

THE AMERICAN WHITE ELM.



GOOD professional landscape gardeners and architects do not need any more information about this tree; I am not writing with a view of trying to instruct them, but because so many who are not of the profession have erred in not assigning it situations for which it is most suitable.

This much, however, may be said about many trees, both native and foreign, but at present I will only mention the elm. If I were to speak of the elm as a forest tree I would tell you about a straight stick of square timber seventy-five feet long, which was gotten out of a swamp forest by a negro near here a few years ago, but just now I will speak of it only as a shade and ornamental tree.

For parks, avenues, village streets and school grounds no tree is so well adapted. Its high arching branches affording ample shade for comfort, without dense foliage like some other trees, which preclude the free circulation of air, which often is of more importance than shade.

Lately I drove over a road, two miles of which is straight and nearly level, lined on either side with a straight monotonous row of hard maples growing rather closely together. Their low spreading branches meeting over the road, and giving the roadway somewhat the appearance of a dismal tunnel, which during summer time is kept continually in a muddy state. I would not be understood as offering one word of disparagement of the maple. They are, when judiciously appropriated, both beautiful and useful, but a tree which is ornamental and useful in certain places, may be unnecessary and displeasing in other places. For shelter belts, sometimes called wind breaks, I would not recommend elms, because they soon override other trees of less robust growth, such as maples, beeches, birches, oaks, hickorys, walnuts and lindens. The elm is a majestic tree, and needs more head-room than any tree that I know of.

Elms send out wide spreading roots near the surface devouring what plant nourishment the soil may contain, hence they should not be planted near fruit trees of any kind.

As a wayside tree the elm is peculiarly adapted, not only because of the lofty arch its branches form, but being free from low spreading branches, under its shade many wild flowering plants and shrubs thrive finely; thus beautifying the road margins, which, under a dense shade, are usually covered with dead tree leaves, preventing even the growth of native ferns.

Speaking of wayside adornment brings to my mind the most beautiful piece of road I ever travelled; many miles of which there grows on either side a great variety of native trees, planted by nature at irregular distances, with an undergrowth of ferns, wild flowers and shrubs, with occasional open views of lakes