

Landscape Gardening for the Farmer

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Table of Contents.

I Introduction

- a. Objects of the Art
- b. The practicing of Landscape Gardening in this country.

a. Past b. Present

II What the Art Includes

- a. Choice of Site.
- b. Laying out of roads, paths & buildings.
- c. Trees, shrubs & flowers.

a. Beauty of b. Trees best adapted to

Kansas soil (c) Arrangement & grouping of.

III Why formers discard tasteful arrangement.

- a. Condition & Situation of formers
- b. Their objects.

IV Landscape Gardening on the farm in the future.

- a. Its progress
- b. my ideal form

References.

- I Landscape Gardening by A. J. Downing.
- II Artistic Aspect of Trees.
- III Out of Town Places by D. C. Mitchell.
- IV Prof Masoris Lectures

In writing on Landscape Gardening, my object is to call the attention of the farmer to an art which in the past, has been much neglected, at the present is in its dawn, and promises a bright and glorious day for the future. The art of Landscape Gardening is the designing or arrangement of buildings, walks, trees, shrubs and flowers that they may be or appear more pleasing and beautiful to man. The art is not only the knowing how, but the doing or carrying out of this work.

The farmer of the past paid little attention to the beautifying of his home, in fact this was not his object, he had other things to see to which to him were of much more importance, He had to protect himself against his enemy more than the man of today. He had none of the improved machinery which this generation has, therefore he was forced to spend most of his time

raising and gathering food for himself and family. Later we find him in a higher stage of development, more civilized. Here he is seeking wealth and feels the importance of making the home beautiful and life happier. The very fact that farmers have neglected the beautifying of their homes has, however, and is yet, the reason why the farmer's life is called "one of drudgery." But this term is now being used less and less.

To show the effect of the practice and absence of Landscape Gardening I know of no better example than our own state. In the Eastern Counties where the art is practiced to some extent, we find as a rule, (of course there are exceptions) that farm houses, houses well painted, barns and other buildings arranged showing some thought was used before their erection. Beautiful blue grass lawns with shade trees shrubs and flowers. But as we pass Westward what a change takes

place. Things drop out one by one until finally all we have left is the sod or frame house standing alone on the prairie.

The farmer after buying a tract of land upon which he intends to make his future home cannot be too careful in the selection of the building site. He should not only take into consideration the buildings which he intends to erect at the present time, but should look ahead and arrange now those which he intends to erect so that in the future additions can be easily made whenever he wishes to enlarge the buildings. He should always have his dwelling house on higher ground than his stables. See that there is good drainage, that is, that no swamp or ponds of stagnant water will be near thus making a harbor for diseases. He should always consider where would be the best place for an orchard, vineyard or garden, and see that they

will not obstruct the view from the house. We should plant a large number of different kinds of trees at first, and take out certain ones as they grow up thus leaving the hardiest and best.

The laying out of roads and walks is one of the main questions. The cost of laying out a beautiful walk is considerable and therefore cannot well be changed after once finished.

A person should first determine the entrance for the "approach" from the main road or street. In former years this was most always the nearest point from the house to the road thus making the walk straight. But now the most beautiful walks and drives which we have are made up of gentle curves thus making them look more natural. The laying out of the walks depends upon the lay of the ground and it is hard to give any rules which can be followed closely. There are two points however which cannot be

disregarded 1st The curves should not be too great nor too many as it will give an artificial appearance and therefore look worse than if the walk was straight, 2nd The walk should not lead over unnecessary ground thus making it inconvenient. If the ground is slightly rolling the walk may be made to follow the lowest ground. A few trees may be planted along the walk for shade. Here and there small groups of trees and bushes. In the rear of the house there should be a dense shelter belt of large trees and evergreens. This will give a more natural appearance to the ground and also serve as a wind break in severe storms. No one who has lived in a timbered country all his life can realize the true value and beauty of a tree. They cost but little and can be grown in nearly every part of this state. In some portions however they require more attention than in others but what little time is spent

in the growing of trees will be well rewarded in the end. In the spring they bring forth their fragrant flowers and deep green leaves. During the summer months, no other place seems as inviting or refreshing as the shade of a large elm or of a maple grove, while the autumn with its crimson, green and golden colors of which the poets so often sing is all due to the trees and shrubs.

