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A SUBURBAN COUNTRY PLACE.

WITH PICTURES BY HARRY FENN.

THERE have been times when the word «suburban» rang pleasantly in the ears of the citizen of New York. Such must have been the times, long ago, when Greenwich village and Chelsea village were the summer resorts of local magnates, and when Harlem village (legend affirms it) was a health-resort so placidly umbrageous, Dutch, and small that people who could not sleep in town were sent out there, assured of a week of unbroken slumber. And such, again, were the nearer times when all the isle was still suburban north of Washington Square, covered with farms, and dotted with country mansions that were often set in forest-like domains, and often fronted on the East or the North or the Harlem River.

Claremont, at the end of Riverside Drive, near the tomb of General Grant, suggests in a rather humble way what these mansions were, and in a very magnificent way what their outlooks were. Others linger, desecrated, here and there, closely pressed by new-laid brick and stone. And away up at the extreme tip of Manhattan there are still a few quiet, shady places which may call themselves suburban in the old and honorable sense. But everywhere else around the outskirts of Manhattan the term has gained an unattractive, hybrid meaning. To speak it with pleasure, New-Yorkers must apply it to those remoter regions which can be reached

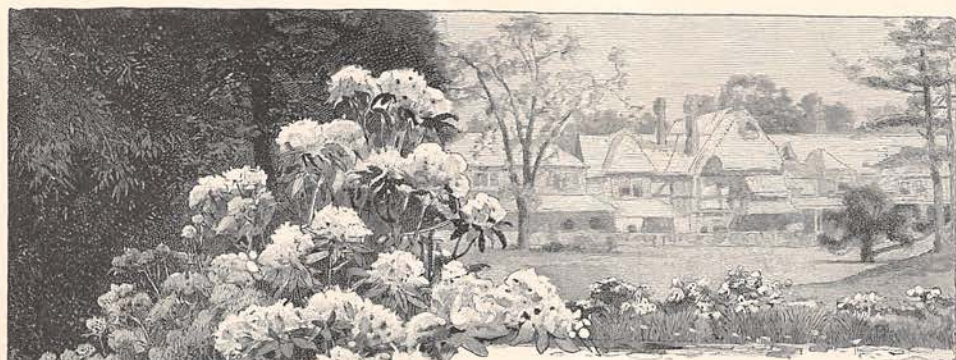
only by a railway journey of considerable length. And then it is incorrectly applied, for a real suburban place is rural in aspect, but urban in convenience—private, green, and peaceful in itself, yet close in touch with the true self of the town.

Our other great Eastern cities tell almost the same suburban story as New York. Only Boston has fared better. Here, too, in some directions, the old suburban villages have been cut into parsimonious villa lots or solidly built over. But in other directions they survive, and retain to a great degree their genuinely rural look. They are threatened by the town, but not yet overborne. And thus they have historic interest as well as intrinsic charm. They tell of fast-vanishing conditions which can never be revived, because suburban life, to be at its best, needs for its center a city of the first importance and yet of modest size, with neither railways nor trolleys to carry its crowds and its hastiness far afield.

II.

THE most beautiful suburban country place that I know lies near Boston. One view of it was shown the readers of THE CENTURY some time ago in an article describing the work of its owner, Professor Charles Sprague Sargent, in creating the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University.¹ It lies only four

¹ «A Tree Museum,» by M. C. Robbins: THE CENTURY, April, 1893.



miles from the center of Boston, in the town of Brookline, on the edge of the town of Jamaica Plain, and comprises one hundred and fifty acres of rolling ground. Jamaica Plain is now legally a part of the Greater Boston, but it keeps its suburban aspect; and Brookline, a much larger place, preserves this aspect and its independence too.

Fifty years ago Andrew Downing, the first American landscape-gardener, wrote:

The whole of this neighborhood of Brookline is a kind of landscape garden, and there is nothing in America of this sort so inexpressibly charming as the lanes which lead from one cottage or villa to another. No animals are allowed to run



AMONG THE RHODODENDRONS.

