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CONCERNING
LAWN PLANTING.

CONCERNING LAWN PLANTING.

By
CALVERT VAUX
AND
SAMUEL PARSONS, JR.



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INTRODUCTION.

The brief essays embraced in this volume have been prepared with the view of advancing the standard of landscape architecture in the United States. Some of them have already appeared in the *Christian Union* and the *New York Tribune*.



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SKY AND SKY LINE.

A MAN who owns an acre of ground cannot look far without reaching its lateral boundaries, but in the direction of the sky, his acre gives him a wide extent of view that constitutes a valuable property.

On the open sea, the sky is visible clear to the horizon; while, from an acre of average ground, the view is more or less restricted. Nevertheless, observation will show that over half the sky can be seen from any average acre; and that as its appearance is constantly changing, it becomes practically an almost boundless pictorial possession to a sympathetic observer, for the light and color of the sky is the controlling element of beauty in every attractive landscape.

By most persons, a tree is conceived as a definite and independent fact of nature, its relation to the sky being considered accidental and comparatively unimportant; but the human eye can hardly help taking in both at the same moment, and really gets a general impression that is quite unconsciously made up of both.

The landscape painter is trained to see the color relations of each to the other, and pays habitual attention to such combinations. To him the sky is constantly visible, asserting itself as a fact more positive even than the objects in front of it. The typical landscape painter may be said, indeed, to observe the aspects, rather than the forms of nature. He is fascinated by some effect of light and shade and color, that depends on a particular season of the year, or the sunlight and atmosphere of some special hour of a day. To this he is attracted in connection with a group of harmonious lines; and he sees and paints his beautiful picture, which is, in fact, devoted to the illustration of a passing moment of time.

In every sensitive observer this co-ordinating faculty of the landscape painter is somewhat active, although it does not seek expression through the hand. The lover of pictures is properly complementary to the painter of pictures; and the art of lawn planting appeals directly to this delicate capacity in the human eye

to blend foreground and middle distance, sky line and sky, into one harmonious, optical impression. Separate groups of tree forms may be in themselves attractive, or a country place may be rich in handsome isolated specimens of trees, or for its varied and picturesque foreground shrubbery; but in each case it will be defective as a landscape composition if it fails in its sky line, and is consequently unattractive when seen in connection with the sky.

It is evident, therefore, that in laying out a country place, large or small, with reference to its landscape attractions, the present and prospective *sky line* is one element of design that needs very skillful attention.

MY FRIEND THE ANDROMEDA.

I do not know why it is, but the appearance of a tree frequently presents itself to my mind in a semi-personal, or I might almost say human way. This is fanciful, no doubt, but only another instance of the facility with which the mind clothes simple objects of the senses with its own less simple drapery of the imagination. Association of ideas may, perhaps, account for it. When a tree is graceful, slender or drooping, we think immediately of womanly metaphors, like the poet's epithet of "Lady of the Woods," as applied to the Birch; and I fail to see any objection to such an innocent misconception. It not only pleases without doing harm to any one, but it does more. Such an attitude of mind tends to develop a more sympathetic consideration and study of plants under varying conditions. Horses, dogs, and even some comparatively worthless human beings, gain and have gained, during all time, much of this sympathetic consideration. May we not, in its humble sphere of life, plead a similar claim for the tree? Every member of the lawn affords us a more profound and lasting impression, viewed from this seemingly fanciful standpoint of so-called personal sympathy, than if we keep ourselves resolutely realistic in our feelings. I assure you, gentle reader, results will prove that the encouragement of these scientifically inaccurate vagaries of the imagination is neither bad for the tree nor the man, nor even for science. My thoughts are disporting themselves

somewhat after this manner to-day, while my attention rests mus-ingly on a lovely specimen of an *Andromeda arborea*, or Sorrel tree. The October sun and air enrich and strengthen its tints and outline, and, in more than one way, its beauty arouses the most palpable feelings of pleasure.

To most observers, indeed, it may be only a bright-leaved tree; but to me, as I look at it, come still fairer images and associations. I remember many a morning before this one when I have looked with pleasure on this tree. Last summer, in July, and August even, I used to enjoy its white-tasseled flowers, bending and delicately graceful as those of any hot-house plant. I insisted then on pointing it out to my friends with, perhaps, what they felt to be the mere pride of ownership; and was wont to declare that here was a tree that not only bore lovely flowers, when scarcely another tree was so adorned, but that also proved good in color and attractive in form throughout the season. One of the few plants that neither paled its shining green, nor lost its firmness of leaf texture from May to October.

On these occasions I was apt, on very slight provocation, to grow warm in praise of my *Andromeda*. It was everything that was lovely. The leaves were always shining and gracefully curving. Bark and twigs were refined and attractive in texture, coloring and picturesque contour. In every way this plant was full of beauty as pleasing as that of its August flowers. Several sober, matter-of-fact friends have, I know, smiled from time to time at my enthusiasm on the subject of this *Andromeda*. But what matters that? It is only their loss that they are unable to see with my eyes; and, in one sense, my gain. The charms of a flower are, to the possessor, rather increased than otherwise by the sense that few people have the wit to appreciate them; but it is a little selfish, I know, to feel thus, although entirely human, and I am trying to make my peace with conscience by enlarging on the topic to-day.

Truly, this brisk October morning, as I am dwelling on the lovely crimson color of my favorite, bright with sunlight and dew, and adorned with pendent seed vessels, I am disposed to doubt whether my enthusiasm, in all its fullness, has not been after all somewhat crude and unappreciative. Notwithstanding its evident excellence, it occurs to me now that this plant has beauty that is still greater than commonly appears, because it is so seldom suitably employed. It is not, like your oak or beech, sufficient unto

itself in its isolated grandeur; but it is a tree that needs association to develop its highest possibilities of attraction. Like some rich beauty, whose loveliness is stimulated and brought out by the charms of other forms and faces, to pale again when left alone or neglected; or like the gifted and witty mind that needs the sympathy of kindred spirits to put it on its mettle, the Andromeda silently craves to be artistically disposed and grouped with other plants.

I comprehend this morning, seemingly for the first time, that my Andromeda, my dear Andromeda, is ungainly. A crooked, slender stem, though, in a certain way, fine and picturesque, supports its graceful mass of foliage in a decidedly unsatisfactory way. Surely this plant was not made to stand alone. On the contrary, I am inclined to think it decidedly affects society. Next spring, therefore, I am going to keep it in the conspicuous position it now occupies, but, at the same time, make it happy by surrounding it with friends and relatives. A mass of rhododendrons shall cluster in its rear, for they show a fine relation to the Andromeda in both appearance and nature; and they are, moreover, rich and noble plants. These rhododendrons, in the outline of their grouping, will present deep bays and promontories of foliage, with points and flanks and bare places, masked with choice low-growing shrubs, like mahonias and evergreen thorns, the bush form of Chinese wistarias, and the golden and variegated weigela. My Andromeda shall not appear exactly on one of the points of these rhododendrons, to which its leaves bear too close a relation for intimate grouping; but it shall be isolated and, at the same time, surrounded and connected with the mainland of foliage by the mahonias and evergreen thorns. The weak parts of the base of my plant will be thus masked, as so many plants apt to develop naked bases need to be masked, and its more excellent qualities brought out in finest relief by its association.

