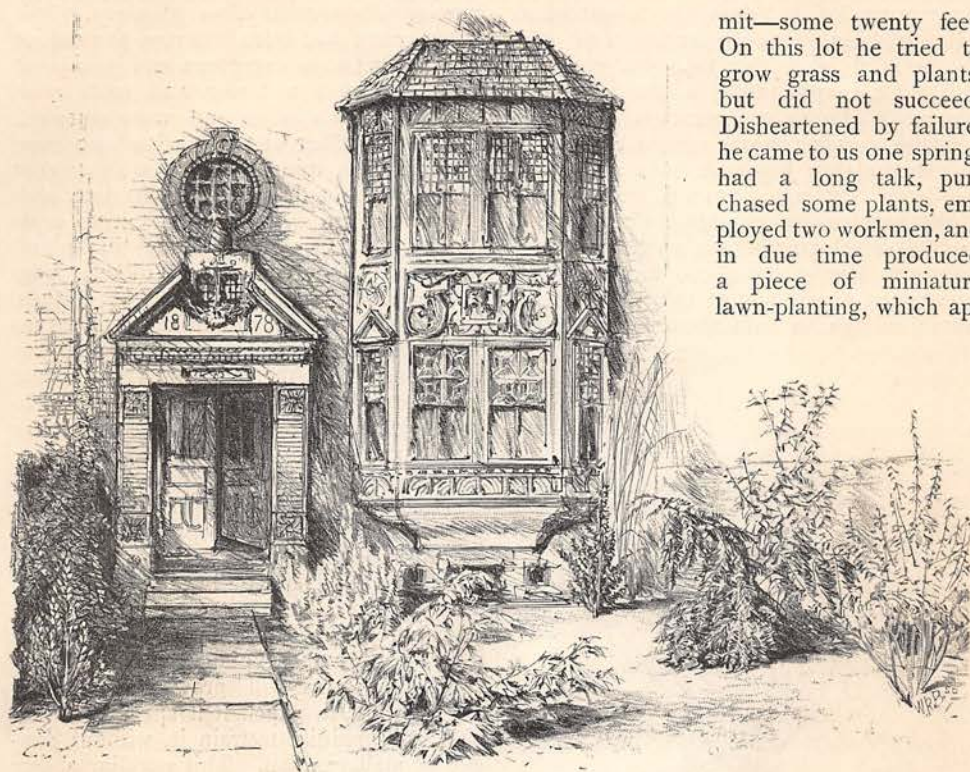


## LAWN-PLANTING FOR CITY AND COUNTRY.



DESIGN FOR PLANTING A CITY LOT.

## I.—A CITY LAWN.

TRUE lawn-planting confined to the dimensions of a city lot seems almost an impossibility. Indeed, under such conditions, the creation of landscape as ordinarily understood can be sought no longer unless we attempt it "Chinese fashion." If, however, we use Chinese or Japanese plants they should be American grown and employed in American fashion. It is, in fact, a difficult matter to plant a city lot permanently on account of hot pavements and walls, and cold currents of wind. Many plants fail altogether, others pine, and others grow too large. Knowing indeed the frequent failures of such undertakings, we feel impelled to describe to the reader how we once planted, or helped to plant, a city door-yard, and how it looked when it was done. A friend had a lot on which he had erected a house as far back from the street as convenience would per-

mit—some twenty feet. On this lot he tried to grow grass and plants, but did not succeed. Disheartened by failure, he came to us one spring, had a long talk, purchased some plants, employed two workmen, and in due time produced a piece of miniature lawn-planting, which ap-

pears in our illustration as it looked after ten years of careful fostering.

Creation of turf was of course first attempted. The lack of well-grown turf is almost fatal to the beauty of any possible selection of plants. Here, where all is foreground in a certain sense, a large amount of the general tone and color of the place must come from turf. Ornamentation becomes in such cases more like the decoration of a room. The turf must make the carpet whereon the ornaments are to be arranged. In this case the unsatisfactory grass was replaced by a turf of ivy planted at intervals of eighteen inches, so that a thick mat of foliage could readily develop. On fences and buildings, ivy often freezes badly, but on the ground it is hardy and luxuriant. The lower part of the fence of our lot, however, was covered with it and it formed a fine contrast or relief for other plants.