ENGRAVED BY H. DAVIDSON.

at large, and the open gates, with tempting vistas and glimpses under the pendent boughs, give it quite an Arcadian air of rural freedom and enjoyment. These lanes are clothed with a profusion of trees and wild shrubbery, often almost to the carriage-tracks, and curve and wind about in a manner quite bewildering to the stranger who attempts to thread them alone; and there are more hints here for the lover of the picturesque in lanes than we ever saw assembled together in so small a compass.

Brookline has now some eighteen thousand inhabitants, and of course it does not look just as it did in Downing's time; but with regard to its southern portions Downing's words are still surprisingly true. The picture that it leaves upon the stranger's mind is a far-spreading, varied picture of broad and well-built winding roads, and narrower, wilder lanes, all canopied by goodly trees, and of pleasant, unobtrusive houses, large and small, encircled by grounds that are sometimes very small but often almost park-like in extent, with trees to rival those by the roadside, smooth turf, luxuriant shrubs, and prolific flowers. And the most careless eye perceives that if such a town had been built on a level, it could never have been Brookline. Brookline's site was naturally picturesque—richly wooded, everywhere rolling, in some parts really hilly, and often boldly broken by huge gray ledges of rock. Thus every place has personality, and plays its part in a panorama of perpetually changing charm. But the most beautiful and most interesting of all is Mr. Sargent's. It is larger than any other, it is very diversified in surface, and it has been treated with exceptional artistic skill.

«Holm Lea» is not an old place in the sense that, as we see it, so our great-grandfathers saw it in their day; but it is old in the sense that for generations it has been a suburban home under conditions similar to those which prevail to-day. Several suburban places have been united to make this large one—altered, remodeled, virtually recreated; but the traditions of the spot have not been broken or its spirit changed.

The State-house stands only four miles away, and in less than half an hour one may drive into the heart of the city along the beautiful new parkway, seven miles in length, which runs from Boston through Brookline to Franklin Park in Jamaica Plain. Yet the conformation of the ground, assisted by its skilful planting, makes this place of one hundred and fifty acres appear much larger. When the trees are in leaf no eye can discern

where its boundaries lie, or can cross the foliage of the middle distances to dwell upon anything except far-off hills and spires; and even in winter there is scarcely any visible proof that it forms part of a large town close to a very large city. Everywhere it affords



AZALEAS IN THE TENT.

a sense of unthreatened peace, of intimacy with unthreatened nature, which could not be more complete if woods and fields alone encircled it; and this fact amply justifies that lack of extended outlooks which, of course, would be an unpardonable fault if its surroundings were really fields and woods.

III.

MR. SARGENT'S house has been altered and enlarged more than once during the last twenty-five years; but its oldest, central portion has a special interest for students of



THE OPEN TERRACE.

ENGRAVED BY A. E. ANDERSON.

the history of American horticulture, because it was once the home of Thomas Lee. Downing, in his «Landscape Gardening,» says in regard to the cottage of Thomas Lee:

Enthusiastically fond of botany, and of gardening in all its departments, Mr. Lee has here formed a residence of as much variety and interest as we ever saw in so moderate a compass—about twenty acres. It is, indeed, not only a most instructive place to the amateur of landscape-gardening, but to the naturalist and lover of plants. Every shrub seems placed precisely in the soil and aspect it likes best, and native and foreign rhododendrons, kalmias, and other rare shrubs are seen here in the finest condition. There is a great deal of variety in the surface here, and while the lawn-front of the house has a polished and graceful air, one or two portions are quite picturesque.

This is what I meant when I said that the traditions of Holm Lea have remained unbroken and its spirit unchanged. The place created by an amateur horticulturist, who was locally famous and useful in his time, has not been surrendered to the Philistines. It has passed into the keeping of a man of similar taste and of much profounder knowledge and wider fame. The old Lee house is the nucleus of the present house, and the old

Lee place, when joined to one that had long been owned by Mr. Sargent's father, became the nucleus, the artistic center, of the domain which has since been extended much more widely.