Several years hence, perhaps, I may be looking at my Andromeda, in its new position, as I am looking at it now, and, I am sure, in that case, it will comport itself with greater dignity and grace than it has ever done aforetime. Its crimson tints will seem richer when relieved against the shining green of the mahonias and rhododendrons; and its naturally taller form will rise with more striking and harmonious effect from amid the broad spreading masses of adjacent greenery. And why should I not give fitting

companions to my fair Andromeda? It is to me of greater value than my pictures, and yet I rehang and regroup my pictures with the greatest care. Certainly, sympathy of this sort is not wasted on plants, which should be treated as sensitive children that need to be deeply influenced in the best way by sympathetic personal comprehension and care.

NATURE AND ART IN LAWN PLANTING.

AN imitation of nature, however successful, is not art; and the purpose to imitate nature, or to produce an effect which shall seem to be natural, and therefore interesting, is not sufficient for success in the art of lawn planting, which depends on a happy combination of many circumstances that nature, unassisted, is not likely to bring about.

A scene in nature is made up of various parts; each part has its individual character and its possible ideal. It is unlikely that accident should bring together the best possible ideals of each separate part, merely considering them as isolated facts; and it is still more unlikely that accident should group a number of these possible ideals in such a way that not only one or two, but that all should be harmoniously related one to the other. It is evident, however, that an attempt to accomplish this artificially is not impossible, and that a proper study of the circumstances relating to the perfect development of each particular detail will, at least, enable the designer to reckon surely on a certain success of a high character in that detail, and a comprehensive bringing together of the results of his study in regard to the harmonious relations of one, two or more details may enable him to discover the law of harmonious relation between multitudinous details; and if he can discover it, there is nothing to prevent him from putting it into practice. The result would be a work of art; and the combination of the art thus defined, with the art of architecture, in the production of landscape compositions, is what may properly be denominated landscape architecture.

DESCRIPTION OF MY DOOR YARD IN FLUSHING.

My lawn, strictly speaking, is but a door yard of fifty by one hundred feet in extent, of which a considerable portion is occupied by the house and paths. It derives its only right to the name of lawn, from the fact that it is constructed on the same general principles as would apply to a place of several acres. I do not mean that such principles should never be modified, but that, in the main, they must be adhered to on every well-planted lawn.

First of all, my place cannot help possessing in its way the general qualities of a picture, although a cabinet picture, to be sure, if its surface is compared with larger lawns. There is here, as elsewhere, first the foreground, then the middle distance, and, behind all, the background. The possible lights and shadows of the lawn picture were studied at the outset, and special points made emphatic. I have looked upon the nearest approach to velvety turf I can get in this climate as an excellent canvas on which to paint with lovely plant color and form. Everywhere the existence of this charming groundwork is kept in full view by retaining broad open stretches. On such spots shifting effects of sunlight and shadow have free play, and we gain that restful sensation which is somehow associated with green grass. Many think such a door yard as mine fit only for a few carelessly scattered plants, an uninteresting arbor vitæ, and, perhaps, a neglected bed of coleuses and geraniums. Every one, however, must be influenced by his individual taste and temperament. I really cannot help choosing to treat my door yard or lawn lovingly and thoughtfully, and if I have failed as a painter in more than one respect, I have not failed to obtain a really choice collection of plants grouped so as not to injure each other. The plants are perfect specimens, individually, as far as may be, but I have also sought to avoid primness and inartistic formality.

On my front porch or piazza, covered with two kinds of honeysuckles, one notices also two Virginia creepers and two Wistarias. I have one path directly to my gate, fifteen feet distant. There is nothing else in the way of paths about the place, except a narrow side entrance passage, between the fence and house, leading to the back door. The house is placed on the extreme east side of the lot, a location that does not give the best exposure for my planta-

tions. I have, therefore, in this case, set out a number of evergreens on the north and west, to suggest coziness and give actual protection from cold and wind. The feeling of seclusion is provided for along the street, not by a *hedge* which, as generally understood, is a formal and unnatural thing, but by an *irregular line* of choice, medium-sized evergreens four or five feet apart. Among these are such varieties as the golden Japan cypress, picturesque, soft and glowing with color; the broad-leaved hemlock, dark and statuesque; the Grecian silver fir, exquisite in early growth; and the dainty sprays of the fountain-like weeping hemlock. The remainder of the front line, and a small part of the west side of the place, is taken up by an irregularly planted group of somewhat larger choice evergreens. An irregular shelter is thus obtained in the coldest quarter, and a strong emphasis given to an important part of the place. In the northwest corner stands the conical, almost columnar, form of the bluish green Swiss stone pine, at once making a strong feature in the right spot, and varying the sky line of fringing plantations. All around the place these important points are marked by some suitable form of tree. On each side of the front gate, for instance, are two spireas *Thunbergii*, with their lovely foliage softening the stiff perpendicular lines of the posts, and making picturesque and graceful the entrance which is usually prosaically formal.

The general character of the plantations of my place are entirely fringing, there being no room for single plants, except in nooks of the house, if we are to allow due space to open turf. We have thus an irregular line of evergreens in front of the house, and then the protecting mass of similar plants in the northwest corner. Among the last, besides the stone pine, may be noted the majestic, symmetrical Nordmann's fir; the feathery, graceful sprays of the *retinospora obtusa*, and the greyish blue of the strange-looking glaucous juniper (*Juniperus glauca*) and the *retinospora squarrosa*. On the inner line of this mass are found more dwarf varieties, such as the glowing and exquisite hardy azalea, the grand flowers and foliage of the rhododendron, and the miniature evergreens like Gregory's spruce, dwarf black spruce, dwarf silver fir and dwarf pines.

Properly speaking, this is the foreground of the picture made up of the choicest material in the way of plant color and form, with the specially protecting effect that evergreens supply. I can

suggest no simpler, and perhaps better, method for selecting the best positions for the individuals of a group of either evergreen or deciduous shrubs and trees than the following: Define, in a general way, the outline of your group, which should be easy and flowing; then step here and there, within the prescribed boundaries, in entirely irregular fashion, with paces three or four feet in length. At the point where each step falls, there set your plants, retaining in a general way the lower individuals on the outside. It is well to distribute also some of the smaller shrubs throughout the body of the plantation, in order to avoid the abhorrent clump form.

Looking beyond this foreground of predominating evergreens down along the fence, you will recognize the more exquisite material of the foreground, running into and characterizing the nearest part of the still choice material of the middle distance. On leaving the evergreens, we notice first a little group of three Japanese maples, for groups to be picturesque should consist only of odd numbers. These, as well as most Japanese maples, are dwarf trees rather than shrubs, and are dyed with many colors. Here is a leaf suffused with living gold; there, on another plant, a color that might be Tyrian purple, for nothing of the kind could be richer. On still another leaf are the various colors of rose, pink, green, white and yellow. As to the forms, they are still more varied, even at times on the same plant; the most remarkable having leaves divided like veritable lace. Skirting along the fence, and beyond these clusters of dwarf hardy maples, into the distinct province of deciduous shrubs, we find the lovely pink flowering Japan Judas tree and the Japan snowball, with rich foliage and large persistent balls of flowers. Here is the exquisite *deutzia gracilis*; the golden spirea, studded in June with white flowers; and the feathery sprays of the strange-looking tamarisk, beaded with flowers in July and August, when we have few plants in bloom.

All the way down and around the board fence that covers the flank and rear of my lot extend these flowering deciduous shrubs, generally four feet apart, and abounding in a series of blooms throughout the summer. The larger ones are, of course, planted in the rear and along the fence, but occasionally, two or three plants removed from the fence line, are low-growing varieties, intended to create the picturesque effect of bays and points of foliage, amid a seeming lake of emerald turf. In either corner of the rear of the lot larger trees are planted, to give more emphasis to special points

as well as more variety of sky line, a horsechestnut on one side, away from the house; and, on the other, a cluster of two maples and a liquidambar for the enjoyment of autumnal color.