The ivy turf recognized as the predominant feature, what plants do we notice first? Here by the gate is a Japanese maple, one of the twenty-five varieties known in this country. It is nearly the most noteworthy plant in the lot, and demands our attention still more because it presents one of the best instances of what the Japanese can furnish us for lawn-planting in America. The maples of Japan are perhaps most free from the peculiar characteristics that make so many plants Japanese born and bred, wonderful, but not beautiful, in our eyes. These maples are miniature trees, with a free, full development that suggests neither deformity nor stunted conditions. Their dimensions would not in twenty years increase enough to unfit them for city lots,



PARASOL PINE. (*SCIADOPITYS VERTICILLATA*.)

though they never should receive a touch of pruning-knife; and as to hardness, we can only say that in this respect they equal any American maple, with the added toughness of all dwarf trees. We have already noted in a previous paper how beautifully the leaves of these maples are variegated during summer, white, green and yellow mingling on the same surface, and how these same leaves are divided and subdivided until they become mere shreds of tissue. It is always curious to note that the most diminutive and com-

plex types belong to the hardest and dwarfest varieties.

But we have not done with Japanese plants. Along the walk directly back of the Japanese maple is a golden Japanese cypress (*Retinospora plumosa aurea*). This arrangement has been intended to produce contrast between evergreen and deciduous plants, between a larger and more erect form and one smaller and more compact. The winter effect of the lot has also been considered in using evergreens, although it should be noted, at the same time, that evergreens are especially difficult to grow on city lots. Occasionally they will die and they always require more skill to keep them healthy than deciduous trees or shrubs. The Japanese cypresses or retinosporas, as a group, have a remarkable fitness for city lots, considering the fact that they too are evergreens. True, certain varieties grow to a considerable height, but most forms are slow and of moderate growth, if they are not actually dwarf. Their forms are indeed legion. They are drooping or erect, fern-like or lichen-like, and even pass into curious thread-like shapes. In color they are golden, variegated and green, but chiefly bright, glossy green. At the time of the formation of this tree its size is about a foot, although it is by no means young. In future its spray-like forms will grow considerably, but pruning, to which it is specially amenable, will readily restrain it, without danger of malformation. This peculiar ability to bear with utmost ease the strain of pruning distinguishes *R. plumosa aurea* above most other evergreens and makes it well fitted for city planting. The general color of its foliage is a broad suffusion of gold, which, when the plant has been pruned systematically, remains unusually bright in winter. No other evergreen, perhaps, equals it in this quality, and it is a quality very valuable for city lawns, where bright and varied color in winter is specially grateful. It is easily transplanted and might be common, for it is easy to propagate. The general appearance of these retinosporas resembles that of an arbor vitæ, only they are more varied and spray-like in form, richer in coloring, and hardier and better in every way.

On the other side of the door-yard we have a Japanese snow-ball. The supreme excellence of this shrub lies in its rich nature. Everything about it is excellent. The soft, brown, fuzzy stems, the dark-green, heart-shaped leaves, piled in pictur-

esque masses when the plant has been properly pruned, and above all, the large, pure white snow-ball flowers make it very choice and attractive. Indeed, the contrast between the shining, crinkled green leaves and the well-rounded flower-clusters is always striking. These flowers, moreover, hang to the branches five or six weeks, and drop unbroken.

Standing out prominently on the open turf is a weeping hemlock of lighter and more rounded habit. Indeed, all its lines are models of curving grace. Like the Japan snow-ball in the one quality of picturesqueness, it needs much the same care in pruning to develop its full charms and to restrain it and adapt it to a city lot. The beautiful sprays and tendrils should be encouraged in their irregularities in order to obtain a characteristic and graceful form.

Another prominent feature of this part of the picture is a *Spirea prunifolia*, a deciduous plant intended to contrast with the evergreen hemlock. The curious small leaves and the set of the branches of this spirea are very characteristic and assort well in a group of varied shrubs. It is, moreover, the bridal-wreath spirea, bearing lovely white flowers in June. Through the summer, its shining, oval leaves contrast strikingly with other foliage; and late in fall, few plants present more beautiful colors.

Only two more plants await our admiration to complete the assemblage of more prominent shrubs and trees visible in the picture of this miniature lawn, and both of these are again Asiatic and one Chinese. The first, a tree-box, needs only to be mentioned to call up visions of stately gardens of the eighteenth century,—clipped yews and box-trees wrought into the similitude of strange beasts and other quaint devices in the old formal manner—a manner that accorded well in its time with buildings designed after Greek temples and with lawns where all was evident art and stately elegance. Lords and ladies paced between "pleached" hedges and there was in it all a certain harmony. But now in our modern world, art is demanding the presence of nature everywhere. Except in retired corners, we cannot properly practice the old formal manner, yet we may still employ the box-tree as satisfactorily as ever. Very many city lots show its value where the passage of years has left it healthy and flourishing. Probably nothing in the way of plants withstands injurious city influences better. Then,

moreover, it is an evergreen, an evergreen shrub with distinct conspicuous leaves and vertical lines of growth which accord well with the architecture of city houses. Its bright living green is also compact and so



WEeping GOLDEN JAPANESE CYPRESS. (RETINOSPORA FILIFORMIS AUREA.)

patient of pruning, as already noted, that its growth may be guided at will.

