



# ORNAMENTAL PLANTING

IN WOODLAND

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WHERE WOODLAND ADJOINS GARDEN GROUND, AND THE ONE PASSES INTO THE OTHER BY AN ALMOST IMPERCEPTIBLE GRADATION, A DESIRE IS OFTEN FELT TO LET THE GARDEN INFLUENCE PENETRATE SOME WAY INTO THE WOOD BY THE PLANTING WITHIN THE WOOD OF SOME SHRUBS OR TREES OF DISTINCTLY ORNAMENTAL CHARACTER.

Such a desire very naturally arises--it is wild gardening with the things of larger growth; but, like all forms of wild gardening (which of all branches of gardening is the most difficult to do rightly, and needs the greatest amount of knowledge), the wishes of the planter must be tempered with extreme precaution and restraint. It does not do to plant in the wild garden things of well-known garden character. This is merely to spoil the wood, which, in many cases, is already so good that any addition would be a tasteless intrusion of something irrelevant and unsuitable.

Honeysuckle, Wild Roses, Juniper, and Daphne Laureola.

Then, among cultivated trees and shrubs, those that are nearly related to our wild kinds, including some that are found in foreign woodlands that have about the same latitude and climate as our own. Among these will be Quinces and Medlars, many kinds of ornamental Cratægus, Scarlet Oaks, various Elders and Crabs, and the grand *Pyrus americana*, so like our native Mountain Ash, but on a much larger



Still, there are certain wooded places where a judicious planting would be a gain, and there are a certain number of trees and shrubs which those who have a fair knowledge of their ways, and a true sympathy with the nature of woodland, recognise as suitable for this kind of planting. They will be found in these classes: Native growths that are absent or unusual in the district, such as the Spindle Tree (*Euonymus*), White Beam, Service Tree, White and Black Thorn, Wild Cherry, Bird Cherry, Wild Guelder Rose (*Viburnum Opulus*), and *V. Lantana*,

scale. A very careful planting with trees and shrubs of some of these and, perhaps, other allied kinds, may give additional beauty and interest to woodland. Differences of soil will, of course, be carefully considered, for if a piece of woodland were on chalky soil, a totally different selection should be made from one that would be right for a soil that was poor and sandy.

In moist, sandy, or, still better, peaty ground, especially where there is a growth of Birches and Scotch Firs, and not many other kinds of trees, a plantation of Rhododendrons may have a fine effect. But in this case it is better to use

the common *R. ponticum* only, as a mixture of differently coloured kinds is sure to give a misplaced-garden look, or an impression as if a bit of garden ground had missed its way and got lost in the wood.

### *Grouping of Trees and Shrubs*

IF THIS SUBJECT WERE CONSIDERED WITH ONLY A REASONABLE AMOUNT OF THOUGHT, AND THE PRACTICE OF IT CONTROLLED BY GOOD TASTE, THERE IS NOTHING THAT WOULD DO MORE FOR THE BEAUTY OF OUR GARDENS OR GROUNDS. NOTHING CAN SO EFFECTUALLY DESTROY GOOD EFFECT AS THE USUAL SENSELESS MIXTURE OF DECIDUOUS AND EVERGREEN SHRUBS THAT, ALAS! IS SO COMMONLY SEEN IN GARDENS--A MIXTURE OF ONE EACH OF A QUANTITY OF PERHAPS EXCELLENT THINGS PLANTED ABOUT THREE FEET APART.

There would be nothing to be said against this if it were the deliberate intention of any individual, for, as a garden is for the owner's happiness, it is indisputably his right to take his pleasure in it as he will, and if he says, "I have only space for a hundred plants, and I wish them to be all different," that is for him to decide. But when the mixture is made from pure ignorance or helplessness it is then that advice may be of use, and that the assurance may be given that there are better ways that are just as easy at the beginning, and that with every year will be growing on towards some definite scheme of beauty, instead of merely growing up into a foolish tangle of horticultural imbecility. If the intending planter has no knowledge it is well worth his while to take advice at the beginning, not to plant at random and to feel, a few years later, first doubt, and then regret, and then, as knowledge grows, to have to face the fact that it is all wrong and that much precious time has been lost.

How to group is a large question, depending on all the conditions of the place under consideration. Whether a group is to be of tall or short growing shrubs or trees, whether it is to be of three or three hundred, and so on. The knowledge that can answer is the knowledge of gardening of the better kind. The whole thing should be done carefully on paper beforehand, or there will again be repented the error of huddled single plants. The groups will have to be well shaped and well sized and well related to each other and all that is near, or they may be merely a series of senseless blocks, not intelligently formed groups at all.

