Lawn Care
REG. U. S. PAT. OFF.
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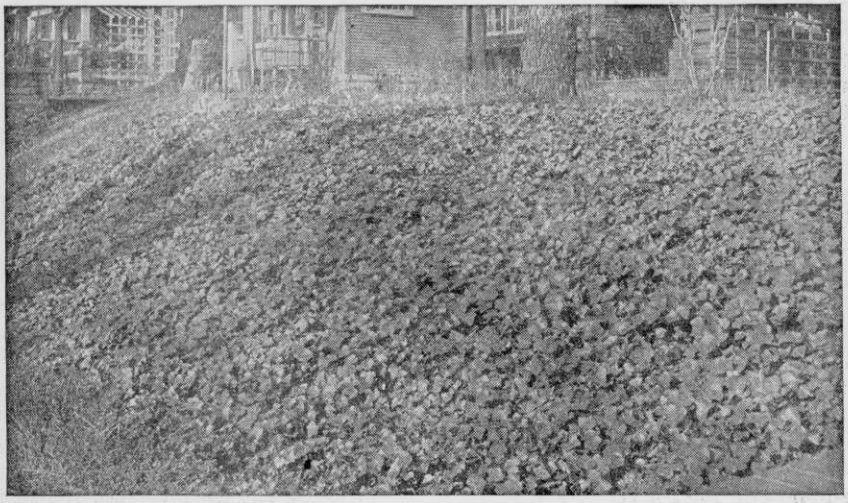
GROUND COVERS

OF the whole plant kingdom, grass is the one member that contributes the greatest beauty and utility to the landscape. In this respect it is the most important ground cover. Unfortunately a few situations do not permit the grass to thrive. In such instances, a special plant should be grown on the area. These plants will never take the place of grass but rather are intended to cover the ground where the turf has failed to stay after reasonable care.

Ground covers are expected to grow to natural size and are not supposed to be cut with a lawn mower. Plants other than grass may best be used in the case of slopes where soil washing has been severe, or the grade too steep for mowing. Situations of deep shade, rocky ground and sandy beaches or areas too small for lawn mower operation, such as tree wells and small courts, also warrant planting ground covers.

Slopes

Whether it be vine, shrub or herb, select some type of persistent plant to solve the problem of very steep terraces. Such a planting will improve the appearance of the terrace as well as protect the soil from washing and slipping.



ENGLISH IVY (*Hedera helix*) covering a shaded slope

Turfing Daisy (Matricaria tchihatchewi) is well adapted for hot, dry embankments. With a close growing habit, its finely divided, dark green foliage is similar to that of a fern. Cypress Spurge (Euphorbia cyparissias) is another choice for such situations. Its

narrow leaves give it a mosslike appearance.

While severe grades may be covered with a vine, more woody material may be planted on longer slopes. The new hybrid rugosa, Max Graf, has been used to good advantage on such areas. When low evergreen herbaceous material of the ground-cover type is desired, Trailing Myrtle or Bowles periwinkle (Vinca minor Bowles), English Ivy (Hedera helix), Baltic Ivy (H. helix baltica), or Japanese Spurge (Pachysandra terminalis) may be employed. Where coarse foliage would be acceptable consider Hall's Japanese Honeysuckle (Lonicera japonica halliana) with its long persistent green leaves.

Shade

Densely shaded areas may be handled by planting a ground cover. Beneath the varieties of Beech, Maple and Evergreen with low branches, special covers answer the question of bare ground. Ground covers should be considered only after a good shady grass seed mixture, having been fed several times yearly, has failed. Even these plants have limitations as to shade tolerance.

Especially adapted for shady spots are the Myrtle, Japanese Spurge and English Ivy as mentioned on page seven of Lawn Care for March 1935. Baltic Ivy (Hedera helix baltica) is a plant which has proven itself more winter hardy than the ordinary English Ivy. Baltic Ivy closely resembles the English variety but seems to grow lower to the ground and spreads rapidly.

A plant which has been selected from its natural habitat on the cool floor of the northern coniferous forests is Partridge Berry (Michella repens). This creeper has dark green, waxy leaves and bright red berries which are very attractive from fall to spring. The soil should be acid and contain an abundant quantity of organic matter. It should be chosen only for small areas where a low refined cover is desired. Another native plant which enjoys moist soil conditions in the shade is Pipsussewa or Prince's-pine (Chimaphila umbellata). This is one of the few that has been found successful to grow under pine because it has become adapted to such conditions in its wild abode. Use only nursery grown stock of these natural species as it is difficult to transplant and keep alive plants from the forest.

Limited Space

Any of the general ground covers such as Trailing Myrtle, Japanese spurge, English and Baltic Ivy, may be planted in areas so small that proper maintenance of grass is limited. Generally speaking the ones with the smaller leaves are better adapted to give finer texture to the confined spot.

Rocky Slopes and Beaches

Where it is difficult to maintain grass due to natural out-croppings of rock, certain forms of Sedum or othe miniature Wintercreeper (Euonymus radicans minimus) are used to advantage.

The native beach grass or Marram grass (Ammophila arenaria) has been found most practical for beaches and similar situations such as sandy fills near sea walls. To avoid slow germination and to minimize sand erosion, the planting should be done vegetatively from divisions of a native stand.

There are numerous other plants with a varying degree of color and texture suitable as ground covers. In selecting them due consideration should be given to the definite soil and climatic requirements of each plant. It is advisable to consult a local nurseryman for this information.

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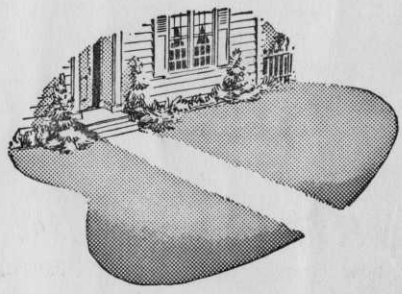

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