The house as it now stands is unpretentious, and can be classed with no recognized «style» except the native rural American. Yet it is not by any means an ugly house. Its frank simplicity is a great merit; all its features evidently serve the ends of comfort and convenience; and, moreover, it looks at home on the spot where it stands. This, in the country, is the main thing,—the fitness of the house to its environment,—and therefore general outlines are more important than any features or details. From every point of view this house looks well, because it composes well with its surroundings, and stands solidly and comfortably upon the ground, as though it had been built because just here nature had specially prepared for a house of just this kind. But of course nature had done nothing of the sort, nor did accident evolve the harmony which now exists. The proportions of the house have been considered with reference to its station and its backgrounds, the near plantations have been adjusted to



THE OPEN TERRACE.

ENGRAVED BY CHARLES STATE.

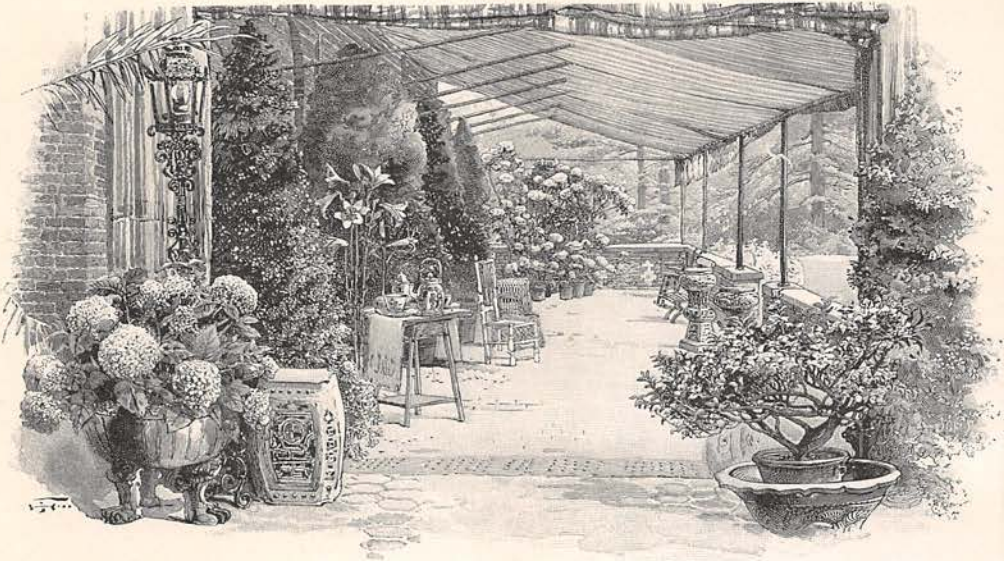
its presence, and its walls have been artistically united with the soil by suitable terraces and by fringing lines and masses of shrubs.

As it is with the house, so it is with every part and corner of the place. None of its features is the result of accident. Each, in one sense or another, is the result of art. And this is the reason why I have wished to speak about it. As far as they go, Mr. Fenn's drawings describe it better than any words; and if the whole of its interest lay in its obvious appeal to the eye, more drawings and no text would be the better commentary. But just as truly as any landscapes ever painted upon canvas, these living ones, wrought upon the surface of the ground, are the outcome of man's imagination and sense of beauty, of his judgment and executive skill. If we do not realize this fact, we cannot rightly value their loveliness or their apparent naturalness; above all, we cannot appreciate the most remarkable merit of the place—the way in which many landscape pictures, differing widely in their character, have been combined with breadth, repose, and unity of general effect. Holm Lea justifies a written

commentary because it is an admirable object-lesson in regard to the aims, the methods, and the possible results of landscape-gardening art.

IV.

THE work of the painter, the sculptor, or the architect is throughout a work of creation. His brute materials are supplied to him, but the thing which he makes with them is in all its parts his own. On the other hand, the landscape-gardener is not wholly a creator. The thing which he produces was in some degree begun by nature. His task is to originate in one spot, but to preserve in another, to suppress here, and to alter there. Yet rearrangement and elimination are artistic processes as truly as invention itself, and in each and every case the result—the finished work of art as a whole—is novel, is artificial, is a created thing. Thus the artist in gardening stands, as an artist, with the painter, the architect, and the sculptor, just as the poet who turns a true tale into a work of art ranks as high as the poet who invents his theme. But every one does not remember these facts. The triumph of landscape-gar-



THE TERRACE.

