

APPENDIX No. 2

There is nothing which improves a place so quickly as vines, and there is an advantage in beginning with them, as they can be procured and planted by almost any member of the household who is old enough to know how to plant anything. Three of the best climbers are three of our commonest wild plants, namely, the Wild Clematis or Virgin's Bower, Climbing Bitter-sweet, and Virginian Creeper. If these vines are not growing somewhere on the farm, one should be able to recall where he has seen them growing wild, and they can usually be obtained without cost. For a veranda we prefer the Virgin's Bower, as it has attractive foliage and flowers, and is not troubled with insects, and hence the veranda is kept cleaner, and one can sit out with comfort. The Climbing Bitter-sweet is also a very clean vine, and it is not affected with insects either. It has bright green leaves and although the flowers are insignificant its highly coloured fruit, which remains on the plant most of the winter, makes it quite attractive at that season of the year. It is a very strong grower and will soon add much to the appearance of the place. The third climber, and one which is perhaps more often used than either of the others, is the Virginian Creeper. As is well known, this is a rapid grower and will cover a veranda in a short time, and in the autumn is very attractive on account of its highly coloured foliage. This vine is, however, much troubled with a little hopping insect called a thrip, which is so destructive to the foliage that many of the leaves wither, and often during the latter part of the summer the vine is quite disfigured.

This is a very difficult insect to control, and because of this we prefer keeping this vine more in the background, where its luxuriant growth in the early part of the summer and its brightly tinted foliage in autumn may be seen from the distance. There is a self-fastening variety of Virginian Creeper which will cling tightly to a wall, and this is very useful for the side of the house or unsightly outhouses. In the warmer parts of the province of Ontario the Japanese or Boston Ivy is one of the best plants for covering walls. There are other climbers with more beautiful flowers than any of those mentioned, but they are not so hardy. Among the best of these are the Crimson Rambler rose, the flowers of which are a gorgeous sight in summer; the Scarlet Trumpet Honeysuckle, and the large flowering varieties of Clematis.

Climbing plants should be dug up with as many roots as possible, but instead of trying to save all the plant, only about two feet or less of the wood should be left on, the rest being cut away. If this is done the plant will grow much more thriftily than if a long piece of wood is left. The earlier in the spring the planting is done the more growth there will be, but if planting is neglected at the proper time we should not hesitate to dig up a plant even when it was in leaf, as if the roots are not allowed to become dry before planting and the soil is moist it will be almost sure to grow, although it should be well cut back when planted. If the soil close to the house is not very good, it should be removed to a depth of about eighteen inches and for about two feet in width where the climbers are to be planted, and replaced with good soil. The strong growth which is made when this is done will well repay any trouble which is taken. As the planting is done close to the house, there should not be much disturbance of the surrounding soil, which, we are taking it for granted, is seeded down with lawn grass. In planting, the roots should be well buried beneath the surface of the soil and the latter pressed against them. There is no danger in planting the Virgin's Bower, Climbing Bitter-sweet and Virginian Creeper too deep. They are better planted a little on the deep side, as they root readily along the stem and will be in moister soil. We have discussed climbers at some length as they are so easily obtained, will make such an improvement in a short time, and can be planted by almost any member of the family, and hence will be more likely to be planted than trees and shrubs, some of which may have to be ordered from a nursery. If the vines are cut back from time to time they can be kept well under control.

It is a mistake to plant trees too close to a house, as when they grow up they prevent a free circulation of air, and sometimes make the house too dark. Some of our native trees are among the best for planting, and there is no tree which in time will