Another plant, a tamarisk (*Tamarisk indica*), grows close by the corner of the house. Its waving elegance forms a strong contrast with associated shrubs and serves to lighten the general effect of the place. Very distinct and exquisite also is the foliage of the tamarisk,—fine as fronds of some delicate tropical fern. The flowers come in late summer and early fall, fringing the foliage with drooping pink lace-work.

At a later date, two other striking plants have been added to the lawn with a view perhaps to replacing eventually some shrub grown old and unsightly. They are not visible in the picture, being as yet very small, but appear in two separate illustrations. They are both Japanese, but the first, the parasol pine, is perhaps the most extraordinary lawn plant of the curious Japanese flora. It is greatly prized in Japan and grows there to a considerable size, with shining whorls of strange-looking glossy foliage

disposed in thick masses. Perfectly hardy, it is likewise, by its dwarf nature, well adapted to small lawns during at least twenty years of its life. During the first three or four years, it hardly grows as many inches, and is always rich and unique in its appearance. As yet it is an extremely rare plant in America, where there scarcely exists a specimen over four feet high.

The Japanese cypress in the cut is a very rare variety, decidedly the rarest plant on this particular lawn; but it is also very beautiful with its thread-like masses of golden drooping foliage. It is dwarf and well fitted for small places, and has an advantage over the common golden Japanese cypress (*R. plumosa aurea*),

part of the house, and from sundry nooks peep out white snow-drops, yellow crocuses and the tiny bells of the lily-of-the-valley. To vary further the color of the green ivy turf, low-growing, richly colored herbaceous plants, like the creeping yellow-leaved moneywort, wander about at will. Purple asters, blue aquilegias and lovely day-lilies appear here and there on the outskirts. Everything com-



DESIGN FOR A LARGE SUBURBAN LOT.

in that it needs little pruning to retain compact shape.

Of all plants suited to the miniature lawn, few surpass in native charm the hardy herbaceous plants, many of them familiar wild flowers. On our miniature lawn, the less and less fashionable crudity called "ribbon planting" would be almost inappropriate, not to speak of the trouble of replanting such plants every year. All the richness of color in flower and leaf of bedding plants may be obtained in a more delicate and fitting way for small plots by the employment of hardy herbaceous plants and bulbs that flourish for years in the open ground.

Few other features of our city lawn remain to be mentioned. Star-shaped clematises creep over the borders of the ivy on the ground, as well as over the fence. Japan creepers cling to the stone-work of the lower

bines to make a very complete miniature lawn.

But such lawns will not care for themselves. They need thorough culture, and especially pruning, to adapt them to their confined location. Summer pruning is very important, particularly for the ivy, whose wandering tendrils need occasional training, as well as pinching. This care, however, is not irksome, for there is little to be done at a time; and, in any case, we doubt whether other adornments of home will afford equal pleasure with less expense.

## II.—A COUNTRY LAWN.

LET us now give our attention briefly to another typical, but entirely different,

instance of lawn-planting, viz.: a country home of the commonly occurring dimensions of 100 feet wide by 200 feet long. Citizens



WEeping PINE (PINUS AYACAHUITE).

going to their business daily, and possessed of moderate means, frequently occupy a place of this size in some neighboring village or suburb of the city. To employ a gardener by the year, on half an acre, would seem extravagant; yet gardeners are hardly to be had on other terms. Consequently, a few hints afforded by the description of an existing lawn will scarcely come amiss to many, who, if they realize how much adornment of this kind is possible for them, must be sorely puzzled to secure the fulfillment of their desires.

The place to which we refer is that of a neighbor, who a few years since purchased it, in a so-called improved state, and gradually has made it, from the crudeness and almost chaos of its former condition, a truly delightful spot. Originally, the lawn was covered promiscuously with maples, arbor vitæ, old fruit-trees, neglected-looking rose-bushes, and rows of rudely clipped shrubs. The new owner of the place changed all this by cutting down everything except a few trees along the fences, and two notable specimens, of which more hereafter. He then subsoil-plowed the lawn, spading only

such parts as the plow could not readily reach.