ENGRAVED BY S. G. PUTNAM.

dening—of the naturalistic as distinguished from the formal branch of gardening art—is to create results which look as though, with very little assistance, nature might have produced them in some particularly gentle and human mood. And therefore nature usually gets the credit for almost the whole of the landscape-gardener's work, just as she does for almost the whole of the story-teller's when his tale is known to be «founded upon fact.»

If the next stranger who visits Holm Lea could be told in detail how the place has been made,—patiently and artfully, year after year and day after day, acre by acre and foot by foot, always with the intrinsic charm of every smallest feature, yet always with the broad effect of the whole, steadily kept in mind,—he would probably be much amazed. But if he chanced to know something of nature and something of art, he would not be amazed at all. He would be aware that nature had simply covered these slopes and levels with the wild beauty of unbroken forests. He would understand that the changes wrought by centuries of human possession could not result in civilized beauty without the exercise of artistic intelligence. He would tell you that in every branch of art intelligence means imagination, knowledge, and patience—the imagination which foresees desirable results with clearness, the knowledge which knows how to produce them, and the patience which shuns no difficulties, is eager to remedy all mistakes,

and thinks nothing really good if it possibly can be bettered. And he would add that the landscape-gardener stands especially in need of all these qualities because his materials are not inert. Nature's materials must be handled with reference to her own intentions and her own methods; and as they keep on growing and keep on dying, the task of creation and the task of elimination are never at an end. The most perfect pictures must perpetually be retouched, and sometimes a new ideal must be substituted for one which can no longer be completely realized.

V.

PROFESSOR SARGENT'S house is intended for winter and for summer habitation. The long brick piazza (shown in perspective on this page as you would see it if you were sitting beside the young lady portrayed on page 7) is covered only by a canvas awning. When this is removed in cold weather the drawing-room windows receive the afternoon sun, while in warm weather the light that filters through it shows at their best the ornamenting ranges of potted plants, brought from the greenhouse in their blossoming season to be replaced by others as their beauty wanes. But that part of the piazza where the damsel sits is solidly roofed for greater coolness in summer, and in winter is inclosed as a conservatory; and beyond it spreads an open brick terrace, delightful, above all, on moon-lit summer nights, when the planta-

tions around the lawn, silhouetted against the somber blue, show that their sky-line has been as carefully considered as the masses of light and shadow and the contrasts of color they reveal in the daytime.

I should like to describe the splendid display of hothouse azaleas which in June fills the tent that occupies the inner corner of this terrace; but our concern just now is with landscape-gardening, not with displays of movable plants for a temporary decorative purpose. And something quite as splendid can be found if we cross the lawn and, down by the borders of the pond, look at the hardy rhododendrons which two of our pictures show.

There are fine rhododendron plantations in other parts of Brookline, but none of them is half as beautiful as this one at Holm Lea. Here the results which nature produces when she is doing her very best with these plants have been most perfectly reproduced and most sympathetically improved upon by the hands of science and of art. Lovers of moisture, the rhododendrons flourish here like the trees of the Bible. All those of defective form or with blossoms of unpleasing color have been weeded out, so that no discordant note mars their blaze of purple, crimson, and white. Inharmonious plants of other sorts are not allowed in their vicinity; and the mirror which lies beneath them doubles their number while it softens and relieves their vivid contrast with the background of emerald turf.

Now compare the drawing on page 10 with the one on page 11. They give us the same outlook, with only a slight difference in the points of view, but they suggest entirely different pictures. One shows an early week in June, and one an early week in May; and thus retracing the days of a single month, we almost seem to have gone to the edge of another pond. In June we scarcely notice the landscape, except as a happy background for the rhododendrons; but in May these play the subordinate rôle. Their dark evergreen foliage, supported by the still darker green of the group of pines on the knoll, serves as a foil to the bright tones of the grass and of the low plants by the water's brink, and to the varied tender tints of the budding trees; and the center of interest is now the big magnolia, with its burden of pale pinkish flowers, which in June makes a quiet, dark spot at the foot of the tall hickory.

