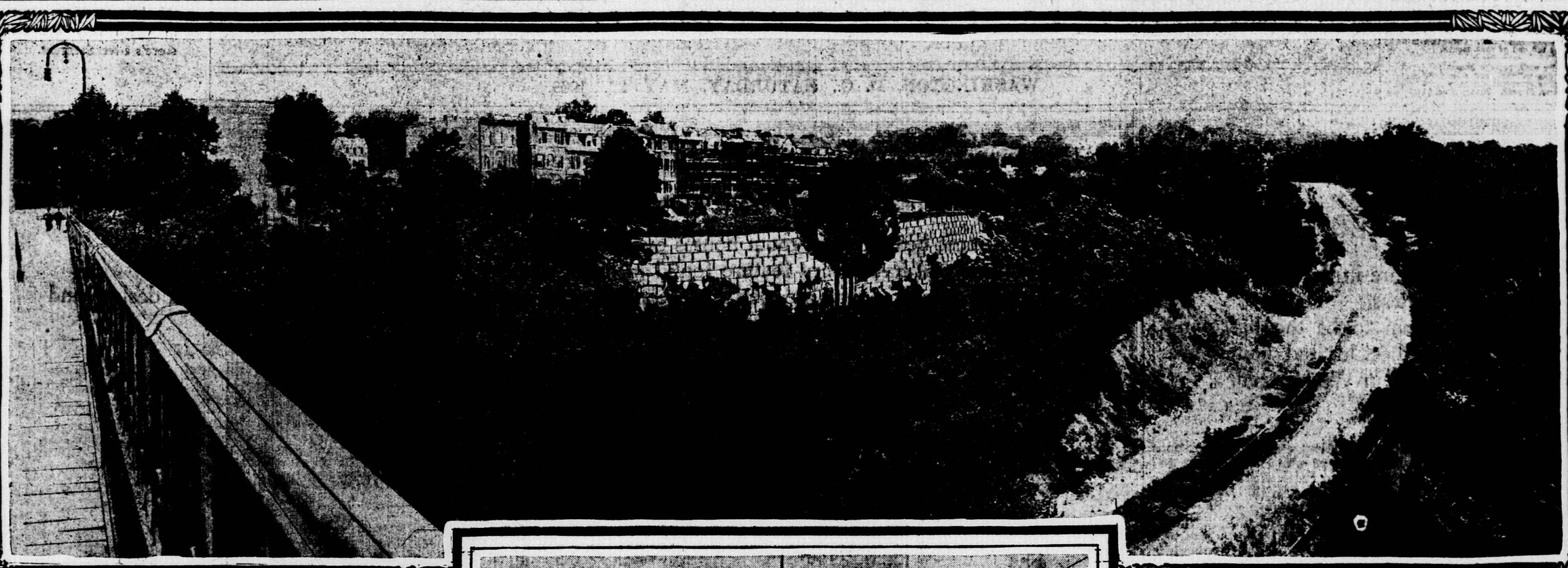
CURRENT HAPPENINGS IN THE REALTY MARKET



ON THE EDGE OF A RAVINE, A RETAINING WALL AS SEEN FROM ROCK CREEK BRIDGE.

DEED PLACED ON RECORD FOR TRANSFER OF ARMORY

Building Purchased by Thomas Ridgate for Speculation---Plans for New Residence---The City Garbed in Summer Foliage.

During the week the transaction involving the transfer of the title to the National Rifles' Armory, on G street between 9th and 10th streets northwest, was closed by placing on record the deed. By this instrument the National Rifles' Hall Association transfers to Thomas H. Ridgate the property in question. The consideration is not named, but is said to have been about $10 per square foot, which would make the total about $76,000.

It is stated the purchaser bought the property for an investment. The sale was made by the Charles Early Company, real estate brokers.

A garage house is being built from plans prepared by B. Stanley Simmons, architect, on the rear of the lot on which the residence of Robert N. Harper stands, at the southeast corner of 16th and Church streets. It is a one-story structure, and will be of a style and built of material that will bring it in harmony with the general style of the residence, which is colonial.

Large New Residence.

The purchaser of a large building site at the northeast corner of 16th and R streets, Isaac T. Mann, is having plans prepared by George O. Totten, architect, for a residence to be erected there for his own use. It is not the intention to occupy the entire frontage with the building, as it is over 200 feet in extent, but a sufficient width will be taken to provide for a house of generous proportions.

The design of the house will be that which has come into general use in this city of late years, several examples of which may be seen in the Sheridan Circle section. The principal entrance will be on a level with the street, and there will be rooms on the basement floor for the use of guests on social occasions. The stairway will be in the center of the house, thus leaving the full width of the second or parlor floor available for a generous sweep or succession of rooms.