Then, in proper relation to the groups, single plants can be used with the best possible effect, as, for instance, a snowy *Mespilus* or a Cherry or a *Pyrus floribunda* against a dark massing of Yew or Holly; or a *Forsythia suspensa* casting out its long flowering branches from among bushes of *Berberis*. Then the fewer individuals will have their full value, while the larger masses will have dignity even when in leaf only, and their own special beauty at the time when they are in flower or fruit (though they don't necessarily taste good). For some flowering and fruiting bushes are best grouped, while a few are best seen standing alone, and it is only knowledge of good gardening that can guide the designer in his decisions on these points. Still it does not follow that a shrub or flowering tree cannot be used both for groups and single use, for such an one as the *Forsythia* just mentioned is also of charming effect in its own groups, with the red-tinted *Berberis* or the quiet-coloured *Savins*, or whatever be the lower growing bushy mass that is chosen to accompany it. Every one can see the great gain of such arrangements when they are made, but to learn to make them, and even to perceive what are the plants to group together, and why, that is the outcome of the education of the garden artist. In the Royal Gardens, Kew, the best of plants may be seen and, to a considerable degree, the best ways of using them in gardens.

The one-thing-at-a-time planting is always a safe guide, but as the planter gains a firmer grasp of his subject, so he may exercise more freedom in its application. Nearly every garden, shrubbery, and ornamental tree plantation is spoiled or greatly marred by too great a mixture of incongruous growths. Nothing wants more careful consideration. On the ground in the open air, and sitting at home quietly thinking, the question should be carefully thought out. The very worst thing to do is to take a nursery catalogue and make out from it a list of supposed wants. The right thing is to make a plan of the ground, to scale, if possible, though a rougher one may serve, and mark it all down in good time beforehand, not to wait until the last



moment and then mark it; and not to send the list to the nursery till the ground is well forward for planting, so that the moment the plants come they may go to their places. All this planning and thinking should be done in the summer, so that the list may go to the nursery in September, which will enable the nurseryman to supply the trees in the earliest and best of the planting season.

How good it would be to plant a whole hill-side on chalky soil with grand groupings of Yew or Box, or with these intergrouped, and how easy afterwards to run among these groupings of lesser shrubs; or to plant light land with Scotch Fir and Holly, Thorn and Juniper (just these few things grouped and intergrouped); or wastes of sandhills near the sea within our milder shores with Sea Buckthorn and Tamarisk, and Monterey Cypress (*Cupressus macrocarpa*), and long drifts of the handsome Blue Lyme Grass.



A mile of sandy littoral might be transformed with these few things, and no others than its own wild growths, into a region of delight, where noble tree form of rapid growth, tender colour of plume-like branch and bloom and brilliant berry, and waving blue grassy ribbons, equalling in value any of the lesser Bamboos, would show a lesson of simple planting such as is most to be desired but is rarely to be seen.

The other and commoner way is nothing but a muddle from beginning to end. A van-load of shrubs arrives from the nursery—one of each or perhaps not more than six of any kind. No plan is prepared, and the trees and shrubs are planted in the usual weary mixture, without thought or design. Generally there are three times too many for the space. It is a cruel waste and misuse of good things.

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### *Heathy Paths in Outer Garden Spaces*

**T**HE SUBJECT OF HEATHY PATHS COMES WITHIN THE SCOPE OF THIS BOOK. WE ARE NOT THINKING OF GRASS OR GRAVEL PATHS, BUT THOSE IN PLEASURE-GROUNDS THAT ARE BEYOND THE PROVINCE OF THE TRIMLY-KEPT GARDEN, AND YET HAVE TO BE SOMEWHAT TAMED FROM THE MERE NARROW TRACK SUCH

AS SERVES FOR THE GAMEKEEPER ON HIS ROUNDS. PATHS OF THIS KIND ADMIT OF VARIED TREATMENT.

The nature of the place and the requirements of those who use the paths will determine their general nature, and settle whether they are to be of turf or of something that must be dry in all weathers. But grass and gravel are not the only alternatives. One kind of path not often seen, but always pleasant, and at one time of year distinctly beautiful, can be made of the Common Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*). We know of such a path, 12 feet wide and some hundreds of feet long, carpeted with this native Heath, mown once a year, and feeling like a thick pile carpet to the feet; grey-green in summer, bronze-coloured in late autumn, and in the second and third weeks of August thickly set with short sprays of the low-toned pink of the Heather bloom. It is not so dry as a gravel path, but a good deal drier than grass, and has a pleasant feeling of elasticity that is absent in common turf.



Many are the pleasure-grounds in the south of England and Scotland where the soil is sandy and, perhaps, peaty. Any such can have these pleasant heathy paths. We have even seen them on a poor sandy clay, scarcely good enough to call loam, in Sussex; for Calluna, unlike the other Heaths, will grow willingly in clay. In the case quoted the plant was wild in the place. In a Fir wood, the bare earth carpeted with needles always makes a suitable path, and one that is always dry; the only thing to correct is to fill up any places where the bare roots rise above the path level. For in these informal paths, where we want to look about and at the trees, there should be no danger of being tripped up. The path, of whatever nature, should be wide enough for two persons--5 feet to 6 feet is ample; but it should have quite a different character from the garden path, in that its edges are not defined or straightened.