It should be evident, from this brief sketch, that my principal endeavor has been to secure first, what I may term in this connection, comfort and enjoyment for the plants in their personal relations; and then, however imperfectly, picturesque effects in genuine, though miniature, fashion. My conviction has been that picturesqueness should be sought before everything else on the lawn, except the actual health of the plant; that picturesqueness which, in the eloquent phrase of Isaac Taylor, claims as its own "the cherished and delicious ideas of deep seclusion, of lengthened, undisturbed continuance;" that "abhors the square, the perpendicular and horizontal;" that is, "in a word, the conservatism of landscape beauty, and suggestive of secure and placid longevity, domestic sanctity and reverence."

THE PARKS AND GARDENS OF PARIS.

THE improvements of the pleasure grounds and parkways of Paris, which now gives so much character to the city, was initiated during the Empire, and has been quite generally credited to that form of Government, while failure elsewhere has been attributed to not being blessed with a Napoleon. It is, therefore, satisfactory to find that in the edition for 1878 of Robinson's Notes on the Parks and Gardens of Paris, the author can tell us, by way of comment on this suggestion, that since the establishment of the Republic in France, improvements calculated to produce the best effects on the beauty and salubrity of Paris, have been carried out more vigorously than before, with this difference, that they are done more economically.

Robinson, it seems, approached his subject at the outset from the strictly horticultural side, being engaged by the *Times* to make notes that might be helpful to England with reference to the culture of fruits and vegetables, in which the French excel, the Paris market gardens yielding threefold more produce than is gathered from a similar extent of garden ground elsewhere. He was probably as fit to make these observations as any other man that might have been selected, but he also showed a special aptitude

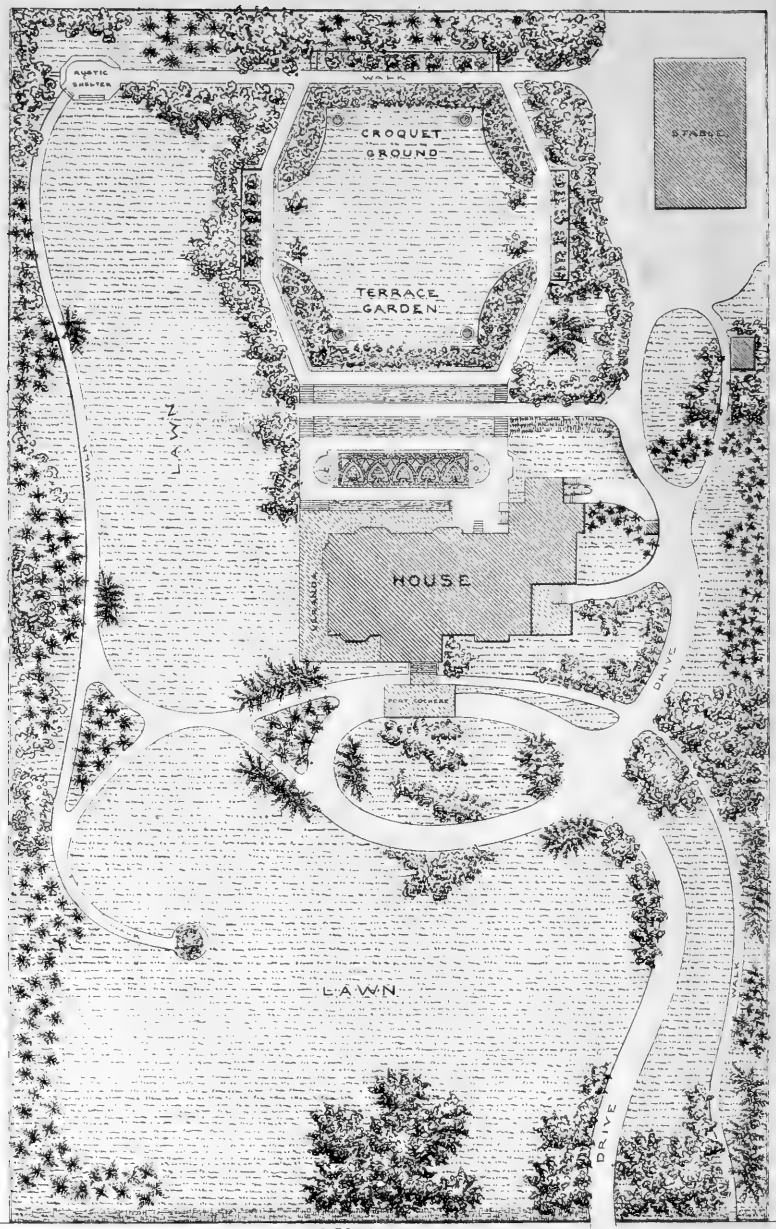
for the appreciation and description of the great system of public parks, parkways, and city gardens that have been formed within the last twenty years in Paris. In this department of his book he stands somewhat alone, and has rendered good service to the English-speaking public at a critical time, because his statements on the æsthetic side grow out of wholesome artistic instincts, chastened by a cultivated taste, while they are evidently based on a sufficiently practical knowledge of the horticultural side of his subject.

The keynote of his book is sounded at the outset in an attack on the needlessly dismal line and square system of planting that is commonly adopted by botanists in their gardens, and it is satisfactory to learn from so good a practical authority that there is no scientific reason for planting such a garden in the formal style, and that the expression of the beauty of the vegetable world is the proper work of a national botanic garden.

The excellencies of the French landscape gardener's conception seem to be shown to the highest advantage in the public square or city garden, and the smaller it is the more apparent does the superiority of the Paris system become. Certainly, the Square of St. Jacques, with its grand old church tower in the center, deserves to be selected by Robinson as a typical example, for it has the inexplicable quality of attraction that belongs to works of the highest art, and transcends any street garden ideal that is likely to have been formed in the mind of a visitor who sees it for the first time.

The Parc Monceau is an example of a larger city square. Robinson complains that it is slashed into four pieces by needless roads; but very few visitors will refuse to accept any reason the designer may have had for this arrangement, because it is so well done that the result is an agreeable one, and it may be looked at simply as a design for a public pleasure ground based on an intersection of two necessary thoroughfares. Under such circumstances, the roads crossing the park, for which they give occasion, may be slightly curved, and a pleasant diversion of a straight line street system may thus be secured without any appreciable loss of time to the visitor who passes through the park in connection with his ordinary avocations.

The only art that is so thoroughly well understood by the public as to be instinctively criticized by everybody is the art that provides a fresh newspaper decoration for our breakfast tables every morning. The habit of being influenced by reading is, in fact, acquired



STREET

GROUNDS OF MR. A. HUDNUT, ORANGE, N. J.

AS LAID OUT BY VAUX & CO.

STREET

SCALE OF 0 50 100 150 FEET

now-a-days so early in life, that it seems a natural instead of an artificial way to get information, and dull books are rejected almost automatically. Robinson has the pungent, readable quality that would make his work what is called successful, without special reference to its quality in other respects, and if its influence had been cast on the wrong side, morally or artistically, it would have been as decidedly felt for harm as it now is for good. His criticism is out-spoken and trenchant, but in the interests of the nobler aspects of the question. He does not, however, see clearly with the artist's eye, or he would not choose to say, when bewailing a lost opportunity in his native city, "This is not only sad, from its depriving us of so much beauty that London might possess, but also from its far more serious evil in the depreciation of property."

