

❖ Flower Garden and Lawn. ❖

THE BEECHES.



AMONG ornamental trees peculiarly fitted for lawn planting the European beech and its numerous varieties are unexcelled. The species itself (*Fagus sylvatica*) is not, as many suppose, of slow growth, but when once established increases rapidly. With ample room, it is a widely spreading umbrageous species of clean growth, strong constitution and apparently not very partial to any one kind of soil. On the outer edge of a group of mixed trees it is especially noticeable for its long drooping branches, densely clothed with bright green foliage. The weeping beech, so called from the curious pendulous branches and numerous slender branchlets, is a tree which we can not too highly praise. It is not adapted for massing, for its peculiar structure fits it for a solitary position where it may have the benefit of the air on every side. To form a first class specimen the branches must receive due attention in its earlier years, both by severe pruning and tying into shape. The owner of a small lot would make a great mistake by introducing the weeping beech into his little collection, as it is assuredly a tree "to which distance lends enchantment to the view."

With the purple or blood-leaved beech the case is different, provided there is sufficient space for its development. The regularity of its growth and striking rich plum color of the foliage render it acceptable in almost any well regulated place. With a background of evergreens it is particularly charming and forms a living picture of which one never tires. An avenue of this form, alternated with some silvery-hued conifer, will create a rich effect where such a system of planting is admissible.

The next variety in point of usefulness is the fern-leaved beech, which is of slower growth than either of the above. To enhance its beauty the branches should be encouraged to start out from the ground. It will also bear clipping equal to a box and thicken up under the process into a dense ball. Without this artificial assistance it is still an exceedingly graceful tree, with long, horizontal branches, clothed with attractive fern-like leaves. It seems equally adapted for massing or as an occasional single specimen on the lawn.

The form known as the cut-leaf beech is similar in growth to the above but has its foliage in curious green strips of different sizes and outlines.

The curled-leaf beech is extremely odd in appearance, but is only grown as an object of curiosity. There is no beauty whatever in such a monstrosity. It may be said, however, in its favor that the tree grows well and is usually well