

THE ARNOLD ARBORETUM.

It is possibly not known to the public that, as a part of its park system, Boston owns the most complete Arboretum in the world, an Arboretum which is not only of local but of national distinction, since no other country can show such a collection of trees and shrubs, carefully disposed for both study and enjoyment.

Landscape Gardening.

While the botanical order of Candolle is there followed in the disposition of the arborescent plants and trees, the arrangement of the whole 220 acres has been so carefully planned by that genius in landscape gardening, Mr. Frederick Law Olmstead, assisted by the taste and profound botanical knowledge of Prof. Charles Sprague Sargent, that the scientific value of the collection is lost sight of in the picturesque beauty of the scene.

Twenty-five years ago the ground now occupied by this Arboretum was a rough, uncultivated region, partly hill and partly low, swampy, ground, sprinkled here and there with timber in an unkept condition, and overrun by a wild growth of native shrubbery. It, however, rejoiced always in a very noble growth of ancient hemlocks, which had survived the destruction of the forest primeval, crowning a steep hill with its sylvan beauty, which still, with its remote and savage charm so strange to find hard by a great city, remains the most remarkable feature of the Arboretum.

Harvard's Appropriation.

Harvard College, at that time, decided to appropriate a bequest, made some time before by Mr. James Arnold, of New Bedford, to the establishment of an arboretum in connection with the university, and so set aside for that purpose this tract of wild land which was a part of its real estate.

The income of the Arnold fund, which even now amounts only to \$7,000, was a very inadequate sum for the great task confronting Prof. Sargent, who was appointed the director. He, however, was able to make a bargain for Harvard college with the city of Boston, by which the municipality was to construct the roads and police the grounds, on condition that the Arboretum should be allowed to form a part of the fine park system by which that town is surrounded.

Boston's part of the work is now completed, it having spent \$450,000 for contiguous land and roadways, in addition to the perpetual expense for policing. A few public-spirited citizens have given generously for the immediate needs of the institution; a fireproof museum has been built for the preservation of the valuable herbaria and the priceless library which are the gift of

Prof. Sargent; and nurseries for the propagation and study of rare specimens have been prepared on a large scale. The whole section has been graded and carefully planted with every woody growth that can bear the climate; old, decrepit trees have been restored to life and beauty by careful pruning and judicious tending; the natural groves have been trimmed and preserved; acres of shrubs have been set out, and specimen trees planted in a way to insure their ultimate growth into full perfection.

Though twenty-five years are very few in the life of a tree, already the young plantations are tall and vigorous, enabling the student to get a clear idea of their habit of growth, and giving pleasure to the eye of the most careless passer-by, while the shrubberies are a wonder of bloom and fruitage.

Season of Beauty.

To the very edge of the noble avenues, winding up the hillsides and through the quiet intervalles, crowd masses of the rich native wild growth, so artistically trained and cultivated, that the arrangement seems perfectly natural and simple. Throughout the flowering season of the year, one sees here a perpetual succession of brilliant bloom in harmonious composition. And when the last ruddy or golden leaf of autumn has fallen, the bright hues of stem and berry remain to lend color to the roadsides throughout the winter.

While the trees of the botanic gardens of Kew and Paris are mere accessories to the herbaceous collections, in the Arnold Arboretum they are the main feature of the scene, and only

there, can one learn what may be done with shrubs and vines in the way of decorative effect.

Nature's School-Room.

The Arboretum is a great school for landscape gardeners all over the country, both on account of the completeness of its equipment in arborescent plants, and also for the skill with which they are there handled and planted. It is also a lesson book for the many thousands who stroll through it yearly, enabling them to learn how the simple resources of their native roadsides can suffice to make their homes beautiful, by wise selection from nature's nursery assisted by intelligent care.

So complete, so instructive an institution as this is unquestionably something for the whole country to be proud of. Boston has nobly established it at a large expense, and it does not seem unjust, that from outside New England, should now and then come a contribution to help it on its way, since the Arboretum is not only of importance to its own immediate neighborhood, but is a source of information to all who care for the cultivation of their grounds and enjoy the introduction into them of fresh specimens from outside.

\$300,000.

The Arnold Arboretum needs at present to add a fund of \$300,000 to that which it already owns, in order to enable it to keep up its present standard of high excellence. It can no longer depend upon chance contributions for its support, but requires an assured income, which, carefully expended, will suffice to maintain and add to its collections yearly. Its expenditures are un-

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