

WASHINGTON, D. C., SUNDAY, MARCH 26, 1911.

TURNING THE CITY'S VACANT LOTS INTO TRUCK GARDENS

SCENES IN THE ROSEDALE GARDENS, KRAEMER STREET NORTHEAST.

How Washington Is Following Lead of Other Cities in Transforming Its Unsightly Barren Grounds Into Pretty Little Farms.

Truck farming in the heart of a big city. Sounds paradoxical, doesn't it? And yet the pictures accompanying this story were taken over in a populous quarter of northeast Washington and illustrate the successful operation of one of a number of vegetable gardens being grown on vacant city lots under the auspices of the People's Gardens Association and other bodies organized for the betterment of our citizens.

These photographs show portions of the Rosedale gardens on Kraemer street northeast, grown under the tender care of J. K. Headings and family. These gardens captured the first prize offered by the People's Gardens Association last summer for the best results obtained from farming vacant lots throughout the city. There are a number of other gardens of similar nature in Washington and a general movement is under way to utilize almost all of the vacant lots in the more crowded sections of the city for this purpose.

Firemen Were Pioneers. The Washington pioneers in this form of truck gardening were the firemen of Truck Company No. 6, on Park Road, between Thirteenth and Fourteenth streets. For five years these firemen gardeners have been cultivating the strip of land adjoining their engine house. Their garden is not quite one half acre in size. To say that the neighbors are always glad when Capt. Warren and his men have started "trucking" in the spring would be putting it mildly. It is the pride of Columbia Heights, as has been expressed in the reports of the Citizens' Association.

During the five years that the firemen of Truck No. 6 have labored on their garden, of less than one-half of an acre, the District of Columbia has had demonstrated to it in a practical manner an important lesson in economy, the utilization of waste land. In fact, it seems that the value has not been fully realized.

Favored by Washingtonians. Through the People's Gardens Association the scheme is being exploited with enthusiasm, and a number of prominent Washington business men, interviewed by a representative of The Washington Herald, have manifested a keen interest in the idea. Col. Spencer Cosby, superintendent of public buildings and grounds, said, "The idea is an excellent one. Though I have not had time to go into detail, I believe the plan as worked out in other large cities would be very beneficial to Washington." He added a word of praise for the manner in which the firemen of the District have utilized the ground surrounding their buildings for growing flowers and vegetables, and for whose efforts have been equally successful financially.

One of the best authorities in the city on such a subject, Mr. Frederick L. Sidons, member of the board of man-



LOST IN THE CORN FOREST



STRING BEANS.



RED, RIPE TOMATOES



SHUCKING CORN.

agers of the Associated Charities, and actively connected with all plans for the betterment of the city, went on record as being heartily in favor of the plan. "I am perfectly familiar with such work and have been interested in that which has been going on in Philadelphia," he said. "The land there was lent to the society by generous owners. It was for the most part land that could not be easily reached, no streets having been cut through, or else there was no method

to reach the rear of the lot. In some cases the land had been bought up for speculative purposes to await the growth of the city, and rather than let it remain idle, the owners permitted it to be used by the gardening association. "These lots were leased to people in need under a few simple terms and conditions. The association did all plowing and harrowing and sowed the seed. The entire project was managed by a superintendent, who was not only an able

gardener, but was also a man of much organizing ability. He was the pivot about which the rest operated. His duties were many, and not only included the charge of leasing, cultivating, and caring for the land, but also that of an instructor for the people. Many of the lessees knew comparatively nothing about the method of operating a garden and therefore necessitated a complete training.

To Detroit belongs the credit of being the first city to originate this plan. It was about fifteen years ago, that that city started the vacant lot gardening, and in the year following the Quaker City, in order to discover some relief for the host of unemployed, formed an association with the title Vacant Lots Cultivation Association of Philadelphia. In Washington, the People's Gardens Association, in conjunction with several charitable organizations, is working out a similar plan to that of the Philadelphia society. There will be many more gardens this spring and summer than last, and before many seasons we may expect to see hundreds of large vacant lots stripped of their weeds and rubbish and flourishing under the care of some family or families of city truck gardeners.