Some one has said, "They who plant trees at once, instead of wasting their breath in selfish complaints of the shortness of life, find luxuriant foliage waving over them much sooner than they expected. But whether you live to see the maturity of your trees or not be benevolent enough to plant for posterity."

Some of the trees best adapted to Kansas soil and climate are Elms, Boxelders, Maples, The Locust, Walnut, Mulberry, Catalpa, Willow, Cedars & Pines.

One should be careful in planting

trees not to place them where they will obstruct the view, often a person in sitting out trees does not seem to realize that they will grow, so that after the trees have become some size they have to be removed. It is not a good plan to plant large trees too near the house, they should be put away some distance and the space between left for small shrubs and flowers.

Do not trees look much prettier in their natural state than when trimmed to represent different forms. The lawn needs to be mowed once in two weeks and rolled three or four times a year. Flowers and flower beds may be placed between the house and gate but not too many, one or two beds on each side of the walk looks much prettier than flower beds scattered all along the walk to the house.

The vines and climbing plants are used for many different purposes and add much to the beauty of a place. The Virginia Creeper or

Cumicon Ivy, as it is called by some is used to cover up the bare walls of houses. In the spring and during the summer months it furnishes a robe of green while as Autumn draws near it assumes a reddish brown or golden color. This vine is grown principally on stone houses as it is said to cause decay on frame houses.

Anyone who has rombed in the timber can remember possibly the wild grape vine and the time he cut loose one end of the long vine and made a swing. The Landscape Gardener now has the vine climbing the large trees of our lawn as well as the trellis of our porches. Other vines which are used are, The Bittersweet, Climbing Rose, Clematis, Moonflower, and Honey Suckle. The latter is grown on a trellis and noted for its fragrant flowers.

Landscape Gardening has to do with all that can make the home appear beautiful and the farms of today

with all that is said on this subject. in the papers, cannot help but know something about it. In order to raise a crop of wheat, corn or oats, a farmer has to put a certain amount of labor into it. This is true of everything and especially of a beautiful place. To keep a lawn in a good condition the farmer will have to spend more or less time or work upon it, this is what most farmers fail to do and consequently this is why we see so many dilapidated farmers homes as we ride over the country.

The farmers object is as some one has said, "to raise more corn, to feed more cattle, and fat more hogs, to make more money. What for? To buy more land to raise more corn and, is certainly the aim of a large number of Kansas farmers.

Not long ago a person from Hutchinson Kansas said that blue grass and clover could not be grown in that vicinity on account of the dry weather, It is true they are not grown

there now but that is no reason why they cannot be, and before many years I believe that trees will be grown that the same as in the Eastern part of the State.

It has only been a few years that attention has been turned towards this art of gardening. Every year it is steadily marching forward and becoming more perfect. It has only been a few years that our large cities have had such beautiful parks, and to get an idea of the progress made in Landscape Gardening we can find no better place to go than to visit some of these beautiful parks.

The practicing of this art in the country is going to make the farmer look out of pleasure, of course he should not attempt too much at first. To make a place beautiful, he must do what he does well, and then by working patiently he will succeed. The trouble in the past has been as Mr Downing has said, "The lazy are too indolent, and the busy are too hurried, the suggestions

of others are readily taken and the most incongruous and imperfect results necessarily ensue."

The farmers life is said to be the most independent of all occupations, why can it not be the happiest? It is true "The love for gardening is rapidly increasing, Every year an increasing number of persons resort to the country to engage in fruit culture and to re-establish pleasant rural homes". Thus we see that it is in the farmer and his family hoping that the large part of the country seemly live, and we hope that the love for gardening will rapidly continue in the future through their ranks.