

Ornamental Vines.

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"Ornamental Vines" is a subject alike for the landscape gardener, the owner of every home from the mansion to the humblest cottage, for the tiller of the soil of every kind and every wanderer through the woods, and should receive the most careful thought from all who would beautify their surroundings.

The ever varying forms and colors, natural grace and picturesque appearance of the vine, along with its hardiness and adaptability, make them extraordinarily well fitted for embellishing the home, parks and various places of amusement and pleasure grounds. How wonderfully did nature in her attempt to clothe the earth, in verdure succeed. It would seem that after she had clad her so beautifully in trees and grass, that she was yet unsatisfied, until she twined vines about the great trees hundreds of feet high, and scaled the precipice where none but the vine could climb. How wonderfully does nature deck the earth's surface, with white during the bleak winter days, with green during the summer, and with all the colors of the rainbow in the fall as if to put on an evening dress.

Ornamental vines while producing one of the most pleasing effects in nature, are likewise destined to please the most exquisite taste in artificial landscape views. They also fill an important

place in flower gardens and upon houses as I will attempt to show. They are, as it were, the finishing touch of all natural beauties and the embroidery of all ground and building ornamentation; probably due to the fact that with them we can most nearly imitate nature, and nature far surpasses man in the field of beauty. Trees, shrubs, and flowers are indispensable in beautifying grounds, but they are not sufficient to adorn our surroundings; we must have vines an abundance of vines. "A house without vines is like a bird without a mate; it wears a look of desolation".

Vines as all other beautifying and useful vegetation were first put to use by nature. As far back as the oldest man remembers, yes as early as the first annals of history, vines have been cultivated but principally for use. They are now in their infancy when we look at them as ornamental as put to use by man although their beauty in nature has been before his eyes for centuries. Take a stroll through the woods and you will find the wild grape vine covering the banks with their far reaching parts, or perchance standing upright for fifteen feet and then with a graceful curve drooping to the ground, their foliage so thick that no stem is visible. Again we see it trailing along some

stone fence completely hiding its rugged stone by its thick leaves. Or who has not witnessed in our forests the wonderful beauty of an old oak with its rugged trunk and fantastic branches, incathed in the graceful twines and adorned with the rich foliage of some luxuriant vine. Not content with this the vine often reaches beyond the utmost branches, hangs down in gay festoons and swings to and fro perhaps a hundred feet in the air. On the forest nothing adds more to the beauty and fragrance of the scene than a tall tree canopied by some tall grape vine or ivy.

The bitter-sweet a common, shrubby climbing vine often graces our forests and roadsides. It winds itself about young trees and has been known to become so tight as to choke the tree to death. Its foliage is bright and shiny and its seed vessels are very ornamental in winter when they break open and display their crimson seeds. This makes them very desirable for Christmas decoration. It is quite common in the eastern half of the state, is hardy and stands transplanting well. Although there are many other vines that enhaunce our streams and hills they are a matter of interest rather than instruction. Vines grow naturally in their native wilds, are always graceful and beautiful, may outlive

their supporting companions, decorate their bare dead branches, conceal their decaying stub or scramble over their fallen bodies and among their bared roots.

Thus from nature we learn lessons that would take volumes to teach to the same extent and near the same efficiency. So we may imitate nature in our pleasure grounds and parks, and thus reproduce some of the grace and beauty of the forests.

However, in parks and about residences, we look for health and vigor as well as grace and beauty. Considering this it is poor policy to introduce stumps or allow dead trees or other decaying matter to remain on the grounds. These may be constructed artificially so that when covered with vines the ordinary eye will detect no imitation. If the soil is good, by selecting proper trees, the vine and tree may be made to grow together for many years without materially interfering with one another's happiness and giving each year a charming contrast of form and color. On planting vines by trees it is best to plant them ten or twelve feet from the tree to avoid the necessity of both subsisting on the same soil. It may then be trained up one of the lower, larger, branches and then over the tree.

The bitter-sweet spoken of above may be used to advantage in parks especially to give them

beauty in winter. Plant it, say near some hardy elm fifteen or twenty feet high upon which it may climb and twine itself about its branches producing in winter a pleasing effect with its crimson seeds.

The *Maederia* is one of the most desirable climbers for both parks and houses. It is propagated by buds which should be taken up in the fall before the ground freezes and set out in the spring as soon as all the frost is out of the ground. It does best in sandy soil often growing twenty feet high. In the fall it is covered with white sweet scented flowers as if in no hurry to prepare for winter.

The *Elycine* or *Wistaria* is universally admired for its loose clusters of flowers and is highly ornamental when covered with them. It adds much to the beauty of trees when trained so as to hang down from the lower branches. It propagates by layering and suckering is hardy and is easily transplanted. The Chinese *Wistaria* (*W. Sinensis*) is the hardiest variety in this locality. It grows rapidly and with little care will mount high trees and hang down in beautiful bunches.

Along with the vines for parks and pleasure grounds should not be forgotten the honeysuckle the most charming & fragrant of them all and without which no grounds are complete.

It is a native of both our eastern and western continents. Found almost universally, most common in gardens they are prized for their beauty and fragrance and noted for their freedom in blossoming. Some varieties flower several times during the summer while others pour out their beauty in an unchecked stream during the whole of warm weather.

The finest of our natives is the red and yellow trumpet honeysuckle: they flower in the richest profusion throughout the summer and autumn. Their flowers scattered among and over the foliage; with its fragrance entitles it to the highest regards.

The Chinese twining honeysuckle is if possible still more to be praised. The leaf resembles that of the common woodbine, but the foliage is much darker, is subevergreen the leaves hanging on half the winter and in sheltered spots until spring.

