

The Farm and Fireside

Epistle to Farmers. Behold your magnificent American maple! How gracefully its branches bend to the spring breeze.

2. And near by stands the stately oak like a strong tower; the monarch of the sylvan nations; every portion valuable to the earth's inhabitants; and another evidence of the great and good Father's blessing.

3. And there are the pines and spruces and firs with their singing foliage; their dense shade; their beautiful pyramidal forms; their dark-green and evergreen beauty; in midsummer and midwinter alike a blessing.

4. Then scores of other varieties, their gaily companions, stately, queenly, beautiful, graceful, useful or ornamental in their various ways.

5. Who would not live surrounded by them as a protection alike against the heats of summer and the winds of winter; a delight of the eye and the ear; a rest for the weary and a variety of beauty for the admiration of people of leisure.

6. And how cheap a luxury they are; and how readily obtained, and how highly appreciated whenever grown and expanded into their full height, size, and natural beauty.

7. And nothing equals them as an investment—nothing costing ten times as much—so much enhances the value of a place, or does so much to make it saleable.

8. Then plant trees both useful and ornamental, (and are not the ornamental useful also,) young farmer, they grow you into fortune while you sleep; beautify your home; add interest to your labor; cultivate your taste; refine your feelings; enrich your stores; make glad and cheerful your household; rejoice your heart and be a continual source of pleasure to you and yours.

9. Point not out the varieties for you to plant; cultivate your taste in selecting them; and you will improve your own mind and awaken the emulation of the angel of the house to underlie them with choice shrubbery and flowers; and make your home an Eden, clothed and ornamented with perennial and ever-blooming beauty.

10. Now have the woodbine in its graceful beauty, or the Virginia creeper with its low trailing branches, and its sweet-voiced ever-twining tendrils, and whose scarlet berries make glad the cheerless waste of winter; or if nothing better the useful and rapidly growing hop, which may be grown into forms of beauty and taught to form festoons which challenge the admiration of the most fastidious.

11. The expense would be only a little labor to cause them to assume the fairest forms of beauty and use.

12. Thus your home may, if humble, become a worthy palace for one of the king's of the land.

'76. '72.

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