Thus you will find it everywhere at Holm Lea. Each locality changes its character with the changing seasons, yet is always a natural-

seeming picture, artistically complete in color and in form; and each feature has its time of special importance, yet at all other times helps the effect of its neighbors, and therefore is never intrusive or even unimportant. For instance, the Japanese apple-tree shown on page 13 outshines all its neighbors when it is in bloom—a hill of a myriad delicate blossoms, rosy pink at first, and, as the days go by, changing to snowiest white. It is then the most beautiful object within the borders of the place, or, I verily believe, within the borders of Massachusetts. But it is also a



ENGRAVED BY C. SCHWARZBURGER.

THE WALK
NEAR THE POND.

charming object during its longer weeks of simple green, and in size and shape suits its environment and enhances the charm of all adjacent things.

There are many other specimen plants of striking kinds at Holm Lea, and some of them are rarities which delight the soul of the botanist or the horticulturist. But there is none which an artist cannot also admire. The place for mere curiosities is in scientific collections. In these artistic landscapes everything must have personal beauty, and must stand where it increases general beauty.

You would weep if I could tell you of all the pitiless executions which have occurred at Holm Lea since I first saw the place ten years ago. For even the executioner almost wept over them sometimes, and you cannot realize, as he did at the moment, or as we who are familiar with the place do now, how excellent his reasons for them were. The ax is never carelessly lifted at Holm Lea. Months,

or even years, of patient preliminary thought control its work. But when the greatest good of the greatest number clearly calls for elimination, neither value, age, nor intrinsic beauty can save the life of a flower or shrub or tree.

From time to time the various ornamental plantations have been thinned at the sacrifice of many fine individual plants that were overcrowding others which could less well be spared. And many beautiful single trees, old and young, have been removed, because they reduced the apparent size of the lawns or injured that aspect of breadth and repose which only unbroken stretches of turf can bestow, or because they shut out desirable prospects, or interfered with the development of still finer specimens, or in color, form, or texture failed to harmonize with their immediate neighbors, or marred the general effect of some particular landscape picture. Now and again the ghosts of these



NORTH END OF THE POND IN JUNE.

ENGRAVED BY C. SCHWARZBURGER.



NORTH END OF THE POND IN MAY.

ENGRAVED BY C. W. CHADWICK.

trees haunt the memory of those who knew and admired them; yet we cannot wish them alive again, for their death conduced to beauty of life in everything which remains.

VI.

Now let us look at the pond again, for we have seen only one of its corners. Turning this rhododendron corner, we pass (as in the picture on page 9) through a grove of great hickories and oaks to a spot where an enormous white willow widely overhangs the water. Its mass of silvery-gray foliage effectually separates the rhododendrons behind us from an equally vivid array of hardy Ghent azaleas which are massed along the shore that lies in front of us. Often we see these two kinds of plants closely combined and blossoming together. But not at Holm Lea: its owner knows too well that a rhododendron

gamut of purples and crimsons cannot harmonize with such scarlets and yellows as the Ghent azaleas bear.

Look now at the picture on page 12. The whole shore of the pond is fringed with ornamental water-plants, which seem as spontaneous as the marsh-marigolds in a country brook; and certainly the edge of this meadow—white and yellow with buttercups and daisies, exquisitely contrasting with the richer splendor of the rhododendrons on the opposite shore—does not look as though the hand of man had touched it. Yet no part of these banks is natural, for the pond itself is not natural. Its basin was excavated some twenty years ago, and the water was supplied by damming a little brook. Every foot of the shore has been artificially outlined and adorned. But artifice here meant true art, and therefore nature has gladly acquiesced in it, sympathetically carrying out



SOUTH END OF THE POND.

