

THE WHITE FRINGE TREE.

This excellent shrub is considered a tree by many. Twenty years old, and planted singly where it has room to develop, it becomes as much a tree as the ash, to which, indeed, it is related. Grouped in masses with other shrubs or plants of its own kind it assumes the habit of a bush. Singly, also, it looks like a bush during its earlier days, being of slow growth and given to rounded forms. Related to the tree-like ash on the one side, it is as nearly allied, on the other, to the shrub-like lilacs, forsythias and privets.

The white fringe, though not exactly rare, is thoroughly choice in every way. There is not a quality about it from the crown of its head to the sole of its foot that is not rich or very good. The bark of the trunk or stem is smooth and light colored, and the leaves good sized and shining—quite as interesting as those of the lilac, which is saying a good deal. Even the twigs group themselves in picturesque fashion. But the “crown of its head” bears its richest endowment after all. Its flowers are indeed unique. There is nothing at all like them in the great variety of inflorescence displayed by a large list of lawn plants. They make up wreaths, and clouds, and piles of lace, snow-white and dazzling. Plucked from the bush they are nothing; crowning the bush they are exquisite.

We recall a specimen that stands on the border of a walk near a picturesque bit of rock-work, with green turf, and great Norway spruces in the background. It would be impossible to describe the charming effect this crown of white fringe produces in such a setting. Looking down the vista and beyond, one could almost fancy for a moment that he saw a mass of cirrus clouds floating near the earth. It is worthy of the most distinguished position, not too near the house or other prominent objects, but out on the farther side of a bay of greensward near a background of contrasting dark evergreens.

Plants of the *Chionanthus* are readily raised from seed, but are very slow in growing to any size. Perhaps the best plan is to graft wood of the *Chionanthus Virginica*, or white fringe on the common ash. What do you think of a strong, straight stem of ash crowned by a great mass of white fringe flowers. The very vigor of the stock as well as the effect of grafting will throw the buds of the graft quickly into flower, and tend to sustain a healthy, rapid growth thereafter.

The habit of the white fringe is so regular and rounded that it scarcely ever needs pruning, unless some part of it happens to break or become diseased. If you must prune, prune in winter or early spring. The *Chionanthus* is a plant that likes good soil and repays good feeding by extra growth and beauty; but forced to occupy spots of moderate fertility and even bleakness, it will do quite as well as most other deciduous shrubs.

There are few shrubs that appear well in so many different places. But the slow growth of the white fringe while young, and its ultimate magnitude of age, fit it alike for the small door-yard or extended lawn, while its unique and beautiful foliage as well as flowers make it distinguished in the choicest assemblage of trees and shrubs.—*Rural New Yorker*.