STREET OF THE SPENDERS IN "LITTLE OLD NEW YORK"

Wall street is the place where New Yorkers make money the fastest, but it has its counterpart in a section of a street equally limited in extent where money is spent with equal facility and rapidity. This is not as might be expected a part of Broadway or Fifth avenue, but the portion of Forty-fourth street lying between the two more famous thoroughfares. Within this narrow space, two blocks in extent, foregather every day men and women whose individual yearly incomes surpass the largest fortunes of a hundred years ago. What the total of their combined fortunes may be no one has attempted to estimate, but it must be so large as to reckoned only in billions.

devoted to public entertainment. At the Broadway corner is the Hotel Astor, with its multitude of restaurants and private dining-rooms, including the largest hotel room in the world, in which the greatest public dinners held in the city take place. Here from beginning to end of the winter season, occurs a long succession of dinners in which the most prominent men in the country participate as guests and speakers. Frequently a dozen of these dinners are going on at the same time under one roof.

Nation's Leaders as Guests. During the present season President Taft, ex-President Roosevelt, three of the justices of the Supreme Court, and scores of other national leaders of thought and action have delivered important addresses here at banquets, the combined cost of which during a season amounts well toward the million mark, a single dinner representing frequently an expenditure of tens of thousands of dollars.

At the other boundary of the short stretch of pavement, constituting what may appropriately be termed "the street of the spenders," the restaurants and the International reputation—Delmonico's and Sherry's—face each other. Both are centers of lavish entertainment, of costly dinners, and of other social affairs, in which the members of the "49" vie with one another.

In fact, the keynote of this street is money. In every club elaborate decorations and luxurious appointments indicate the personal extravagance which distinguishes a large proportion of the members. Only a wealthy man can afford to belong to "Kew" in his own home, in order to "keep up his end," a member must throw away his dollars with both hands—and he does it. More than \$1,000,000 is annually spent upon wines and cigars alone in Forty-fourth street.

It is said that the club dues here amount to over \$700,000 a year. J. P. Morgan, who belongs to fewer clubs than many other prominent New Yorkers, pays \$7,000 in dues annually. W. Gould Brokaw is a member of twenty-five clubs, Foxhall Keene of twenty, August Belmont of thirty-two, and so on, each man paying from \$5,000 to \$10,000 a year merely to belong to the clubs, some of which he may hardly visit. And with all the money they spend upon themselves, they do not by any means stint their wives and daughters, inasmuch as a rough estimate of the value of the dresses and diamonds worn by the women who frequent the Hotel Astor, Sherry's, and Delmonico's any evening during the season gives a result of between \$3,000,000 and \$10,000,000.

A Street of Gold. Figuratively speaking, Forty-fourth street is paved with gold. Years ago it was occupied by stables, sheds, and run-down buildings, but these have given place to palatial structures. In twenty-five years land here has appreciated in value nearly tenfold, and a still goes on increasing year by year.

From Broadway to Fifth avenue the distance is but a third of a mile, but the person on foot has difficulty making the hour of 4 and 11 at night, when the clubs, the dining palaces, the ballrooms, and the Astor combination of all are in full swing. No one walks here but those who serve, as those who are busy passing through. Those for whom this street exists as it is, touch foot to ground only where the latter is paved with velvet, and although many of the feet that only touch the velvet are large and many more unbecomingly, all are shod in shining leather.

MAKE WASHINGTON CLEAN BEFORE TALKING ABOUT ITS BEAUTIFICATION—SAYS HOUSEKEEPERS' ALLIANCE

Organization of Notable Women Works to Improve Homes and Scrub City Until It Shines Like "Spotless Town."