No greater fallacy exists than the idea that spading is better than plowing of an equal depth. No tilth can be better than that given by the plow, followed by frequent and continual applications of the harrow. Leveling with the spade can then be executed in the most perfect manner, and the finishing touch can be given by a light cross-plowing and harrowing. Seed should be always liberally applied; and, instead of the various lawn-grass mixtures, we believe in the use of simple red-top seed, together with a very little white clover; and when it is thus applied (during quiet hours of the day that it may fall evenly), two or three years should suffice to grow a thick, velvety turf. Weeds are the great enemies of good turf, and every lawn should be kept as free from these pests as a flower-garden. The employment of good artificial fertilizers greatly helps to secure permanent freedom from weeds, since foul seeds cannot very well lurk in them.

Good turf obtained, the walks were carefully laid out in long, graceful curves, with shallow grass edges, neatly trimmed. Every



WEeping NORWAY SPRUCE (ABIES EXCELSA INVERTA) AND DWARF PINE (PINUS STROBUS COMPACTA).

winter, fertilizers were applied to enrich the grass, and a perfect surface was always maintained throughout the season

by the use of a lawn-mower. The house, being on the north side of the lot, afforded abundant protection for choice plants, and secured the employment of large and effective masses of evergreens, as part of the same shelter. The masses of foliage, also, since they pertained to a larger place, needed less exact care in their disposal. Their appearance, likewise, having less individual attraction at a distance from the house and more mere picturesque effect, required less pruning and studied attention.

Among the trees that had been preserved from the general destruction that befell the old plantation, were two specially attractive specimens. It was really wonderful how they came to occupy the positions they did, and indeed, how they came to be on this lawn at all, for the other trees used were by no means choice or rare. These two specimens, on the other hand, were both choice and somewhat rare. One of them, the cut-leaved weeping birch, stood by the summer-house and hung graceful sprays above its rustic angle. Indeed, at this point in the picture, the bolder color effects of the lawn-planting seemed to culminate. Rising thirty feet above the summer-house, the white bark of the birch split into strange devices, and the delicate grayish green foliage made a fine effect against the masses of large Norway spruces near by.

The other noteworthy tree retained is a Nordman's fir, by some termed the king of evergreens. It stands by itself, equally removed from the clustered shrubbery of the outer boundary, and from the choice plants along the only footpath. After the cut-leaved birch, it is decidedly the most imposing and important tree upon the lawn,—a rich, dark mass of color on the green turf and near the light deciduous foliage. You will at once note how perfect the symmetry—perfect, even for a Nordman's fir. Growing as it does in a massive, stratified manner, with a blue silvery lining under the leaf, the compactness and symmetry add greatly to its beauty. And what a grand specimen it is—thirty feet high and without a flaw!

Two varieties of evergreens are grouped about or near the Nordman's fir. They are small, six to nine feet high, and were planted by the new owner some eight years before. Their arrangement has been made with the view of affording a measure in height for the larger trees as well as a complete and harmonious contrast of color. The most noteworthy of these is *Pinus ayacuhuite*, a rare Mexican pine of decided beauty, of which

we give an engraving. Although this pine comes from Mexico, it is generally hardy in the Northern states; it is the nearest approach to a weeping pine that we have if we except *Pinus excelsa*. The branches, indeed, do not droop, but the long pendent clusters of needles give a weeping appearance to the general effect of the tree. In the young plant of our illustration, the shape of *Pinus ayacuhuite* is decidedly pyramidal; but as it grows older, it assumes more of the usual spreading appearance of *Pinus excelsa*. No specimen, however, of which we know has yet attained large size, for it is comparatively a new plant and as yet little employed. *Pinus excelsa* has occasionally suffered from a peculiar disease,—but for beauty of color and form it is nearly equal to the *Pinus ayacuhuite*. We notice even now in youth that *Pinus ayacuhuite* has a more open appearance or branching than the Nordman's fir, against the shining dark masses of which its rich blue color stands out in beautiful relief. There is a slight resemblance between the outline of this specimen and that of the Nordman's fir, but not too much when accompanied by contrasting bluish-green color. The growth of this tree is moderate and easily restrained by pruning, to which it takes very kindly. To complete a harmonious and richly effective arrangement, three pyramidal arbor vitæ, at that time three or four feet high, were planted within two feet of each other, and about ten or twelve feet east of the Nordman's fir. Standing singly near the fir and pine, one plant of this arbor vitæ would have been almost too slender and insignificant; three specimens, growing together at the base and developing independent spire-like heads, give variety of form and sufficient size to bear a proper relation to the graces of the other trees. Their color too is light, lighter than that of either of the other trees, thus affording a complete contrast of hue as well as form. This arbor vitæ is thrifty in habit and perhaps hardier than any other of its race, and above all keeps its formal shape with little pruning. It is still an uncommon tree, and well deserves more attention.