ENGRAVED BY A. E. ANDERSON.

those completing details to which, in this branch of art, she must always attend.

You may have seen natural ponds as beautiful as this one, but their character is not the same and would not be appropriate here. Here the eye demands a kind of beauty which, while it looks spontaneous, is really civilized, refined, and delicately finished, or, as the writers of Downing's time would have said, is «polished.» No spot where nature does the planting is likely to remain equally effective through all the seasons of the year. No natural pond could be as variously adorned as this one, for its flowering plants have been brought from many parts of the world, and some of them owe their charm to long years of horticultural care. And every natural pond is more or less marred by the scars and defects wrought by death and decay. Look again at the drawing on this page. The tupelo-tree, which spreads its horizontal arms above the group of rhododendrons in

the center, is just the right tree for just this spot, and in autumn its crimson foliage strikes as fine a dominating note of color as do the rhododendron flowers in June. Eliminate the drooping branches of the elm toward the right, and the composition is ruined. Repeat them on the other side, and it would not be a composition at all. And here, as everywhere at Holm Lea, all such facts are proofs of that true kind of creative work which, with a wise understanding of nature's possibilities, knows what to originate, what to alter, and what to destroy.

VII.

THESE words also define the kind of work which is needed to adjust a bit of wild landscape to surroundings and accompaniments of a more «polished» sort.

Downing found some parts of the Lee place distinctly picturesque, and thus they

still remain. Picturesqueness always implies a certain degree of wildness, and there are parts of Holm Lea which, in fact, look entirely wild. Mr. Fenn had the most important of them at his back and on his left when he was making the picture of the little valley (on page 15) upon which the entrance front of the house looks out. Here, lifted high above the level of the valley and the pond, lies an extensive stretch of wild woodland, interspersed with glades and rocky ledges really romantic in their charm. The aboriginal forest—cut down, who knows when or how?—has been spontaneously replaced by fine second growths of oak and pine and beech, and those varied flowery undergrowths for which New England woods are famous; and here and there rise single pines of much greater stature, relics of the aboriginal forest—spared, who knows by whom or why?

One may wander long amid these woods and think as little of landscape-gardening as of Boston's near-by streets; yet they are what they are because the hand of art has tended them. The Philistine would have cut them down and civilized their site, in the belief that they were out of keeping with the rest

of the place. Or else he would have thought them too sacred to be touched, and allowed them to grow into impenetrable thickets. He would not have known how to unite them harmoniously with the softer landscapes, and therefore they would really have been out of keeping. But the artist has made them beautiful and accessible without destroying one iota of their natural air. Dead or dying or painfully imperfect trees and branches have been removed in due degree, which, of course, does not mean in the same degree desirable elsewhere. Young trees and shrubs similar in kind to the indigenous growths have been planted where bare spots threatened. The ax has occasionally been used where destructive overcrowding appeared. And where the wood meets the turf of the valley, isolated trees, projecting shrubs, and fringing wild flowers make so gradual a transition that even the clipped grass wins a spontaneous air.

The pictures on pages 14 and 16 show, from just beyond their boundaries, those remoter portions of the place which are not devoted to purely ornamental ends. They present still another type of landscape beauty. These effects are pastoral, not gardenesque



A JAPANESE APPLE-TREE.

ENGRAVED BY C. SCHWARZBURGER.

or picturesquely wild. But these, too, have been consciously secured, carefully studied, and artistically developed.

VIII.

It would be difficult to decide which are the most beautiful of the many and varied landscape pictures that have been made at Holm Lea. The seemingly wild, the rich and polished gardenesque, and the simply pastoral pictures all seem, in their turn, the most beautiful that could be made.

This is partly because they have all been so skilfully united that as we pass from one type to another, the one seems naturally to blend into the other; and it is partly because, at the same time, they have been so skilfully separated and framed in foliage that a point of view which shows the perfection of one type isolates it from all objects that could impair its peculiar charm. Moreover, each type of picture has been developed where that type was most clearly demanded by the position of the house and the natural character of the ground; and within itself each and every picture has been kept free from inharmonious details.