While the several organizations whose plans for the beautifying of Washington have been outlined in recent Sunday editions of The Washington Herald are struggling with Congress and the public conscience toward the achievement of the Washington Beautiful ideal a serious, practical little band of Washington women is marching determinedly toward the goal of civic and household cleanliness and efficiency. Under the name of the Housekeepers' Alliance, this group of thinkers and doers is conducting a war of extermination against dirt and microbes. Without blare of trumpet or extraneous verbosity, this organization has been teaching the doctrine of cleanliness to the housewives of Washington for over three years, with such good effect that it now feels strong enough to attack the problems of civic housecleaning.

Some time next month a special day will be allotted for a general cleaning up of Washington's sidewalks, streets, alleys, and yards. Every housekeeper in the city will be enlisted in this one-day campaign against uncleanness, and each will be asked to arm herself with broom and trash barrels and make a thorough job of the immediate premises of her house. Led by distinguished members of Washington's exclusive social circles, the city's housewives will storm the battlements of the enemy, dirt, and when the day's fight is over Washington will be, for the moment at least, the original "spotless town."

While no lasting effect is expected from this one-day battle against uncleanness, it is looked upon by the alliance as the best possible sort of object lesson and alarm clock for the public conscience. It will teach the city's housekeepers what real cleanliness inside and outside the home means, and is expected to have some influence on the District Commissioners, to whom the alliance is pleading.

"One of the greatest evils of housekeeping in Washington is the fearful condition of the homes and lodging places of many of the employes of our households. Our members are urged to acquaint themselves with the housing conditions of their employes and take every means in their power to improve them or, at least, make them fairly sanitary. We also encourage the use of washable garments in the performance of household work, and we stand firmly for fair dealing with the employes. We encourage the study of household economics among all classes of housekeepers, and to this end our study classes are conducted."

Subjects for Discussion. These study classes referred to by Miss Rugg are conducted in the form of general discussion of a preannounced subject. Among the subjects discussed at the class meetings this winter were "Micro-organisms," "Yeasts," "Bacteria," and "Sanitation." Subjects to be discussed at future classes are: "Household Sanitation," "Effects of bleaching, dyeing, and other processes," and the "Selection and use of material." One of the best expositions of the ideas and ideals of the alliance was given at a recent meeting in a paper by Mrs. Frank J. Goodwin. In part, Mrs. Goodwin's paper read as follows: "Housekeeping, as we are told, is in a lamentable condition and must be adjusted to the times, and run as a business proposition. Then, and only then, will father and the boys come gladly home, and their study classes will be conducted at home, when they arrive, ought to be

smiling and happy. Mother will be serene, well dressed, intelligent; the babies will be properly fed and regulated, the servants respectful. In such a business there will be no bills, no extemporaneous tasks, no coals, no confusion. All will be peace, prosperity, and Browning's 'grow old along with me' will be found on the living-room wall in a neat frame, and 'My symphony and the footpath to peace,' indication of our former struggle after serenity, will be relegated to the waste basket. Down in Maine they tell of a new pilot who asked for something to steer by and was told to keep his course true to the North Star. In a brief while he called down excitedly, 'Say, give me another star quick; I passed that one long ago.'

House Not Always a Home. "It seems to me as if we housekeepers were in search of a new star. But I see by your announcement that your alliance exists because you believe that the problems of the home demand serious and dignified study, which attitude of mind I feel sure we are all at one. But first of all I want to express my feeling that in our struggle for better housekeeping we must not overlook the fundamental matter of homekeeping. Any ordinarily intelligent woman can run a house—that is, if she puts her mind upon it. Many and many a woman to-day is failing to make a home. Sidney Lanier said that love, music, and a wood fire would make a home anywhere. He might have added with St. Paul, 'and the greatest of these is love.' A house to be conducted as a business must be run by rule. A home must make exceptions to the rule, and we who learn the rules and stumble over the exceptions, whatever we may do with our houses, are going to fall in making homes. A perfect home has as necessary constituents God, who is love; father and mother, who are, or should be, God-ideas incarnate; little children, and then cleanliness, order, kindness, and harmony. Everything else may go; if these remain there remains the deep harbor of home, safe anchorage for shipping, great and small.

