knowledge of plant material, so that it is about a "standoff" between the two. No one man can actively engage in the nursery business of propagating, growing, transplanting, and selling good, honest stock, and render thorough, intelligent and sincere service as a planting designer at the same time. But he can practice the one craft and at the same time possess a deep and abiding comprehension of the principles of the other.

Due to a peculiar conceit of human nature, an interesting feature has developed in the field of sincerity in planting from a practical point of view. This is the plant guarantee, which assures the buyer that the plants he buys will live for a certain length of time, or be replaced free of charge in case of failure. The duration of the guarantee generally does not exceed one year; replacement is usually made but once for any one plant; and exception is made for failure due to improper handling or planting, and lack of attention after planting. Also, acts of God, insect or disease injury, or similar causes of failure beyond control of the guarantor nullify his obligation. Many guarantors insist

on doing the planting themselves, and then require strict observance of a program of maintenance so thorough that the possibility of loss is reduced to a negligible minimum.

The plant guarantee is somewhat similar to life insurance or fire insurance, except that it is not based on such a definite foundation of accurate statistics. Experience enables us to ascertain that in an average planting of good nursery stock, well packed, shipped with reasonable dispatch, and carefully planted and cared for, a ten per cent loss is an exceptional maximum to expect—assuming that the species selected have been chosen in all sincerity for the purpose and location at hand.

The high percentage that the purchaser pays as “premium” for a guarantee, added to the cost of each plant he buys under guarantee, amount to considerably more than it would cost him to make his own replacements in the event that he bought the stock at net prices without guarantee. The real appeal of the guarantee is that it dispenses with the petty detail of checking up losses, with the attendant bother of identifying unfamiliar plants, ordering and replanting. It amounts to compensation for rendering service which the average busy citizen is only too glad to have someone else perform for him, and deserves to be well paid for. There are, however, many nurserymen who do not relish such petty troubles, and who refuse to guarantee, preferring to sell their stock in quantity at net prices, and stand upon the sincerity of their growing and shipping methods as sufficient guarantee of good faith.

The cheapest guarantee lies in choosing plants of known hardiness; buying nursery grown plants with well-developed masses of fibrous roots from a dependable grower; planting well with a thorough understanding of the requirements of the plants for healthy growth; *and properly caring for their needs in respect to watering, cultivation, mulching or fertilizing for at least two years after planting.* Most responsible guarantors require such care as part of the bargain. Why should anyone pay someone else to *make* him take care of his plants?

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