

THE CUT-LEAVED WEEPING BIRCH.

(Betula Alba Pendula.)

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THIS beautiful tree, although of comparatively recent introduction into Canada, is gradually receiving marked approbation from all who take an interest in arborial decoration. Its symmetrical form of growth,

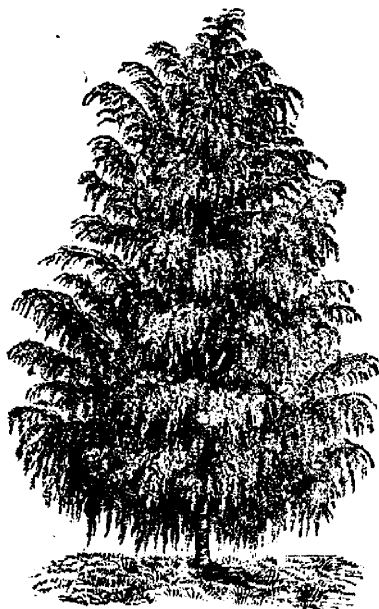


FIG. 33.—CUT-LEAVED WEEPING BIRCH.

its slender pendulous twigs, often six feet in length, hanging from the branches, sometimes twisted together into natural wreaths, which sway gracefully with the wind, its marked and deeply cut foliage, its shining white

bark, and its fragrant scent in the early morning after a fall of dew, or shower of rain, all combine to make it the most attractive object on the lawn; but to be viewed to advantage it must be planted singly, with sufficient space not to come in contact with other trees.

For cemetery planting no deciduous tree can be more appropriate, even surpassing in appearance the common weeping willow (*Salix Babylonica*) of historic fame, on which the captive Israelites hung their harps by the banks of the Euphrates, after singing their mournful native melodies.

The birch, just alluded to, was discovered in a bed of seedlings of the common weeping birch in a nursery in Germany, and being pistillate does not produce seed of itself, unless in close proximity to a monoecious birch; and even then the seedlings might revert to original conditions. It is what may be termed a *lusus nature*, and can only be perpetuated artificially by working on seedlings of other birches.

All birches, either indigenous or exotic, are very desirable, either planted singly or grouped with other trees. The white barked varieties produce a fine contrast with those of darker colors.

The natural order *Betulacæ* (birches) is indigenous only to the northern hemisphere, and mostly confined to the temperate zone; some dwarf varieties, however, have been met with on the tundras of America and Asia, within the arctic circle.