

THE OAKS.

Mrs. Roberts Woods Bliss, June 24, 25, 1922.

The Oaks offers opportunities for development on so many different lines that it is difficult to know which to emphasize most strongly in the beginning. For purposes of convenience, therefore, the various sections will be discussed in their relation to the house and its approaches, beginning with the entrance on R Street and the border plantations and the house and its immediate surroundings and leaving the development of the ravines and brook to be spoken of under another heading.

It would seem as though the whole street front section of the place should be treated from the point of view of some of the large, ample, old, half-city, half country houses, which one associates with certain districts in England and France and to a certain extent in our own south. The house is not quite a country house, nor is it in the least a town building. Its proportions are so harmonious and its horizontal and vertical lines so strong and well considered that it imposes a treatment as carefully thought out in the planting. The whole feeling of the entrance front of the house should be one to be gained through easy flowing lines, dark masses of foliage, considered quite as much from the point of view of winter effect as summer space and quietness. It would seem as though no, so-called, ornamental planting should be attempted and that the forms and textures should be all that are needed to give the feeling of dignity and simplicity which the lines of the building themselves demand.

While in no way should the planting on R Street look as though it were intended to close out people's view of the place, it should in effect do this, but by giving them interesting and pretty plants to look at, with occasional calculated glimpses of the place, arranged so that they will not rake the windows and gardens, the passersby will not feel crudely excluded and yet additional privacy will be secured for the owners of The Oaks.

On a separate sheet a tentative list is given of the plants to be used for the R Street border plantation. The evergreens, ~~whether~~ ^{should be} coniferous or broad-leaved, ~~being~~ used as the backbone of the plantation, the north outline of which should be irregular and worked out to suit the needs of screening heavily where more screening is needed and lighter where there is already a good mass of protection. Against this main planting should be added a few single flowering trees or a group of shrubs here or there, bearing in mind, however, that the interruption of the evergreen border by too many so-called incidents of planting will tend to take away from its dignity without giving enough variety to make it worth while.