He misses it again, when, speaking of the art of landscape design, he says that "improvements will never come through architects, because their work is different, even in kind."

The kinship that he fails to see is, in a community of artistic aims, each desiring to build up a beautiful combination of forms and colors in the open air, in accordance with a pre-conceived design gradually developed out of common materials by the hand-labor of others. The two arts are very close together in theory, and are destined in the future to be more closely allied in practice. In fact, the chief contribution that the French have made during the last twenty years has been in this direction. They have shown how city architecture can be glorified by judicious planting, and how greensward and trees, shrubs and flowers, may be as pliant in the hands of an artistic designer as wood or stone.

MR. HUDNUT'S TERRACE GARDEN.

DURING early boyhood, I paid long visits at the home of a dear old grandmother, in one of the most thoroughly crystalized towns of New England. Grandmother was a Quaker of the old school, and a pillar of the meeting, consequently everything about her was of the approved old-time sort. The garden, certainly, was no exception to the rule. I think I see now, the sober, dignified Quaker ladies, attired in suitable dove-color, pacing the garden walks or daintily plucking flowers. Surely, finer flowers never grew than

were reared in that garden, for the maintenance it received was exquisite. What sunny hours we children spent in it. And it was truly a charming spot, though something must be allowed for the glamour of boyish freshness and spirits. I feel, indeed, after seeing all the modern inventions, that I could cheerfully forego the most blazing effects that we behold now-a-days on expensive lawns, for the privilege of enjoying once more the old garden behind grandmother's house. I wish you could see the quaint old place as I recall it after the lapse of many years. It was, I confess, a somewhat formal and prim affair; but there was nothing commonplace or vulgar about it, as in the baser sort of what is now called ribbon gardening. On the contrary, there was a distinct flavor of individuality in the character of its appearance. The designer, being either a practical housewife, or inspired by one, had thought of many things besides mere ornament, and even the ornament had a distinct difference, which gave this garden a special suggestiveness of its own.

The paths were laid out with entire regularity, and marked with long rows or borders of dwarf box; but there the regularity and sameness ceased unless we count as regular the scrupulously kept gravel of the walks, bedded with white pebbles. Such a garden naturally had its grape-vine, trained on some suitable supports, which, in this case, happened to be the stable wall. The next-door neighbor, I remember, had an arbor for his grape-vines, that began, as it seemed, nowhere in particular, and ended twenty feet off, with the most delightful neglect of any why or wherefore, except that it existed for the grape-vine; that was evidently enough for Deacon Jones. Now-a-days such an arbor must have done duty alike as a place for seats, for a promenade, and also for the display of architectural ornament in the Queen Anne style. Not that such a triple performance of duty is not proper enough, but only it was not the way of gardens of those earlier days.

For the economies of the house, there were all sorts of fragrant herbs, such as thyme, sweet-marjory, sage, mint, and half-a-dozen other sweet-smelling and savory plants, that were on this account, however, none the less attractive as ornaments of the garden. They were not only delightful in themselves, but delightful because they reminded us of grandmother's wonderful store-closet, from which issued so many good things.

But grandmother's garden was, before all things, a productive

flower-garden. Unlike modern gardens, created for external show alone, it was a real store-house of color and odor, out of which one could, day after day, gather rich treasures, and yet leave its beauty apparently undimmed. Everybody about the house, boys included, was welcome to pluck a flower occasionally without let or hindrance. The flowers, indeed, seemed actually to enjoy being plucked. They were not, of course, specially rare, and yet, I am sorry to say that it might be difficult to find some of them now-a-days. Their simple charms have, in fact, been almost entirely obscured by the glittering novelties of the modern horticultural world. For instance, there were those rich old damask roses. They are seldom, if ever, seen now; and yet what masses of them there were in grandmother's garden, and how well I remember their rich color, and the delightful odor they exhaled when the dew was resting on their petals. Where shall we find now such beds of sweet-scented pinks, not carnations, but real hardy pinks? Nowhere; for they are out of fashion now. Tall clusters of phloxes stood here and there. Blue larkspurs, tall, quaint and lovely, nodded above carpets of portulaca vine, studded with scarlet flowers. Broad patches of the rampant-growing, gorgeous herbaceous pæony were striking in effect, close by the straggling foliage and flowers of the sweet-pea. Great hollyhocks were there, too, with richly colored petals, the pure outlines and decorative appearance of which fail not to charm the eye even now, amid the multitudinous resources of the modern gardener.

Snowdrops, crocuses and other bulbs used to spring up as if by magic, year after year, in secluded spots of grandmother's garden. Evidently no definite arrangement had been applied to any of these plants, but somehow they were seen to be greatly to the advantage of the general effect. All stood together, just as they happened to come, behind the borders of box, in the rich, weedless brown earth. How fresh that brown earth smelled as it was dug up in early spring! Of other climbers than the grape-vine there were few. Wistarias, clematises, and the long list of similar plants of the present day were little used then. Filling their place, in their own attractive way, were delicate morning-glories and graceful cypress vines, trained with some formality and with almost reverential care.

But now comes in the question why I call up these memories, and what they have to do with Mr. Hudnut's terrace garden,

of which a general plan is given in our illustration of his place. Certainly a family likeness may be recognized. At first, it may seem remote, and near views of elegant houses, done in modern style, and farther glimpses of picturesque hillsides may seem to have little kinship in appearance with the neat streets and walled yards of the quaint New England town where the garden I have been talking about, flourished.

But if we look over the surroundings more critically, we may perhaps explain how grandmother's garden has influenced the treatment of this design. Mr. Hudnut's terrace garden is situated at the rear of the main building, on a hillside, out of which the site of the house itself has been excavated. The views from this building, of long stretches of lawn and varied masses of shrubbery, extending to the street, are pleasing, and the picturesque appearance of the house made us hesitate to doom the ground on its north side to the commonplace purposes of a vegetable garden. As the windows of the parlor have an outlook in this direction, it seems unfair to impress the idea of long rows of beets and turnips upon the eye of a visitor, who must naturally enter this part of the house, after being agreeably impressed by the well-kept front lawn. The place is only four acres in extent, and an owner, under the circumstances, can better afford to buy vegetables, or grow them on hired ground, than to sacrifice any portion of the possible daily feast for the eyes that can be secured if the outlook in every direction is made up of flowers, trees and greensward. Abandoning the idea of a vegetable garden, we endeavored to strike out a new line of treatment instead of ornamenting this particular spot with routine rugs of bedding plants, to be marshalled in and marshalled out by the fifty thousand every year; and we finally decided to construct, in place of a garden full of vegetables, or bedding stuff, a mixed border of hardy, flowering, herbaceous plants.

Owing to the nature of the ground, and the requirements of drainage, we found it necessary to make two terraces, thus raising a plateau of land about one hundred feet square, somewhat above the level of the parlor windows.

This arrangement gives the owner a simple form of terrace garden, a name having quaint associations, dating back to Elizabethan times. It is necessarily formal in appearance, and therefore contrasts with the general park-like aspect of the place. To secure unity of effect within itself, it is secluded completely by a border

of deciduous flowering shrubbery, which has an exterior irregularity of outline that enables it to take its place in the general effect, when seen from the park-like lawn beyond.