I do not merely mean that Holm Lea shows

none of those glaring mistakes which are apt to reveal themselves when much ambition and much labor have been spent upon a country place—conspicuous artificial features introduced into would-be naturalistic scenes, or would-be picturesque, crudely naturalistic features introduced into soft and polished scenes. I mean that a feeling for the virtues of concord and unity has directed the choice and the placing of even the smallest plant. Of course no garden plants deface with inappropriate bits of beauty the glades or the edges of the wild woodlands. Not every plant which grows here is self-sown, but all of them might have originated in the company of those which really sprang up of themselves. And when I wrote that even in the gardenesque landscapes, where greater latitude of choice is permissible, each plant must be beautiful and must help general beauty of effect, I implied that none exist which are palpably dissimilar in aspect to the indigenous vegetation. Some are exotics from far climes, and some the gardener's hand has improved beyond mother nature's recognition. But they are all hardy in this climate, growing all the year round where we find them in summer; and they all accord in general character with the character of New England's



THE MEADOW.

ENGRAVED BY PETER AITKEN.



LOOKING DOWN THE VALLEY.

ENGRAVED BY J. W. EVANS.

native dress. Palms and bamboos, cacti and aloes, and scores of other attractive plants of unmistakably foreign aspect, are cultivated at Holm Lea; but they are kept in the greenhouses or used for the decoration of the house and its piazzas. They are not set about the grounds in summer, pretending to grow where they stand, and marring with their tropic air the effect of the products of the temperate zone.

Need I now assert that, as all the outdoor pictures at Holm Lea are naturalistic pictures of one kind or another, they include no formal flower-beds? There is only one such flower-bed on the whole place. You may see it in the angle formed by the piazza walls near the steps in the picture on page 6. Here architectural formality justifies a brilliant bit of floral formality which would be as distressingly discordant upon the bosom of the peaceful lawns, or by the graceful borders of the pond, as in the heart of the wild-wood itself.

Nevertheless, Holm Lea is more richly adorned with flowers than any other country place I know. Its blossoming trees and, above all, its blossoming shrubs, growing freely and

luxuriantly, make it a glorious place of color all through the spring and early summer months, sweeping the ground with their pink and red, their white and yellow and lilac robes, now standing proudly alone, now massed in huge bouquets of blossom, and now sprinkled through the borders of the larger plantations. In the spring narcissi by the thousand, wild hyacinths, trilliums, fritillaries, forget-me-nots, and their like, bloom in the grass wherever it is not kept closely shorn, and around the borders of the pond and along the edges of the shrubberies; and they need none of the costly care which plants that are "bedded out" require, but after their first establishment appear afresh as spring follows spring, with their scattered sparkles or their almost solid sheets of bloom. In their wake come the children of the summer and the fall, enchanting every day, but most splendid in the day of the rhododendrons and the Ghent azaleas. When the flowers are perishing more color follows, for the larger plantations have been arranged with an eye to autumnal harmony and brilliance as well as to spring brilliance and summer harmonies of varied green; and also

with an eye to that winter beauty which may be won by a judicious use of plants with evergreen foliage, bright-hued branchlets, or persistent decorative fruit.

Then there are the many kinds of garden flowers which cannot be required as details in landscape pictures, and which ruin these pictures if intruded among them in our

and to understand how it ought to be applied in this case or in that. But discouraging signs of blindness, apathy, or misconception meet us at every step, and where we might least expect to find them. Our costliest, most ambitious, and most polished country places are often less artistic than our smallest and humblest; and the architect whose own work



UNDER THE ELM.

ENGRAVED BY C. W. CHADWICK.

customary semi-formal ways. These are also grown, and lavishly, at Holm Lea; and its gardener, Mr. Zander, has made himself a notable name by his great success with them. But they are grown by themselves, near the greenhouses in one corner of the place, where they can be tended with the greatest ease, where their several beauties can be well appreciated when the visitor seeks them out, and where they interfere with the effect of no naturalistic scene.

IX.

