

YARD DECORATION.

feet long, and lies along one side of a small back yard. The soil was originally a most tough and obstinate clay.

These various pictures will fix in the reader's mind the importance of a simple structural design for the home grounds. The essential elements of this design are the open centre and the well-planted sides. It is particularly important that the view to and from the front of the dwelling house be kept open, for otherwise there can be little conception of pictorial effect in the composition. It is a grave mistake to cover up or to obscure the one central and important feature of the place. This architectural composition would have little place or merit in the landscape if the foreground were promiscuously planted.

But if one has no area which he can make into a lawn and upon which he can plant such verdurous masses, what then may he do? Even then there may be opportunity for a little neat and artistic planting. Even if one lives in a rented house, he may bring in a bush or an herb from the woods and paint a picture with it. Plant it in the corner by the steps, in front of the porch, at the corner of the house, almost anywhere except in the centre of the lawn. Make the ground rich, secure a strong root and plant it with care; then wait. The little clump will not only have a beauty and interest of its own, but will add immensely to the furniture of the yard. About its base one may plant stray bulbs of growing tulips or dainty snowdrops and lilies of the valley; and these may be followed with pansies and phlox and other simple folk. Very soon one finds himself deeply interested in these random and detached pictures, and almost before he is aware he finds that he has rounded off the corners of the house, made snug little arbors of wild grapes



FIG. 1058.—A CORNER AND DOORWAY
DRAPED WITH HONEYSUCKLE.

and clematis, covered the rear fence and the outhouse with actinidia and bitter-sweet, and has thrown in dashes of color with hollyhocks, cannas and lilies and, has tied the foundations of the buildings to the greensward by low strands of vines or deft bits of planting. He soon comes to feel that flowers are most expressive of the best emotions when they are daintily dropped in here and there against a back-ground of foliage. Presently he rebels at the bold, harsh and impudent designs of some of the gardeners, and grows into a pure and subdued love of plant forms and verdure. He may still like the weeping and cut-leaved and party-colored trees of the horticulturist, but he sees that their best effects are to be had when they are planted sparingly, as flowers are, as borders or promontories of the structural masses.

It all amounts to this, that the best planting, like the best painting and the best music, is possibly only with the best and tenderest feeling and the closest living with nature. One's place grows to be a reflection of himself, changing as he changes, and expressing his life and sympathies to the last.