Immediately in front of the parlor windows, a *tour de force* seems to be admissible—something that should be thoroughly isolated, and yet attached, as it were, to the lines of the building itself. In this case, it takes the form of a color mat, showing a salient, architectural design, clearly marked out, with rich-colored plants that only grow in one year, to a height of five or six inches, and therefore, in this case, numbering many thousands. Here are echeverias, altenantheras, pyrethrums, allysums, gnaphaliums and the like. The colors thus obtainable, are varieties of vivid green, yellow, red and white. In such a place, we believe that such designs are entirely warrantable. Ordinarily, we object to such elaborate work as artificial, and troublesome to replant every year.

Passing up the two flights of stone steps that ascend to the terraces, with their intervening terrace walk, we come to the more individual garden that we have attempted to arrange for the place. It consists of a square of green turf, with the corners cut to an octagonal line, and then a border of eight feet, for mixed hardy herbaceous plants, lined on the farther side by walls of California privet and other deciduous shrubbery. At the base of the California privet, scarce two feet away, are planted *deutzia gracilis* and *hypericum Kalmianum* (St. John's wort), to mask, with their low, bushy foliage, the inevitable bareness of the larger plants at that point. On either corner of the grass plat, are tall urns for flowers, and on four keypoints of effect, still farther in, are tall clusters of the dazzling white *arundo donax variegata*, or ribbon-grass, mingled with a blazing spike or two of the red hot poker plant (*Tritoma uvaria grandiflora*), the only tender varieties out of the vases to be found in the terrace garden proper.

And now we may indicate the special points of resemblance in this design to what we have called my grandmother's garden. They are to be found, principally, in the border of plants, eight feet wide, that skirts the entire grass plat. Each angle of this grass plat is cut off, making a large, eight-sided figure, with four long and four short sides. A strip of turf two feet wide, is first left, and then comes the mixed skirting border, of hardy herbaceous plants. Here, as in grandmother's garden, there is plenty of color and odor scattered about in somewhat promiscuous order, and ready to the hand

for plucking or not, as the passing mood may determine. In a general way, the large-growing plants are placed at the back, beyond a row of lower habit, and next the path we find the smaller specimens. Taken as a whole, however, the appearance of the plants, about two feet apart, would be called entirely irregular, and instead of bare spaded earth, generally considered necessary in such places, the entire surface beneath the plants is covered with varieties of hardy creepers, such as moneywort, periwinkles, sedums, sandwort, mountain everlasting, arabis, or rock cress, not forgetting the pretty creeping forget-me-not, and the turfing daisy, with its lovely little blue flowers. All the plants in this border are entirely hardy, and safe to last for many years without being renewed. Anyone may enjoy here abundant color, and odor of the most charming kind, for the greater part of the year. First, in early spring, peep out flowers of the lovely blue and red hepaticas, of the trailing arbutus, the dainty New England mayflower, and certain of the anemones, or wind flowers. The bloodroot, too (*Sanguinaria Canadensis*), very dwarf, is always eagerly looked for in early spring, on account of the delicate charm of its pure white buds tenderly enfolded with leaves; later on, a clump of its opened flowers are very showy.

Then in May come still more, and, if possible, lovelier flowers, many of which last on far into summer. Such are larkspurs, garden pinks, the exquisite stemless gentian (*Gentiana acaulis*), candy tuft (*Iberis*), the asphodels, favorites of the ancients; several beautiful species of violets, and charming species of anemone, still blooming on into summer. Strictly summer-blooming kinds of herbaceous plants there are, of course. Here, of course, are bright yellow achillias, the quaint and exquisite blue and yellow aquilegias, or hardy columbines, with strangely formed petals, the dainty harebells, showy coreopsises, day lilies, certain lovely species of gentian, the wonderful scarlet cardinal flower, brilliant yellow poppies, rich blue and scarlet foxglove like penstamons, veronicas, white astilbe Japonica, the garden phloxes and liatris or blazing star.

Autumn flowers are not forgotten. Masses of golden rod (*Solidago*), and orange-colored milkweed (*Asclepia*), and purple asters are scattered throughout the border. The blue aconitum autumnale or autumn monkshood, the curious chelone, or turtle head, and the dwarfer kinds of sunflowers.

Last, but not least, just before winter sets in, we dwell with delight on the brilliant yellow and purple flowers of the chrysanthem-

mums. Your attention has been directed in this description to only a few of the plants in this border of mixed hardy flowers. More than a hundred and fifty varieties are used. Before leaving the subject, it seems worth while to dwell for a moment on the Japan irises, planted in distinct lines within three formal recesses of the California privet, arranged for their reception. They appear in spring, and present, with their curious forms and hues—as strange and beautiful in their way as any orchid—one of the most unique and charming effects in the entire garden. The broad, straight paths that run past all these flowers, and the grass plat and croquet ground make a worthy frame for our border, and everywhere the eye meets, at almost any season of the year, objects of interest. This place has, therefore, an attraction that is related somewhat to the charm grandmother's garden possessed for us in early days. There is, first, the neatness and perfect keeping that suits the level space adjoining a terrace and the architectural lines of a house, and then there is all the profusion, and far more than the variety, that characterized the floral treasures of the old fashioned example. More than that, we have individuality of beauty, which is, in one sense, the best of all beauty, fostered in the highest degree. One's economical instincts are satisfied with the idea of possessing flowers that need no re-setting year by year, and one's instinct for beauty can certainly ask for no more abundant feast than is here spread out.

A well ordered country place must have a lawn with its several capabilities properly developed, its perfect greensward being planted with evergreen and deciduous trees, shrubberies and flower-beds in their proper places near the house; but this mode of obtaining plant effect may properly be contrasted with other modes, and one of the most legitimate of these seems to be a mixed border of hardy herbaceous plants and wild flowers, the true inheritor and successor of my grandmother's garden.

THE CENTRAL PARK.

THE principal defect of the ground originally appropriated to the Central Park was, that it offered very few comparatively level tracts of sufficient area to make a definite meadow-like impression on the eye. The ground is for the most part broken, undulating, picturesque and rocky; and this is confessedly a desirable quality for a park site to possess, because it is a comparatively rare one. Most of the large parks, such as Hyde Park, in London, the Bois de Boulogne, in Paris, and the Phœnix Park, in Dublin, are manifestly lacking in variety of natural surface; and every effort that art can make has to be resorted to for the purpose of relieving at intervals the general monotony of ground line which, in these parks, is the normal condition of things. Under such circumstances, it is evident that much can be done by planting trees of high and low growth, in such relation to each other that the sky line will be agreeably diversified, while the level of the soil is but slightly varied. Nature works on so large a scale that it is rarely practicable to construct artificial eminences of sufficient magnitude to be really impressive. It has been done at the Park du Chaumont, in Paris, quite effectively; but this is a rare example.

It may be remarked, in this connection, that the sense of quiet repose ministered to by a large lawn surface is not satisfied by picturesque ground, however vigorously it may be planted; and as the need for quiet repose in this work-a-day world is more constant than the need for vigorous stimulus, a lack of pastoral, meadow-like stretches of lawn in any large public park will always be felt by the habitual visitor to be a serious disadvantage.

RIBBON GARDENING.

I FEAR that many do not comprehend the real tenor of certain disparaging remarks uttered from time to time concerning ribbon gardening, coleuses, geraniums, etc., by excellent authorities on taste in planting. Prejudice, conceit or a desire to be distinguished for taking a new line of discussion, are attributed to persons who should be held far above suspicion in this respect. There is clearly a misunderstanding in the matter. That good ribbon gardening

and properly employed coleuses and geraniums may be really charming few persons of knowledge and taste will hesitate to acknowledge. It is only against the false and vulgar methods of slashing and striping the fair surface of our lawns, under the pretense of ribbon gardening, that the shafts of righteous ridicule and invective are directed.