One may often see in the outskirts of an old garden a dense wood that once was only a growth of shrubbery size. The walk was originally bordered by a Box edging, and there may have been a strip of flowers between it and the shrubs. Here and there one may still see a yard or two of straggling Box nearly 2 feet high.

Of course, this edging should have been removed as soon as the place became a wood, for after a certain time its original use as a formal edging to a trim plantation ceased to exist. Nothing is pleasanter in woodland than broad, grassy ways, well enough levelled to insure safety to an unheeding walker. In early spring, before the grass has grown any height, here is the place where Daffodils can best be seen and enjoyed, some in the clear grass and some running back in wide drifts into any side opening of the wood. If the grass is cut in June, when the Daffodil foliage is ripe, and again early in September,



or woodland the moss is right and harmonious.

There are paths for the garden and paths for the wood. A mistaken zeal that would insist on the trimness of the straight-edged garden walk in woodland or wild is just as much misplaced as if by slothful oversight an accumulation of dead leaves or other débris of natural decay were permitted to remain in the region of formal terrace or parterre. Heath paths should be made by either planting or sowing. The common ling (*Calluna vulgaris*) makes the best turf. If the ground is sown it should be of nearly pure sandy peat, or weeds would be troublesome. If the path is to be made by planting, it should be done with two-year-old seedlings--nothing larger--planted about 6 inches apart. The path when grown should be mown with a machine once a year, in autumn after the blooming time of the heath. There must be no grass.



these two mowings will suffice for the year. In many woody places where shade is fairly thick, if there is any grass it will probably be full of moss. No path-carpet is more beautiful than a mossy one; indeed, where grass walks from the garden pass into woodland, the mossy character so sympathetic to the wood should be treasured, and the moss should not be scratched out with iron rakes. Often in the lawn proper a mixture of moss and grass is desirable, though one has been taught that all moss is hateful. In such places, though it may be well to check it by raking out every four or five years, it should by no means be destroyed, for in the lawn spaces adjoining trees

### *Trees and Shrubs in Poor Soils*

AS THERE IS VEGETATION TO SUIT NEARLY ALL NATURAL CONDITIONS, SO THOSE WHO FIND THEY HAVE TO UNDERTAKE PLANTING IN POOR, DRY, HUNGRY SANDS AND GRAVELS WILL FIND THAT THERE ARE PLENTY OF TREES AND SHRUBS THAT CAN BE USED, THOUGH THE CHOICE IS NECESSARILY A MORE RESTRICTED ONE THAN THEY MIGHT MAKE ON BETTER LAND. THE VERY FACT OF THE FEWER NUMBER



OF AVAILABLE TREES AND SHRUBS MAY EVEN BE A BENEFIT IN DISGUISE, AS BY OBLIGING THE PLANTER TO BE MORE RESTRICTED IN HIS CHOICE THE PLANTING SCHEME WILL BE ALL THE MORE HARMONIOUS.

As to trees, Holly, Thorn, Juniper, Birch, Scotch Fir, and Mountain Ash are found wild on the poorest soils, and will even grow in almost pure sand. Oaks, though they never grow to the dimensions of the Oak of loamy woodlands, are abundant on poor soils, where they have a character of their own that is full of pictorial value. The lovely Amelanchier, daintiest of small trees, revels in sandy woods, as does also the Bird Cherry, another good native tree, while the Wild Cherry becomes a forest tree of large size and of loveliest bloom. Evergreen or Holm Oak and Arbutus are excellent in the south of England, enjoying the warmth and winter dryness of light soils.

Garden shrubs in general can be grown, though not so luxuriantly as on better soils, but some classes are especially successful on poor land such as *Genista virgata*. There are the Cistuses and Heaths, with Lavender and

Rosemary, in the drier parts, and in the wetter places Kalmias, Andromedas, Rhododendrons, Ledums, Pernettyas, and Vacciniums, with the Candleberry Gale and the native Bog Myrtle, also Broom and Gorse, especially the Double Gorse. These, which are usually classed as peat shrubs, will succeed in any sandy soil with the addition of leaf-mould, and are among the most interesting and beautiful of our garden shrubs. Those who garden on poor and dry soils should remember that though their ground has drawbacks it has also some compensations. Such soils do not dry in cracks and open fissures in hot weather, and do not present a surface of soapy slides in wet; they can be worked at all times of the year, except in hard frost; they are easy to hoe and keep clean of weeds and are pleasant and easy to work. They correct the tendency of strong soils to the making of a quantity of coarse rank growth, and they encourage the production of a quantity of flowers of good colour.