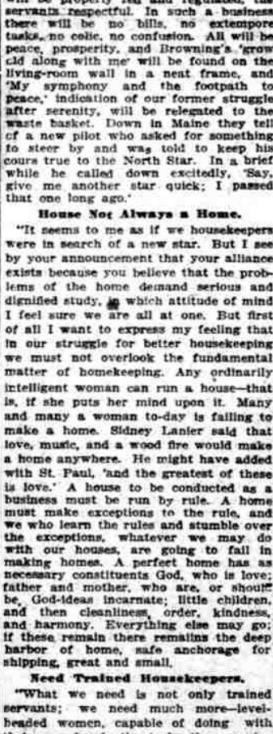
Need Trained Housekeepers. "What we need is not only trained servants; we need much more-level headed women, capable of doing with their own hands the tasks they require of others, that they may be teachers, guides, directors in their own homes. This is the real secret of the housekeeping conducted on business principles. The man at the head of a business has very often gone all through the details of that calling in order to be himself the best of all his workmen. Very few indeed are the housekeepers who are willing, as the men are willing, to learn their business from the ground up, who can make a fire, bake bread, do laundry work, sweep a room properly, even wash dishes thoroughly and well. You do not know a great many women so prepared for their work, and we all know many

who scramble along with a smattering of knowledge, knowing nothing of the easy capability born of well-trained hands and head. Until we have better housekeepers in our own limited sphere it seems to me idle to talk of large plans for delegating all this to a few paid experts and giving up the individual home simply because we do not know how to make a small thing perfectly.

"This alliance makes close appeal on one or two practical sides—the study of foods, of sanitation. These are a part of the training of your capable housekeeper, who is too often backward or indifferent about new and important things crowding upon us so quickly. Proper inspection, accurate account keeping—these will be but a part of her well-trained profession. The problem of competent servants will be wisely and effectively handled by such a system as your registry and reference, but it ought to work both ways, and mistresses as well as maids should be subject to criticism. If a mistress is notoriously uncaring, unfair, demanding the impossible, if she does not pay promptly, or if she descends to borrowing money from her servants, as many and many a woman does, she should be placed upon a separate list, and it should be a matter of pride to mistresses as well as to servants to stand well with the registry."

Members from All Classes. The membership of the alliance, while less than 100, comprises in every democratic manner housekeepers of every social stratum, from those who do all their own housework to the social dignitaries with large retinues of household employes. The problems of household cleanliness and efficiency are the same in a three-room flat as in a fifty-room mansion, the difference being only one of degree. And when it comes to questions of civic cleanliness Connecticut avenue and its tributaries are little better off than the less imposing sections of the city.

TAKES AN ACTIVE PART IN MOVEMENT.



MRS. ROBERT M. LA POLLETTE, One of the vice presidents.

HEADS IMPORTANT COMMITTEE.



Photo by Harry Davis. The officers and heads of the various committees of the alliance are as follows: President, Miss Ellen Marshall Rugg. Vice president, Mrs. H. B. F. Macfarland. Mrs. Mary S. Lockwood. Mrs. Thomas W. Bidwell. Mrs. Robert E. La Pollette. Mrs. Wendell P. Stafford. Mrs. John D. Van Schaick, Jr. Secretary-treasurer, Mrs. Alice E. Whitaker. Chairmen of committees—Ways and means, Mrs. R. C. Collinson; membership, Mrs. W. P. Stafford; household economics, Miss Emma S. Jacobs; investigations and resolutions, Miss Rugg; recreation circle, Miss Ellen A. Vinton; sanitation and civic, Miss Georgia L. Robertson; day nursery and kitchen garden, Mrs. Joseph Goodwin, and press, Mrs. E. C. Wood.