Properly speaking, all ribbon gardening is a *tour de force* that should display its effect only in connection with the architectural lines of a building or in an out-of-the-way and secluded part of the lawn. The only reason for its being at all should lie in the essential attractions and peculiarities of a diverse and rich collection of plants, the charms of which can only be thus displayed with proper effect. Let us consider an excellent illustration of the point I wish to make. Mr. Hunnewell, of Wellesley, Mass., has on his lawns, which are certainly unequaled in America, an instance of the proper employment of works of this character. Near his greenhouses, completely shut in by high, squarely clipped hedges of evergreen, we see through the single small passage-way a most noteworthy ribbon, or, more properly, geometric garden. Every form in the garden is a strictly geometric figure of some sort. The walks are all straight and square, and the grass cultivated and clipped into green velvet. There are square beds, raised with earth and studded with consistently formal plants, rosettes of echeverias for instance, and intricate designs worked out in low-growing varieties a few inches high. Lines of striped and variegated grasses, displaying an agreeable license in their bending irregularity and increased variety of attitude, wave on either side or corner of the path. Strange, tropical looking, richly colored plants of still larger size stand here and there in masses regularly and formally arranged. Palms, too, tallest of all, and angular though graceful, are dotted about in the same linear fashion, and add greatly to the variety of height and color as well as to the unity of the effect, which is very far, indeed, from conveying any impression of a uniformly flat color surface. Nor are coleuses and geraniums in any wise neglected. They have each their appropriate place in some design, where the contrast of their colors and the special charms of every individual variety are treated with tasteful and appreciative consideration.

Now, why is it we feel so perfectly satisfied with the artistic success of this particular gorgeous exhibition of color in what may be unquestionably characterized as a specimen of ribbon garden-

ing? Doubtless, something must be allowed to the agreeable sense of surprise at beholding unexpectedly so rich a feast of color entirely uninterfered with by any conflicting attraction. But I contend, however, that, in this instance, the chief cause of the true artistic pleasure afforded lies in the fact that the design is really conceived from the outset with a definite purpose of displaying most effectively the charms of a great variety of genera, as well as species and varieties having special characteristics well understood by the appreciative designer. Yet, in nine cases out of ten, we find ribbon gardening made up of a few species and varieties of geraniums, coleuses and like gorgeously-hued plants, wrought into a mere mosaic of flat color. In fact, I believe that much of the false taste in ribbon gardening comes from selecting plants adapted to the limitations of a commonplace, highly colored pattern instead of insisting that the design should recognize the great variety of both form and color which is offered by well-chosen material.

Of such ribbon gardening, of such a rich and dignified assemblage of well endowed plants as one sees at Mr. Hunnewell's, I cannot speak in terms of too high respect, but of the ribbon gardening which is illustrated by the tarts and other confectionery of color in the parks and squares of Boston and New York I can only speak with abhorrence. Nothing milder in the way of condemnation can be expressed, concerning a long walk of many hundred yards lined with stripes of a million and a half of Gen. Grant geraniums and a few species of like showy bedding plants, than to declare it essentially vulgar.

The splashes of bright-colored plants, as they are usually employed on both large and small lawns in America, are not only inharmoniously blended and disagreeably contrasted, but very troublesome and expensive to construct. Why not, since all such plants are necessarily reset every year in great numbers with the most elaborate care, limit their employment to small spaces adjoining the house, or to some out-of-the-way, secluded spot like that chosen by Mr. Hunnewell? Surely nothing whatever of this nature should be so placed as to withdraw our attention as it rests on level greenward and noble trees; nor should we dwell on its engrossing characteristics to the neglect of the more exquisite charms of the wild garden and naturally planted shrubbery.

Ribbon gardening is interesting and proper in its place, definitely co-ordinated and subordinated to other varied effects of the

lawn. At best, however, there is a suggestion of the barbaric in ribbon gardening, and in America our unlicensed employment of its most undisciplined and cheapest effects is one of the surest evidences of the crude and undeveloped condition of our taste in landscape gardening.

PLANT CABINETS.

IN alluding to a plant cabinet design which in 1880 was executed for the then Mayor of New York, the *Tribune* said :

“IT is a common remark that the most encouraging signs of improved and improving taste are to be seen in the attention given to interior decoration. Perhaps it will not be held that any considerable fraction of our people have such correct ideas as to home decoration and its proper limitations that they stand in no need of professional advice. But it is plain that, year by year, a greater number of people are seeking counsel, and year by year the advice they hear and heed is growing better. Curtains, painted glass, carpets, fittings and furniture of all kinds are now designed for the place and the man by artists, and by artists who interest themselves in working out particular individual problems. All this is in the right direction. One's house has been called his larger garment, and the owner should not only be interested in having it beautiful, but specially suited to himself and his conditions.

“But while this general tendency is marked, it must be admitted that there are available means of embellishment which are strangely neglected. This is strikingly true of growing plants, which, under skillful hands, can be grouped in infinite variety and with the finest decorative effect. There is no lack of expenditure for floral emblems and designs which are employed as a part of the regulation paraphernalia at weddings and funerals. Dinner tables are graced by immense bouquets which are only an improvement upon the artificial plants and flowers which display themselves before street windows. On state occasions, too, masses of flowers and foliage are hired from the nearest florist for special effect. But all this is apart from the purpose of permanent decorations. Conservatories of any size are expensive luxuries in thickly-built quarters of the city, where every inch of land is sought for, and too often the conservatory is not altogether satisfactory. A conservatory does not conserve un-

less the gardener lives in it, and a compromise between a gardener's greenhouse and a lady's boudoir is rarely fit for either. At best it is outside of the house; something to be visited for transient inspection.

"The need is to abolish the pot and shelf notion, and to have properly grouped plants which can be cared for by servants of average capacity. That this is accomplished in other countries proves little, but that it has lately been done by one of our landscape artists for a well-known gentleman of this city is a matter worth recording. An extension north of the dining-room, less than ten feet wide, and into which two large windows open, gives little room for plants as ordinarily placed. But against the wall between the windows and in the corners, a layer of soil is held by moss bound with wires, and the whole is covered with closely growing lycopodium, making a perpendicular lawn upon which ferns, orchids and plants with delicately veined leaves are tastefully grouped. At the base of the south side is a row of the smaller growing palms and the like, and there are other pleasing features; but the keynote of the whole is the wall of verdure, which is a singularly happy device, beautiful in itself, and leaving the whole floor-space free for use. This, of course, is only one innovation that can be made in the ordinary plant-cabinet arrangement, but it is suggestive of how large a field there is in this direction yet open for clever designers in this special branch of art."

