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Utilize the Back Yard (Concluded from page 13.)

We shall have more to say on this

We shall have more to say on this head in succeeding issues.

There are several advantages to be gained from this idea of back yard gardening. The first is, of course, the saving that is consequent upon being your own green-grocer. This is a very real saving. In the summer time particularly, salads and green stuffs form a great part of the diet, and while it is true that the price of all sorts of vegetables is lower in the summer than in the winter, still, in the aggregate, the amount of money which would be paid to the greengrocer in the ordinary way, and which would be saved if the householder grew his own green stuffs, would be considerable.

Perhaps more important still is the fact that the swelltr of the yearstables.

grew his own green stuffs, would be considerable.

Perhaps more important still is the fact that the quality of the vegetables grown at home must be better than that of those sold over the counter. The reason is obvious. Vegetables kept in the store for several days are bound to deteriorate in the keeping. Take sweet corn, for example. It has been proved by experimentalists that four hours after plucking, fifty per cent. of the sugar in the sweet corn is changed into starch. If this is the case four hours after plucking, it stands to reason that when the cobs have been laying in the window of a store for two or three days, the corn has lost a great deal of its nutrition. The very taste is different. Go out into a field and pluck some cobs of corn, and toast them over a fire there in the field. They taste very different to corn which was brought to the dealer on Monday, sold on Wednesday, and boiled on Thursday, in the home. And corn is not the only vegetable that suffers by keeping. It is infinitely better when dinner time comes to go out to the once back yard, now a garden, and pluck whatever is wanted for dinner, thus having it fresh, than it is to buy, say, a sack of potatoes that reached the store nobody knows when.

Then, again, turning the back yard

wanted for dinner, thus having it fresh, than it is to buy, say, a sack of potatoes that reached the store nobody knows when.

Then, again, turning the back yard into a garden producing vegetables and flowers makes the property more valuable. It is self-evident that soil improves in quality the more it is used. The more you take out of the soil the better the condition in which you leave it. And if you own your own house, and have equipped it with a garden, it is easier to sell it, for a house and garden is worth more to a purchaser than a house, with a dumping ground at the back. Most people buy houses nowadays to turn them over at a profit later on. One way to ensure the profit is to add something tangible to the property.

There should be no need to point out at length the pleasure of gardening. When a man is working for himself, he will feel a good deal more interest in what he is doing than if he were working for somebody else. If the working man were asked to work at his ordinary job in the evening after working hard all day, he would not be very eager. But he is eager to come home, and after supper, put his time and strength into digging, and planting, and trimming. Apart from the fact that he is attaining a reduction in expense of upkeep, he likes to see the work of his hand prospering as a result of his effort. He works all day, it may be, at bricklaying. When he has finished he can point to the building upon which he has been at work and say, "I helped to make that." But he cannot say, "I made that, and it is mine." In the case of his garden it is different. He can say to his friends, "See that garden? I made that out of an ordinary back yard. I have made it look as if it belenged to somebody instead of its being dirty and unsightly. And I have made it produce my vegetables for the summer, and thus lighten my wife's housekeeping expenses. And I have had a good many happy hours looking after it, and watching it grow out of nothing into something."

This is just the time of the year to begin. The outlay

a city of gardens is better than a city

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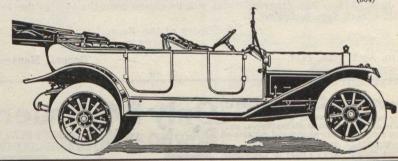
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