WAYSIDE BEAUTY.

In these days there is no lack of advice to plant trees by every roadside, and Village Improvement Societies are furnishing good examples of neatly kept highways. But many of our country roads are already bordered with trees and shrubs and climbing vines of Nature's own planting, and it is quite as important to preserve the wild beauty of this spontaneous growth as it is to provide for the more formal and stately rows of Elms and Maples which are planted on Arbor days. The illustration [above] gives a glimpse of a New England by-road which, fortunately, has escaped the axe and brush-hook of the enterprising path-master. Many officials in charge of our highways appreciate the value of trees when planted in straight rows and at equal distances, but a group of Cockspur Thorn, or Sassafras, or Black Haw, or a thicket of Sumach, or Hazel-nut, is too often looked upon as a disfigurement and a proof that the overseer is neglecting his duty to keep the roadside neat and clean. Miles on miles of wayside beauty are sacrificed every year to this mania for "trimming up," but the trees and shrubs spring up again to clothe the desert made by man. In smooth and level regions a strip of greensward bordering the wheel-way and running under the open fences into adjoining fields is always pleasing, and it cannot be too neatly kept. But in all hilly and stony regions east of the Alleghanies, no lovelier road-border can be conceived of than the native trees and shrubs which flourish where they are left to themselves . . .

[Garden and Forest 1 (1888): 42]