I may add that the fundamental idea of this plant cabinet is to make a natural leaf-wall effect by using potted plants without showing the pots, and to increase the walking space by reducing the width of the window boxes as much as practicable. The limitations of space in this example are unusually contracted in one direction, the structure being only 7 feet wide, though 25 feet long. It is built on the north-side of the house: one side and one end of the cabinet consisting of glass, and the other walls being formed by the main building and a wing. In the wall of the main building are two large windows opening from the dining-room into the plant cabinet. The unoccupied spaces are, therefore, of glass or brick, except a wainscoting that runs beneath the sashes. If such a greenhouse or conservatory were 20 feet wide, the brick walls would be covered with staging to support rows of pots, and, in that case, although the conception of a conservatory, as usually understood, would

have been realized, pots would be the prime and chief object that would meet the eye at first glance. An attempt is made to solve the problem, in the present instance, by carrying a narrow window box, eighteen inches wide and ten inches deep, and about three feet from the ground, along the two glass sides of the cabinet and at the top edge of the wainscoting. This box is filled with clean sand, into which are plunged as many pots of plants as it will hold. Wandering Jew and panicum, a grass, are planted in the sand to cover up entirely disagreeable artificial forms. The plants in pots are selected with great care for contrasting beauty of flower and leaf, and with the same view to tasteful variety as one would take in arranging a light, graceful bouquet, the large plants in the center and the small ones in front, but always with natural irregularity. The varieties employed are climatically adapted to the north side of the house, where the sun does not shine until late in the afternoon. They are consequently selected for their leaf beauty rather than for their flowering qualities, because only a southerly aspect gives entirely satisfactory results with flowering plants. A few of these varieties may here with propriety be named: Showy yellow-leaved crotons, one of the brightest hued of plants; waving palms; the cactus epiphyllum, with its hanging flowers of splendid crimson; maiden hair ferns, and other sorts; orchids, with their strange, foreign-looking blossoms; graceful dracænas, both red and green; the picturesque pandanus utilis or screw pine; marantas with curious tracery of pink lines, and white calla lilies.

The arrangement of the window boxes in this plant cabinet is simple, occupying little space and covering up the hot water pipes that heat the room. Yet even narrow boxes take up so much space that what is left of the seven feet width is all needed to pass along conveniently and examine the plants. Out of this strict limitation in one direction grew the idea of covering the walls of the house with greenery, which, of course, economizes space on the floor in an agreeable manner, by erecting on end in the winter time a meadow of green studded with rich color. This bed was built up behind galvanized wire netting, painted dark-green, and of two-inch mesh standing out four inches from the brick wall of the house. The space between the netting and the wall is filled with moss or sphagnum, mixed with about one-fifth of its bulk of rich potting earth. In this medium or bed, large quantities of the green mossy lycopodium, in two or three species, are planted.

Through the same meshes of wire, and mingling with lycopodium, are planted quantities of ferns of all kinds, particularly the adiantums or maiden hairs. At the top are a few of the striking stag-horn ferns with their large grotesque fronds. To vary the ferny spread of herbage, there are planted all through the mass quantities of the large, richly variegated foliage of begonia rex, as well as marantas and fittonias, curiously marked with lines of white or pink over a green groundwork.

Partly on account of the drip, and partly on account of the evident need of a border or proper base to this vertical plane of herbage, boxes ten inches high and a foot wide are placed along the bottom of the network, which stop a couple of feet from the floor. In these boxes are planted ferns, palms (*Latania Borbonica*), calla lilies, and other plants specially adapted to withstand the evil effects of the drip that must necessarily come from the lycopodium wall above.

The vacant space obtained by this arrangement gives ample room to walk about and examine things conveniently, and the general impression to the eye is of being in a natural bower of green leaves and flowering plants.

HOW A DUCK-POND BECAME A LAKE.

“JOHN, why can't you do something with that pond down there by the road? It is a positive eyesore. Surely you could dig it out a little more and plant some trees about it. It wants improving badly, and you ought to do something.”

John should explain here, as he recalls the above remarks made some time since, that he is a hard-working farmer who is tolerably forehanded with the world. His wife, whose words have been just quoted, is a busy-body in the best sense, with lots of taste and energy. She has decidedly a will of her own and a bright enthusiasm that has led her into a startling amount of home decorations of late. I have been quite overpowered; not to say set up, at times by the triumphant efforts of genius that have on different occasions appeared in the way of artistic gimcracks made out of just nothing at all. Two or three years ago my wife extended the

domain of her decorative undertakings to the outside of the house. At first I grumbled at her interference, as I called it, with a region peculiarly my own, but somehow things out of doors began to change in one way or another nevertheless. First, it was the straight road up to the front door, which I had carefully worked and otherwise kept in order until I had become quite proud of it. This road looked stiff and was steep, it was now asserted. It must wind up more gracefully and on an easier grade, and have two or three groups of trees planted on its borders. And you may be sure it was not long before it did wind. Trees were planted and fences taken away, and I was easily taught to recognize the beauty of the gently sloping turf and bordering oak groves reserved originally as shelter for the cattle. To-day, however, as I distinctly remember, it is the duck-pond that my wife's good-natured attack has left on my responsive mind; it is the veritable duck-pond that lies in a sort of hollow close to the gate and forms the outlet for a stream where we grow our water-cresses. It occupies at this time not much over an acre, and has been considered worth the ground it takes for watering cattle and raising ducks and geese, besides the yearly crop of cresses.

Well, to make a long story short, the outcome of our lively, rather one-sided encounter, which I have described at the commencement, is the attractive little scene before us. If you will notice, as we examine more closely, the old pond has been dug out lately at one end where the stream comes in. My wife insisted that the puddle or pond-like appearance should be gotten rid of in some way, and by a little contrivance we managed, while the men were carting away the earth, to make one or two points and bays, and a turn at the inlet like the bend of a crooked-necked squash. This prevents anybody from seeing the entire lake except for one short stretch which is blockaded with a heavy group of shrubs, of which the front ones dip into the water to stop people from getting round easily. Variety was what we were after, and an arrangement that would suggest an indefinite size in a simple way. The earth removed, as it happened fortunately, was needed to fill up a new barn-yard I was making. The bottom of the pond I didn't touch, as it was really "puddled" or cemented by nature, but in the banks I put every stone I found in digging out, and a number of large ones besides. I was determined to have as little slope as possible exposed by the changes of water level resulting from summer

evaporation. We had great fun planting the borders of our pond—lake we always called it after this. Much of the planting we did together in the evening, or at odd times, with perhaps a boy to help. The soil was solid and of good quality down to the water's edge, so we did not have much trouble in setting the plants directly out. We didn't spend much money on plants, perhaps \$50 at most, and contented ourselves with cheap varieties of shrubs, mostly deciduous, which in no case cost over seventy-five cents apiece, and generally not over thirty-five. One of our most effective plants, you notice, is Adam's needle (*Yucca filamentosa*). It is planted on several of our points or capes, and when it is in bloom in the summer with its long spikes of large, creamy white flowers borne on stalks four or five feet high, coming out of low masses of broad, stiff, sharp, bluish green leaves, it looks just the thing for the position. One of our nicest effects along the banks are plantations of honeysuckles on the steepest parts, such kinds as the golden-leaved, striped monthly and *Halleana*. Their growth is peculiarly picturesque, piled together in their vigor or pushing about single tendrils with wild, irregular grace. The leaves of these honeysuckles hang on late in autumn, and the flowers bloom in abundance more or less all summer. Virginia creepers and the beautiful Japan creeper, *ampelopsis Veitchii*, with their rich summer clothing and splendid autumn colors, we employed in several places. We had some old trees, decayed at the top, but sound in the trunk for eight or ten feet from the base. We left portions of the projecting branches at the point where we cut them off, so as to give them picturesqueness as a support. All such places we planted with Virginia and Japan creepers. Some of the lovely clematises were planted at the foot of piles of rocks—such as *C. Virginica* and *C. apiifolia*, these special ones on account of their abundant flowers in August. Nor have we forgotten to employ the great spreading masses of foliage and magnificent crimson and orange-colored, trumpet-like flowers of the trumpet creepers (*Tecoma radicans* and *T. grandiflora*).

