

## The Field.

### Hedges at the Toronto Nurseries.

DURING the past autumn we paid a visit to the Toronto Nurseries for the special purpose of examining the live fences, for which Mr. Leslie's grounds have become famous. We need scarcely say that we thoroughly enjoyed our visit. Of Mr. Leslie and his very complete establishment, we may have something to say on a future occasion, but at present we shall confine our remarks to the subject of the hedges, which we then had the privilege of inspecting.

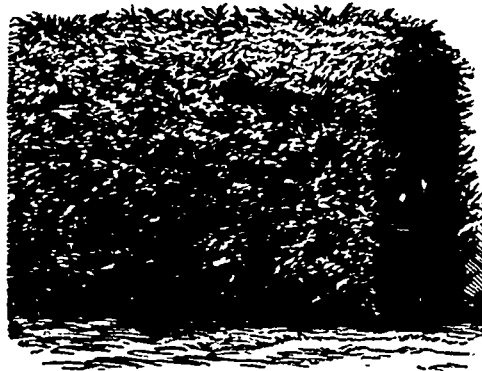
We must first premise, however, that we are indebted to Mr. A. Pontey—Mr. Leslie's zealous and intelligent manager, and President of the Gardeners' Improvement Society of this city—for much of our information respecting the habits and growth of the hedge plants in question. The small cuts accompanying this article, have been prepared from sketches made by our artist, at the time of our visit.



NORWAY SPRUCE.

**NORWAY SPRUCE.**—This is a particularly fine hedge, as well in a utilitarian as in an ornamental point of view. As most of our readers are aware, it is an ever green, is perfectly hardy, and, we were assured, stands the use of the clipping shears, admirably. The plants are generally imported from Europe when they are about twelve months old. They are afterwards transplanted in the nursery several times, so that when they have attained sufficient size to be sold—from three to four feet—they have an abundance of fine fibrous roots. As the tree naturally is of a hardy habit, the plants seldom fail to live and do well, when ordinary care is observed in planting them out. In addition to its desirability as a hedge plant, it has a beautiful appearance when planted singly on a lawn, or elsewhere. When well grown, its under branches sweep the ground, and the tree rises in perfect symmetry to one bold, straight shoot at the top.

**HEMLOCK.**—The unique hemlock hedge in Mr Leslie's grounds was planted nearly twenty years ago. It



HEMLOCK.

still retains all its beauty, vigour and gracefulness, and forms altogether one of the most charming objects that we ever remember to have beheld. It is over ten feet in height, and has been so trimmed as to leave a flat surface at the top, measuring eight feet across. The Hemlock, although one of the finest of our Canadian evergreens, will probably never be much in demand for hedging purposes, owing to the difficulty of raising the young plants. It rejoices in a moist, sheltered spot, and when planted in an exposed situation—as it must often naturally be, when used for a fence—a large proportion of the plants fail to grow. Unlike Spruce or White Cedar, it does not form a mass of roots, so as to be lifted with a ball of earth attached. It is also of slow growth, and has a tendency to develop itself in any direction rather than upwards. In spite of these drawbacks the graceful weeping of the shoots, and the bright, silvery appearance of the under side of the leaf, delight the eye of everyone beholding it; and we were assured that would be purchasers of ornamental hedge plants, are always sure to make the Hemlock their first choice.



WHITE CEDAR.

**WHITE CEDAR.** This tree is so common in this Province, that it requires no description. It is perfectly hardy, admits of being readily transplanted, costs a merely nominal price, and is a general favourite. Plants of the White Cedar may be seen in the Nursery

in every stage, from a few inches in height up to the perfect hedge, eight or ten feet high. To any professional or amateur horticulturist who desires to make a good winter screen about his forcing plot, the white cedar stands unrivalled. Its capacity for affording shelter is, perhaps, not superior to the Norway Spruce, but to those who must study economy in effecting improvements, it has the great attraction of cheapness.

**BUCKTHORN.**—As a hedge plant, this undoubtedly demands the first place in the estimation of the Canadian farmer. In localities where timber is becoming scarce, it is well deserving the attention of the agriculturist. It is perfectly hardy, vigorous in its growth, of a sturdy crabbed habit, free from mildew, and makes a stout fence in a short time. It is a native of the Rocky Mountains, and partakes somewhat of the character of the Blackthorn,—of Irish notoriety. An astringent flavour, peculiar to this plant, repels the attack of any insect, and also renders it distasteful to cattle. It bears a strong thorn at the extremity of each shoot, which presents an almost invulnerable barrier to any intruder. The plants require to be



BUCKTHORN.

placed in the earth in a single line, at the rate of about three to a foot. For the first two or three years, it is cut down to within five or six inches of each season's growth, in order that the bottom may become well filled out. Afterwards an annual top-clipping will suffice to make it a fence capable of turning anything. We were shown specimen hedges of this plant by Mr. Leslie, from three to eight years of age, and they all bore sufficient evidence of utility to warrant us in stating, that the Buckthorn appears, to our mind, the most desirable hedge plant grown for general purposes in Canada. The roots of some of the plants that we saw removed, resembled a perfect mass of horse-hair—a peculiarity which would seem to ensure the rapid growth of the plant under almost any circumstances. While, however, it will grow anywhere and under any treatment, it is like any other tree or shrub—improved by careful cultivation. There can be no doubt but that the planter who keeps his hedge-bottom free from grass and weeds, and gives it an occasional mulching, is well repaid for his extra trouble.