SOMETIMES we fancy that, in this America, we have learned to appreciate gardening art

is most intimately connected with the gardener's very seldom comprehends his aims, appreciates his difficulties, or rightly values his results.

Our architects have, indeed, begun to perceive the need for gardening art as an accessory to their own, but hardly as yet its intrinsic dignity, its lawful freedom, its right to stand by itself on an equal height with the other great arts of design, and to aim at ideals and work with methods peculiar to itself. Very often they quote as defining and concluding the whole matter a bit of Parisian studio parlance: «Gardening is the sauce of architecture.» Truly; but in the same sense

that apples are the sauce for roast goose. Apples have other uses than this, and gardening has other rôles to play than as a docile adjunct to the lines of a building. There are many cases, as in public parks, where gardening must furnish the solid food for the eye, while architecture can but garnish it and flavor it a little. And there are many other cases where those formal gardening schemes which architects most easily understand are distinctly inappropriate, where naturalistic methods of treatment must be chosen, and where, in consequence, architecture must consent to play the subordinate part.

Holm Lea, of course, is an instance of this kind. Only a very dull eye could look upon the grounds of Holm Lea as mere accessories to its buildings, or could think that this is what they should have been made. Virtually they exist because the buildings exist—because people wished to make their home upon this spot, and therefore wished to civilize and adorn it. But artistically it is the other way about. The treatment of the grounds has been inspired by their natural character (by their formation and their native vegetation), and the buildings have been adjusted to it. And only in this way could a place of so much beauty have been created upon a site of this kind, amid American suburban conditions, and with due reference to American habits of life.

Now, in conclusion, I may write down two important truths which, taken together, constitute the very important truth that I wished to enforce when I began this little commentary. The first of them is this: All the science, all the patience in the world, will profit a landscape-gardener little if his sense of beauty has not been developed by the persistent observation and study of beauty both in nature and in art. An artist in gardening is not born ready made, or fostered by scientific acquirements, any more than an artist with paint or chisel. On the other hand, and this is the second truth, all the artistic instinct, all the artistic training in the world, will not make a man a good landscape-gardener unless he has much scientific acquaintance and much practical experience with plants.

As regards both general scheme and completing details, Mr. Sargent has created his own place. But this is not to say that any

owner of a country place, or any botanist, or any artist, is able to make as fine a one. It required, so to say, a union of these three personalities. The charm of the artistically composed landscapes at Holm Lea is greatly enhanced by the variety of the trees and shrubs and flowers which compose them; and quite as remarkable, and even more helpful to beauty, is the flourishing condition of every plant and the rapid development of every young plant—a development which seems almost magical to one who knows how hard the average planter must struggle with his nurslings, and how often he must confess defeat in the end. Thus wide botanical and horticultural knowledge are revealed by the artistic plantations of Holm Lea no less than by the scientific ones of the Arnold Arboretum. Mr. Sargent's public affiliations have been with men of science, but in early life he had a wise artistic counselor in his uncle, Henry Winthrop Sargent, who created one of the most charming places on the Hudson River, and transmitted to his nephew the inspiring influence of Andrew Downing. And the impulse thus received has been sedulously fostered by a love for art of every kind, and by a wide acquaintance, in many parts of the world, with nature's fairest products and with the gardening achievements of our own and antecedent times.

If Mr. Fenn had made a hundred drawings at Holm Lea, each might have been used as a text to enforce this fundamental truth: Landscape-gardening is a genuine art, an independent art, a very difficult art, and one which demands much knowledge of other than artistic kinds. No superficial amateur, and no professional man of one-sided training, can create a really fine country place of a highly civilized and polished sort, perfectly adapted to the needs and tastes of its owners, entirely appropriate to its situation, completely realizing the natural possibilities of its site, displaying the full resources of modern horticulture, delighting the eye with pictures of the most diverse kinds, and satisfying it by their combination into a harmonious whole. The genesis of a country place like Holm Lea requires the mind of a scientific botanist, the hand of a practised horticulturist, the heart of a lover of nature, the eye of a trained artist—and, besides all these, the beautiful patience of Job.

M. G. Van Rensselaer.