Our main mass, which we spoke of as planted to prevent any one occupying a position where all parts of the lake could be seen at once, is made up of common shrubs. Some of them are very effective, however, and of considerable size. *Cornus sanguinea*, with its red stems summer and winter, grows vigorously into great picturesque masses of rich, solid-looking foliage. Then there are the hydrangeas, *H. nivea*, with its tossing, white-lined large leaves,

and all other hardy kinds, notably *H. paniculata grandiflora*, with white and red trusses of flowers in fall. The spireas, of course, are quite a standby. In this group we have been careful to use the strong-growing, splendid golden variety of *S. opulifolia*, as well as *S. Thunbergii*, with delicate, dainty, golden leaves. There are narrow-leaved lilacs, Japan snowballs and Japan quinces, and low *deutzia gracilis* and *hypericum kalmianum*, with more than one waving tamarisk drooping delicate foliage and flowers in the midst of the same group, which thus makes a large, varied and most effective mass. At another point you will notice a considerable group of willows—and very suitable they are, too, for such positions. There are no common weeping willows (*Salix Babylonica*) in or near this group. We don't like them much; one or two down at the foot of the lake are quite enough. They don't combine well in a group of other plants. Most of these willows of our groups are properly bushes of various tints. There is the delicate narrow purple-leaved rosemary willow, the narrow, so-called American weeping willow, one or two beautiful Japanese willows, another small-leaved one called tri-color, the large shining, laurel-leaved kind (*S. pentandria*), low-grafted Kilmarnock willows, and above all a beautiful silvery species, *regalis*. Among those willows were mingled several oleasters (*eleagnus*), the vigorous common hortensis, narrow-leaved and silvery, and the large-leaved and far more choice and effective *eleagnus longipes*, a rare Japan species. Another group consists of sumachs straggling down a steep bank. There are lots of the common sumach, and mingled among its masses, or rather on the outskirts, are several of the cutleaved sumachs, with young leaves of peculiarly delicate shape. All these sumachs color splendidly in autumn. There are clusters of the sweet-scented, hardy and vigorous bush honeysuckle *fragrantissima*, as well as purple berberries and *eunonymuses* with striking scarlet berries, and the waving branches and beautiful early yellow flowers of the *forsythia* or golden bell. You see I have a few deciduous trees in single positions near the groups of shrubs, a silver poplar and balsam poplar and a scarlet and silver maple. We have scarcely any evergreens as yet, because I have found them quite expensive and not easy to transplant; but I am going to try some trailing junipers, a stone pine and a weeping hemlock, and, above all, a Japanese cypress or two, with their rich, fern-like foliage. Herbaceous plants, however, suited to its water edge, have

not been forgotten: For instance, there are nodding red and white lilies, the bright scarlet cardinal flower, strangely beautiful Irises from Japan and elsewhere, golden rods, and some lovely little orchids.

Well, now, considering the amount of money spent, don't you think my wife and I have done pretty well to make the spot look so attractive—just a pool, with natural-looking growth about it? Neighbors coming in at the gate wonder what in the world has changed things so. The whole thing looks so much a matter of course now, that it really seems to me as if it had always been there. We mean to keep on planting, however, although the general outline of our work is established. Hereafter plants can be set out from time to time, as we may fancy. Let me tell you, though, after all is said and done, that, although I don't brag of it, as you see, this lake of ours is really a big thing in the way of home decoration, and if I were to tell you how little it cost in hard cash, I think you would hardly believe it.

A NATURAL PARK AT NIAGARA.

IN Lord Dufferin's speech made before the Society of Artists, at Toronto, Canada, some little time since, and generally alluded to by the press, he proposed an International Park in the vicinity of Niagara Falls. The idea is a charming one, and every true believer in Niagara will bless the noble lord, if his efforts on behalf of the public should be successfully terminated. His notions in regard to the art of landscape gardening seem, however, to be somewhat vaguely expressed, and I think he must have failed to convey his precise meaning in the paragraph in which he says, "that the proposed international park must not be desecrated, or in any way sophisticated by the puny efforts of the art of the landscape gardener, but must be carefully preserved in the picturesque and unvulgarised condition in which it was originally laid out by the hand of Nature."

It is evident that there must be some way to treat well the territory now treated badly on the Canadian side, in the vicinity of the Falls. It should be entirely bare, or entirely covered with trees, or partly bare, and partly covered with trees. Success lies somewhere, and should be logically foreordained. It will be gener-

ally acknowledged that on Goat Island may be found a beautiful example of natural landscape design, "carefully preserved in the picturesque and unvulgarized condition in which it was laid out by the hand of Nature." An analysis of its sources of effect will, however, show that if it was all burned over, a similar effect (if a record had been kept) could be reproduced with comparative rapidity, if the resources of the art of the landscape gardener were consecrated to the work.

Some years since, while Mr. F. E. Church was one of our Park Commissioners, he showed me in his studio an original sketch of Niagara, and the conversation naturally turned on its present disadvantageous surroundings, both on the American and the Canadian side, and on the desirability of securing to the public all that was really essential to a full enjoyment of its beauties. I remember Mr. Church's then mentioning incidentally, that he was under the impression that a close study of the subject in the future would show that it would be quite feasible, and perhaps desirable, to improve the artistic effect on the American side by opening up a few channels that would allow the water to flow here and there over the high rock wall on Goat Island, between the Horseshoe and the American Falls, and thus give a sparkle and life to this subsidiary portion of the scene, which would help the general effect to the artistic eye, by linking together in an easy way the two great falls, which at present seem to be somewhat disconnected, in consequence of what really looks like an untoward accident in the play of natural forces. I was reminded of this conversation when, a few winters afterward, I was at the Falls, when the flow of water had been much reduced by a storm of wind that continued for several days. Under these circumstances the water, pouring over the walls of rock to the right and left of the central gulf, was divided into separate falls, and although the impression of the Horseshoe Falls, extending as a unit from shore to shore, was thus, for the time interfered with, it seemed to be a fair illustration of the kind of secondary effect that had been hinted at as suitable for the intermediate region when the two grand falls are in their normal condition.

The improvements on our New York Park had been in progress for several years before the late Horace Greeley made a visit to it. His first stroll happened to be in company with a friend of mine, who told me some time afterward that Mr. Greeley made no

comment except just as he was leaving it, when he said, apparently with some sense of relief, "Well, they've left it alone better than I thought they would." And yet those who remember the initial proceedings, will call to mind how complicated and apparently iconoclastic they were—the constant need for blasting in rock to secure convenient grades for road construction and for efficient drainage, the unintelligible processes of lake excavation, the incessant digging and delving necessary for the preparation of the soil, and to adjust the natural surface to the numerous archways demanded by the proposed subway system of roads and walks, all these, and a thousand other necessary incidents of gradual development had to be undertaken in regular sequence, under circumstances disadvantageous to all serenity of appearance, while the works were in progress. But the object in view all the time was, of course, the permanent retention of the interesting features of the landscape, and the preservation and emphasis of every natural characteristic of the site.

In the arts of architecture, painting and sculpture, the results are exactly determined by the limitations of the human brain and hand, but in the art of landscape design, no such boundary line is recognizable.

Having studied carefully the works and the method of working of the Creator, the designer of a landscape can bring into successful play the great forces of Nature, and, subordinating his own personality, can secure for his work an undying vitality, which can only follow from such a direct reliance on the resources of the Infinite. In every difficult work the key-note of success lies, of course, in the idea of thorough subordination; but it must be an intelligent penetrative subordination, an industrious, ardently artistic, and sleeplessly active ministry that is constantly seeking for an opportunity to do some little thing to help forward the great result on which Nature is lavishing its powers of creation.



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