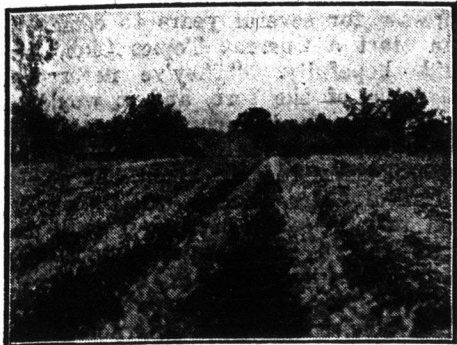


"Doing Your Bit" in a Garden

Some Lessons Taught by the War

By Helen E. Vialoux, Charleswood

The great war brought us many strange conditions, not always to our liking, but we can thank "The War God" for teaching us more thoroughly than ever before the gentle art of gardening, the oldest profession in the world. More especially is this true in cities and towns where thousands of unsavory spots have been cultivated into bowers of beauty and usefulness all over the civilized world. In the Old Country home gardens have been encouraged in many ways by the British

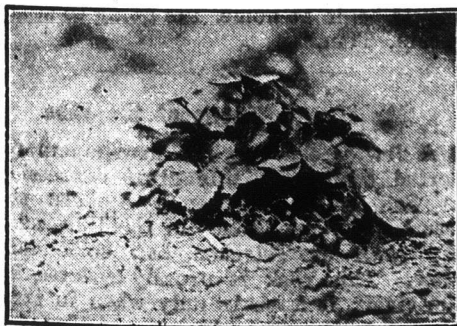


A sample of Winnipeg's beautiful gardens

government. Leaflets on every phase of gardening have been issued for several years by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries in London, Eng., free to anybody who could secure an allotment, however small, to garden and thus conserve food.

Many land owners gladly gave or leased allotments to be worked up into family gardens to help combat the acute food problem in the British Isles. During the war period the Board of Agriculture issued quite 20 of these practical leaflets, not only gardening, but "Fruit Bottling for Small Holders", "The Drying of Fruits and Vegetables" and one most useful pamphlet on "Economy in the Use of Garden Seeds" are included in the list. Once a week prices of vegetables, fruit and dairy supplies in representative markets in England and Wales are issued free on application. Thus, the British government helps the amateur gardener not only to grow vegetables but to find a market for all surplus stock. In Canada excellent bulletins are published at Ottawa and from the various agricultural college centres, which should enable the greenest hand to grow plenty of good vegetables in any decent land.

The literature sent out by the Manitoba Agricultural College to the members of the Boys' and Girls' Clubs is first rate and really practical. A fine race of enthusiastic tillers of the soil is growing up in all the western provinces, though Manitoba leads in this splendid work among our teen age boys and girls winning a higher percentage of marks in club work than any of the The large school garden is the centre of much activity and inspiration to pupils and teacher alike. Most of the



Blossoms green and berries ripe

children have a garden at home as well. I have in mind a most prolific garden down at Gonor, Man. 'Tis a large school where 80 to 90 Ruthenian children are being educated in no ordinary way under the careful training of Miss Edith Griffiths and her two assistants. The pupils do all the work but ploughing themselves under the supervision of the teachers and grow enough first class juvenile clubs across the line in the U.S.A. The fine gardens in sections of the country where club members are new Canadians are surprising to the beholder. The teacher occupies her

school home or "teacherage" and lives among her pupils all the year around. vegetables for use all summer, fresh canning and preserving all the surplus corn, beans and peas, tomatoes, beets, rhubarb and other garden products that cannot be successfully stored for use in winter. The hot school lunch of vegetables is a feature at the Gonor school during the cold months. The children also get plenty of wild fruit canned and preserved. Both teachers and pupils live well, enjoying a varied menu at little cost while city folk are doling out each can of high priced store peas or corn to their families. This school and boys' and girls' club has won diplomas from Ottawa for general proficiency. The Governor-General Diplomas three years running and many prizes here in Manitoba. Anyone who once has enjoyed the fruits of his or her labor from a garden, however small, is not content with stale vegetables and "garden sass" from a tin can.

Mere children of 10 to 12 years are growing splendid vegetables and winning prizes not only at the club shows, but at the leading agricultural shows, such as Stonewall and Kildonan in competition with "grown ups". When a growing boy or girl can spend a dollar or so on seeds and plants and staking off a portion of the family garden, planting and tilling it during the spare hours from school, actually tills over twenty dollars worth of produce during the season besides attending school regularly and helping with the general chores, fine educational work is being done and self-reliance taught in the best way. This, I have seen done each year in a local boys' and girls' club.



A three-year-old gardener at work

For the beginner I would advise a small plot at first and on land newly broken. I would not plant small seeds. Rhubarb roots can be planted, a few drills of peas put in and beans. Potatoes are the best crop for new land and often give a good return. Turnips will do fairly well and set out a few cabbages. Cultivate the ground as well as you can. The weeds are not usually very bad on new land. The plot can be well ploughed in the fall when the crop is taken off and then disced and harrowed again, followed by the garden cultivator using a rake and roller. A fine seed bed can be made suitable for small seeds of all kinds, of course the land varies so much in different parts of the province. On the heavy soil in and near Winnipeg manure is used on the new land; quite a heavy coat is applied in fall or winter. This is then ploughed in when spring opens. In sandy loam which is often seen both east and west, manure is hardly needed at first. Out in northern Manitoba the soil is fine for gardening. A rich black soil, 6 to 8 inches deep in some places in the Birtle country, where Mr. Sam Larcombe grows his wonderful vegetables which beat the world at Kansas City last fall. However, the local gardeners in the Winnipeg vicinity, such as Kildonan, St. James, Charleswood and St. Vital held their own at the International at Kansas, 1919, taking many prizes and honors in the magnificent collection sent south by the Manitoba government.

The mapping out of a garden is most fascinating where there is a family of boys and girls. Let them all do their share in making a garden and enjoying

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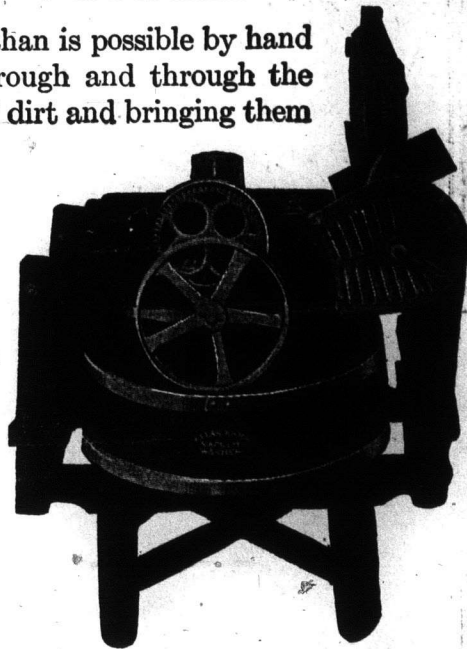
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