



Elms, as Shade Trees, Have a Grace and Beauty all Their Own

are all delightful shade trees. The white or silver maple, a particularly graceful and pleasing species for park planting, is not so good as a street tree, it being very easily damaged. The Horse Chestnut, planted everywhere because of its beautiful appearance when in flower, is

undesirable as a street tree. The ground underneath is strewn first with the sticky bud scales, then the falling flowers—later the fruit is such an attraction to the boy that he damages the tree in his attempts to secure it. The tree, too, is particularly liable to insect attack.

## A Plea for the Spring Garden

Miss M. E. Blacklock, Toronto, Ont.

THOSE who have only a few beds, gorgeous though they be, of tulips and hyacinths, do not know the joys of a spring garden, though they may think they do. Not that clumps of tulips and hyacinths are not a great addition to it, but geometrical beds of them are anything but lovable, and loveliness is the very essence of the spring garden.

The garden I am advocating would be quite unnoticeable a block away, but you can poke about in it and enjoy it and be continually finding something new and interesting. The first things to greet you will be the snowdrops, which are due here (Toronto) any time after the first of March, and last well into April and even May in late seasons. The Giant Snowdrop (*Galanthus Elwesii*) is the earliest and perhaps the most showy of the genus, and is much larger than the common one (*G. nivalis*), which follows it. The double form of the latter makes, when naturalized, a mass of snowy white. Snowdrops should be planted so that the bulbs almost touch

each other and then left undisturbed to form permanent clumps, which will increase in beauty year by year. In time they will become too thick to prosper, but not for a good many years. They can be bought here for one dollar a hundred, and are still cheaper in England, so the price is within the reach of nearly every one.

While the snowdrops are still in perfection the Spring Snowflakes (*Leucojum vernum*) are making their appearance. These are a little larger and have longer stems than the snowdrop. They have a small yellow blotch at the tip of each petal and are quite sweet-scented. Otherwise they resemble the snowdrops so much that the casual observer almost invariably mistakes them for snowdrops.

Next come the Siberian Squills (*Scilla Siberica*), in color a most charming blue. These should be planted in groups. Left untouched, they will give a solid mass of color during April.

Blooming contemporaneously with the Siberian Squills are several varieties of Glory-of-the-Snow (*Chionodoxa*), all of

them delightful, though very different, shades of blue. *C. Lucillae* is a new phila-blue, *C. Sardenis* a Gentian-blue, and *C. Gigantea* (syn. *C. Grandiflora*), with very large flowers, a lavender-blue. While these are all lovely little flowers, they are not so effective as the Siberian Squill. There is a beautiful white-flowered form of *Scilla Siberica* to be had now quite reasonably. Two other varieties of the smaller Scillas are pretty, *S. bifolia Alba* and *S. bifolia Carneae*, the latter is especially so.

### THE HYACINTHS

The earliest of the Grape Hyacinths (*Muscari azureum robustum*)—pale blue, as its name implies, with a stiff, upright flower stem—adds to the array of the blue flowers with which nature delights to deck the April garden. All these bulbs flower about the same time as the crocuses, and continue in bloom equally long.

Of the herbaceous plants the first on the scene is the single form of the white Rock Cress (*Arabis Alpina*). The double form of it comes on just as the single is waning.

For profusion of bloom there are few things that excel the Rock Cress, and it has the added charm of a faint almond-like fragrance. It is perfectly hardy here (Toronto), and will grow anywhere, though like most things it responds to good treatment. The flowers of the double variety taper up into a spike not unlike a miniature stock, and it lasts in bloom much longer than the single. Bulbs of the *Muscari Heavenly Blue* planted amongst its creeping stems, give a charming contrast of blue and white. This Grape Hyacinth, I may add, is the largest and handsomest of the family, though there are several other varieties beside it and *M. azureum* that are very well worth growing—a pure white one, Pearls of Spain (*M. botryoides album*), a white one tinged rose (*M. b. candidum*), and a pale lavender-blue (*M. b. pallidum*). The last two are little gems of delicate color, but alas! they are too expensive to plant in quantity.

The purple Rock Cress (*Aubrietia*) is another dear little spring flower. It comes in various shades of mauve, purple, crimson-purple, and even pale pink, forming low-lying masses of color. I am afraid it is not quite hardy except in well sheltered situations, but as it is easily grown from the seed, which is not expensive, it is well worth a trial. I have wintered mine now for two years, but I protect it carefully and grow it on a warm border, where no later ever lodges. It blooms early and combines delightfully with Golden Tulips and the white Rock Cress (*Arabis*), and remains in bloom a long time. The English rock gardens are brilliant with it through April and May.