It is a fortunate thing for the lawn that it occurred to some one to plant the Nordman's fir just where it stands, for it is the making of the place artistically considered. Color as well as form are here grouped harmoniously and yet boldly. The variety in height, the different shades of kindred color, the columnar, spreading or open, and the

massive conical, forms, all combine into an instance of what we conceive to be good lawn-planting composition. A sense of coziness is suggested by the semi-detached lawn or croquet-ground of this part of the place,—features that are defined, as it were, by this very group. Further variety of detail is given to the scene by climbing honeysuckles and wistarias clustering about the rich, solid proportions of the rustic summer-house. Across the lawn, past the border of the croquet-ground, is a beautiful Japan Judas-tree; it is a lovely shrub, with early pink flowers and rich green leaves, and does not grow high enough to interfere with the sunset view. Across the path from this plant is a group of the rare and exquisite Japanese maples. Nearer the house, and still on the path, is a graceful weeping hemlock, already noticed as one of the choicest of evergreens. The common hemlock, in certain conditions of its growth, is unsurpassed for weeping grace. Imagine one of these naturally weeping specimens, fixed permanently by grafting at the best development of its pendulous habit, and you have the true weeping hemlock. It is indeed rare and difficult to propagate, yet it would, nevertheless, be brought into common use could people generally see its great beauty. Slow-growing and even dwarf, it is also delicate and graceful. It is always, moreover, surprising one with new and beautiful shapes. One peculiarity of this particular specimen consisted in the fact that it is low-grafted. Convention declares that weeping trees must be grafted high to secure the effective appearance of their pendulous form; but practical experience in America, on the other hand, teaches that the stems on which these weeping forms are uplifted tend to diseased and disfigured conditions under the stress of American suns and changes. The spreading forms of the low-grafted hemlock assume, moreover, a more natural grace.

Near the weeping hemlock, with perhaps a deciduous shrub or so between, are four very distinct dwarf evergreens, distinct and curious especially from the manner in which they are grouped. They consist of the weeping Norway spruce surrounded closely by three dwarf white pines. Norway spruces and white pines are always associated in our minds with large, massive forms, but here are white pines that in twenty years need scarcely reach four feet. The weeping Norway spruce, too, is dwarf, but in a very different way. The forms, moreover, are perfectly natural, in no way the result of pruning. And what curious plants they

are,—the one rounded and compact, with long, well-defined needles and softly blended colors of blue and green, and the other dark, grotesque, and erect!

A little farther along the border of the walk and near the turn leading to the front of the house, stands a rhododendron. This beautiful plant is specially effective at this point, as it not only varies the curve of the walk, but presents a delightful object in view of the bay-window, about which are Ghent azaleas, flowering deciduous shrubs, *spirea*, *thunbergii*, *prunifolia*, and other fine-leaved, beautiful flowering varieties.

It is not, indeed, an expensive lawn, having scarcely cost \$500 for all the plants; but there is something of everything hardy to be found on it. Blue and white wistarias form a cordon of bloom along the eaves of piazza and balcony, and honeysuckles, Virginia creepers, etc., fill a part of the space between the columns. The Japan creeper and the great purple or white flowering clematis creep about here and there. Young vigorous roses bloom in nooks of shrubbery. Violets peep out early in unexpected places, and familiar wild flowers lurk in favoring spots. There is no startling display of beds of flowers, any more than there is in woodland glades; but the plants seem at home. In front, along the road, is a wall of solid masonry, neatly capped with stone by the new owner, and covered with Japan creepers. Immediately within are purple beeches, rich and dark. A weeping beech stands in the corner where its expanding foliage has plenty of room, and at intervals are fine flowering shrubs of large size, like the Chinese magnolias. Along the path to the front door are planted choice dwarf deciduous shrubs. The outlines of shrubbery and trees have been made up in the ordinary way, with Norway spruces, white and Scotch pines, elms and maples, with such common large-growing shrubs as lilacs, philadelphuses, dogwoods, spireas and weigelas. The grouping of these ordinary shrubs and trees is naturally arranged, after that of attractive bits of outlying woodland.

The perfect keeping of the paths of this place is also noteworthy; but better still is the regard shown for the health and well-being of the plants. Contrary to the usual habit of people who have no gardener, the plants have not been treated according to the mere advice of others, but have been made to thrive in a peculiar way by a painstaking study of their individual wants.