When old it flowers several times during the summer in abundance; the flower being red outside and striped inside. It grows very fast and mounts to the top of high trees. In their natural state they grow upon trees and rocks but by the proper treatment become one of the most desirable of ornamental vines.

On all its varieties it is a most charming plant to adorn the porch of a cottage or the garden bower and at the same time breathing the breath of

sweet perfume all about it.

In connection with the garden I would invite your attention again to the grape vine. How charming and refreshing walks may be made by simply training grape vines over them or trellises. In this way a beautiful arbor may be made answering for comfort and beauty while bearing baskets of fruit for the table. It is reported that at Chiswick, one of the prettiest autumnal features of the place was produced by the different kinds of hardy grape-vines which draped and festooned some chains and iron work near the council room. They may be made quite ornamental by planting them along and training them over the garden fence or some stonewall.

Besides being handsome but few things surpass them in point of fragrance when in blossom. The English ivy is also suitable for such uses as I have just spoken of in reference to the grape vine.

It is a comparatively easy matter to construct forms in the garden or yard, which when covered with vines will present a most pleasing appearance. For instance, by the drive in the yard or some other suitable place, construct a frame so as to form a bower; the top may be in the shape of a concave cone, dome or some other form to suit the eye of the owner. Then plant two or three wild grape

wine, English ivy or some other suitable vine about it, training them over it so as to cover such portions as desired and leaving an entrance and other openings. This with with seats in it will add considerable to the appearance of the place. }

We have spoken of the vine in nature, in the park and pleasure grounds, but perhaps the most important still remains to be treated. It is the consideration of vines for dwellings and other buildings.

The dwelling is where we are born, pass our happy childhood days, struggle for a livelihood, decline and die. Should we not take great pains in beautifying our homes and buildings? It is essential to our success, yes to civilization itself that the home shall be made attractive.

Houses differ much as to what vines should be used and what they should be trained. In general a large stone house should have but few if any vines. Let us consider first public buildings such as churches, school-houses and colleges. These as a rule are large, not very ornamental and usually built of stone. Without vines they look bare too mechanical and isolated. They are as if some great giant had quietly set them there and nature had not yet adorned them.

What they need is to be partly or wholly covered with vines. A well built new structure needs simply a few scattering vines as a relief from the hard bare wall. As the building becomes old and weathered the vines may be allowed to completely cover the walls and other desirable portions, and thus conceal the aldness and make it even more attractive than when new. These same principals apply to the larger stone dwelling houses. Creeping vines should not be used on frame buildings as it greatly hastens decay and makes it impossible to paint the house.

There are several vines adapted to this work but the Virginia Creeper and Wistaria are especially suited. The creeper is a vine hardy in our latitude and used extensively on public buildings. Its leaves are large as the hand deeply lobed and its blossoms succeeded by dark blue berries; it attaches itself by little rootlets springing from the branches and attaching themselves to whatever they contact with.

It climbs to the height of eighty or ninety feet, and when it clothes thickly a high wall reaching the very roof and reaching itself about the highest chimneys it is extremely handsome. It is not evergreen as the ivy, but in the fall when the leaves assume their colors of red, scarlet and yellow, it far surpasses

the ivy, in point of beauty. Owing to the hardiness of this vine, it requires to be trimmed several times during the summer, to prevent it from completely overrunning the windows and roof, if not so desired. This is of little consequence however as a man with a ladder and pruning knife can in a few hours trim the vines on a good sized house. Sometimes, but seldom, the vine is torn or wrenched away from the wall, by the wind ladder or other causes, when it becomes necessary to fasten it back until it again gains a hold upon the wall. If it is required or desired to change the position of a vine upon a wall all that is necessary is to remove it and tie it to the desired position. This may be done by driving nails in the wall joints and tying the vine to these with twine.

The *Wistaria sinensis*, although not so common on houses as the creeper is almost if not quite as handsome as the latter. If allowed to make its full growth every year, it will cover almost any surface. When it has reached the desired limit it should be pruned to keep it in bounds; this also encourages flowering, in which it has few equals. Chas. Turner the king of the florists covered his house with this admirable vine, producing an ever to be remembered effect.

The Clematis is a very beautiful vine for dwellings more especially. It has numerous small branches and trains well on lattice work and similar construction. It makes the best appearance when covering three or four feet of the front of a porch or like places. It has numerous white flowers, is very fragrant, and gives a tasteful contrast with the Creeper or Wistaria.

The Morning-glory an annual climbing vine should not be left unspoken of. It is hardy grown with little trouble from the seed, and will mount a string or other support to eight, ten or even fifteen feet high. It blossoms abundantly and by mixing the seed, a very pleasing contrast of color may be secured. Other annuals as the sweet-pea and moon-flower are grown in a similar way and produce even better effects. Sweet peas should be sown after all danger of frost, in a rich soil and be well watered.

So far I have assumed most of the vines to be planted, but a few words as to the setting of vines will be in keeping with our subject.

As a rule vines are hardy and ready growers, but their progress may be greatly aided by proper setting and treatment for the first year.

The hole in which the vine is to be set should be sufficiently large to allow the roots to be placed.

in their natural position. The bottom should be pulverized and if the soil in that particular place is poor, some good should be secured with which to fill the hole. The vine should be pruned back to a few buds. It should be set so as the crown will be even with or a little below the ground surface.

Spread the roots well, cover them with fine earth, working it in well about the roots. It should be tramped moderately solid leaving the vine firmly in the ground. If it is then well watered there will be little doubt but that it will grow, providing the roots were not allowed to get dry before ~~re~~planted.