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SCHOOL GARDENS.

Gardens on school grounds are not popular. The chief reason probably is because the teacher makes no educational use of them. A garden as such is worth no more at school than at home. As the children see gardens at home anyway, the one at school seems unnecessary.

Until teachers get the children's heads from between the covers of a book a school garden is worse than useless. It becomes a neglected bed of weeds, and is an example of careless, bad management which we do not care to have our pupils see. The ratepayers justly condemn the waste of time and money spent in making the garden. A garden properly used is desirable; but the one planted in a hurry and then left to a kind Providence had better never been started. An improvement that is feasible, however, is the planting of shrubs and perennial flowers against the buildings and along the fence-rows. After a year or two, these will take care of themselves and will thrive in spite of the teacher's neglect. Such masses of shrubbery will relieve the picture of utter desolation which so many school premises now present. A bed of flowers will please the eye of the passer-by, and will give him a good impression of the school. A variety of hardy perennials, properly chosen, will give a good succession of bloom.

Some of our teachers miss the point, and think we urge gardens for the sake of the gardens only. The general public think we are trying to teach farming. As a matter of fact we are doing neither. We teach school gardening with a twofold purpose. First, we believe that a child who makes a garden will form habits of industry never acquired otherwise. He is working for himself. In acquiring responsibilities and rights of his own, he learns to respect the rights of his fellow gardeners. This is his first lesson in social civics. In producing food, he feels he is helping support the home, the country, the nation. This is a practical lesson in real patriotism. A knowledge of gardening is always useful, whether in after years it may serve as a vocation or only an avocation. If the boy becomes a farmer, his knowledge will make him a better farmer. If he becomes a professional man, his garden on his small city lot will be a source of health-giving contentment.

Aside from the knowledge of gardening, however, the alert teacher will vivify all school work by a reference to the garden