Shrubs for Lawns Surrounding Public Buildings*

Roderick Cameron, Toronto

IN the Old Land and on the Continent, nearly all grounds surrounding public buildings are planted with evergreens. This gives a cheerful effect during the winter months, as well as during the summer. But in Ontario we must abandon all hope of success in growing such plants unless they are used and treated as sub-tropical plants. This could be carried out on a small scale by planting in beds or amongst other shrubs. The methods of caring for evergreens are well known to most gardeners, so that I need not detail them here, but shall proceed to the subject first mentioned.

Most buildings look bare in this country when lacking both flowering shrubs and vines about them, and are improved when either are used. A few neat shrubs, planted in the angles of a building, and a few vines to grow on it, not necessarily to cover it, take the bare look away. If some Tecomas and Celastruses are planted along with the Ampelopsis, particularly in the angles of a building, the one helps the other to relieve the sameness. The Tecoma blooms hang out beyond the flat background of the Ampelopsis and give a pleasant effect. The same may be said about the Celastrus, but its beauty begins when winter is at hand. The first frost bursts open the seed-pods, exposing the orange red seeds that hang down on silken-like threads from the pods, producing a warm appearance when the ground is covered with snow.

Celastrus scandens is our own native plan found in the woods, but better known by the name of staff vine. Celastrus paniculatus and Celastrus punculatus are both Japanese varieties and are hardy.

The planting of shrubs around the base of a building depends greatly upon the style of the building, whether it would be an advantage or not. The north side of a building must have shade-loving plants, such as Caragana arborescens (Siberian Pea Tree), Hydrangea arborescens, Cornus spaethii, Cornus variety elegantissima variegata, Corns siberica. Kerria Japonica, Kerria Japonica fl. pl. and Kerria Japonica variegata, as border plants, Philadelphia, Coronarius foliis aurea, Rhodotyphus Kerriodes, or White Kerria, Ribes aureum (Missouri Currant). From the plants mentioned may be selected foliage, bloom and fruit, as well as colored bark to suit the taste of any individual.

For the east side of a building any of the best flowering shrubs will answer, as it gets the morning sun yet it is not too long exposed to the same, and plants in this situation get the moisture when it rains.

The west side of a building is the difficult one for which to prescribe. It is so protected from all moisture during the summer with high walls and a projecting roof that artificial watering must be resorted to almost daily to ensure the development of the plants. This watering is more effective in the evening than during the day. The plants should be well sprinkled overhead to keep down insect pests such as aphis and red spider, the latter being the most destructive pest to plants in such positions. If this watering is well attended to, the same varieties of plants as are mentioned for the east side may be grown here.

THE SOUTH SIDE

On the south side of the building, where the sun is blazing hot all day and the heat reflected back from the wall, it is hard to get plants that will not be destroyed by insects, or the foliage be burnt by the sun.

In this position the more upright forms seem to answer better than the low, flat-headed ones. I find that Aralia spinosa, by some called Japonica, and Tamarix parviflora are two excellent plants. Forsythia suspensa is always clean and tidy. Spiraea prunifolia flore pleno, viburnum plicatium, viburnum tomentosum (both from Japan), can be used with Spiraea Anthony Waterer towards the outside. Philadelphus Coronarius aurea always looks well among the other shrubs on account of its golden foliage. Dentzia Lemonei and Deutzia gracilis are about our dwarfest shrubs. Therefore, they must be planted towards the edge. A few of the dark foliaged Canna, King Humbert, would brighten up a border of this sort.

*Extract from a paper read at the recent convention in Toronto of the Ontario Horticultural Association.

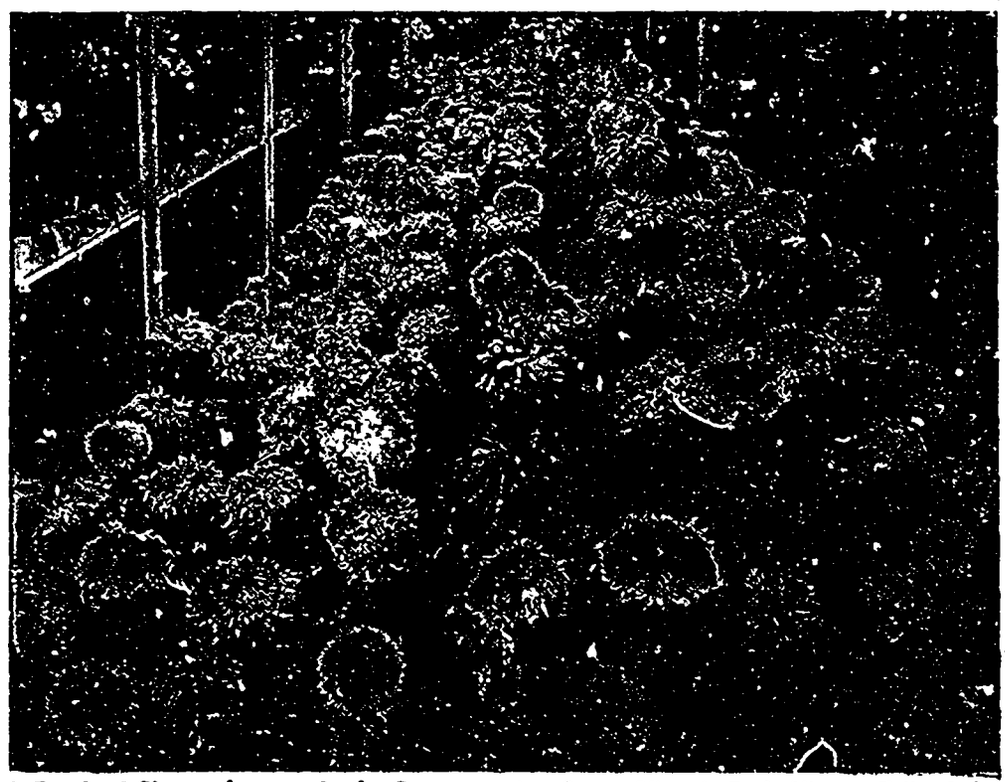
Strawberry Patch in Quebec

D. E. Lothian, B.S.A.

Two of the greatest hindrances to commercial strawberry culture in the province of Quebec, are late frosts and long midsummer droughts. For many years it has been the habit of growers in the Middle States to prevent this late frost by smudging, but they found that the injury resulting from light frosts, such as ours are, may be prevented by spraying. Spraying will also overcome the drought trouble, lately so troublesome.

At Macdonald College there has lately been installed a long perforated iron pipe which taps the water main running through the farm. This pipe rests on wooden trestles about three to four feet high, and the water pressure is sufficient to cover a considerable area of the celery bed over which it is placed.

To strawberry growers in this province who are fortunate enough to be located at the side of streams or who have access to water power, we would suggest that an arrangement similar to that existing at Macdonald College might be applied with advantage to their strawberry patch, causing higher yields and better returns.



A Bench of Chrysanthemums in the Conservatories, Queen Victoria Park, Niagara Falls, Ont.