The exterior will be treated in stone of light shade.

Plans of Mr. Walsh.

Early in the coming fall it is proposed to make such changes in the building at the northwest corner of New York avenue and 14th street, known as the Oxford Hotel, as will make it better adapted as an income producer. In order to bring about such a result it may be that the owner of the property, Thomas F. Walsh, will decide to erect an entirely new structure there.

Both plans are under consideration, and the details of both, showing their character, are to be studied by T. A. Wickersham, the representative of Mr. Walsh in realty matters. A decision will then be made as to the extent and the character of the improvements.

The Spectacle of the Foliage.

The variety in the forms as well as the grace of the massing of the foliage along city streets and in city parks is a never-ending source of wonder and admiration. With every street banked, as it were, with greenery and the vistas closed with groupings of shrubbery and flowers, it is not surprising that nature in its spring garb should be the dominant element in the impression which the city makes. In fact, the architectural form of the houses and of buildings have but little influence in the spectacle of the city, for these works of man serve now, in the midst of the luxuriance of nature, merely as incidents, as details only in the composition which has such charm and grace.

One walks beneath the overspreading and arching branches of the trees, with the sunlight working graceful patterns of mingled light and shade across the pathway, and yet the feet are all the time on the hard pavement of the city sidewalks, and there are the regular curb lines binding the formal surface of the paved roadway. Above and about, as one casts his eye, he is in the midst of a forest and is walking through shady vistas in the woods, and yet he is in the crowded haunts of men.

A Charming Washington Paradox.

This paradox of a city and yet the country can only be found in Washington, and at this season of the year the surprising completeness of rural surroundings in the midst of a great population can be seen at its perfection. The opening of each year appears to mark the highest point attained by the city in loveliness. Next year the charm of the spring and of the summer will seem to have enhanced, and so it will be next year and the next. For the trees continue to flourish, and it is their beauty and grace that constitute the glory of the city.

There is no display equal to that of the trees in this city. In form and luxuriance of foliage the variety is never ending, and one never tires of them, for these masses of greenery rest the tired eye and also the tired brain. There is the variety which is due to different ages of the trees, and then there is that which comes from a differing nature. The magnificent elms adorn some of the city streets and are found in some of the parks, while along the new extension of Connecticut avenue are to be found oak trees, the stately proportions of which will delight the eye of coming generations.

The Building Inspector Problem.

The naming of Building Inspector Ashford for the position of municipal architect by the committee appointed by the District Commissioners to suggest a man to fill that recently created place points to the possibility of a vacancy in the near future in the office of building inspector. Before such a change is made it might be well, if the opinion of those who have to do with this office in pursuit of their business has any weight, to adopt some means of taking off from the head of this office some portion of the burden of the detail work.

It is a difficult matter to see the building inspector, not because he is exclusive and shuts himself up, for that is directly the contrary to the practice pursued, as any one can enter his office. But it is evident that no more than one person can talk to him at a time, and so there is a long line or group of people waiting in his office each day, and practically all day, to get a chance to speak to the head of the building department.

A Center of Many Details.

As most of those who wish to see him are busy, the delay is irritating, and tends to make people have revolutionary thoughts about their city government, to say nothing of the loss of time, which is a loss of money. It is possible that other officials in the District building, or perhaps in that department, could attend to a goodly proportion of the matters personally presented to the building inspector, but even allowing for that, it is still true that a larger variety of duties devolve upon the head of this office than ought to be the case if the best results and the quickest service is expected.

Those who have most to do with the office, architects and builders, would like to be able to attend to their business there with as little delay as possible, and there is no objection to any reasonable plan which will tend to bring about such a result. It is proposed that the revenue derived from the issue of permits be increased, and when that is done then Congress may be more inclined to provide the additional help which the growth of the business of the office demands.

Proposed Increase in Fees.

Instead of a flat rate of two dollars for a building permit, whether such a permit authorizes the erection of a shanty or a palace, it is proposed to fix a scale of rates varying with the importance and magnitude of the proposed structure. This would result in increasing the fees for building permits, but not in such a degree as to be burdensome.

It will certainly not be burdensome but gladly welcomed if in consequence additional men are secured for this service. As has been pointed out by the building inspector and indorsed by the Commissioners for a good many years past, everything about the office has grown except the force of officials.

At Rate of a Million a Year.

Fourteen years ago the total value of the building done in that year in this city was about four millions of dollars. Today such figures run up to fourteen millions. With all the increased duties, to say nothing of responsibilities, the force of men who are expected to see that the building regulations are carried out, and to suggest improvements in line with the safety of lives and of property as well as of health, there has been during this period an increase of three in the force.

The disproportion shown in the figures needs no further comment, but point directly to the conclusion that in this particular the cloth is not sufficient for the pattern.

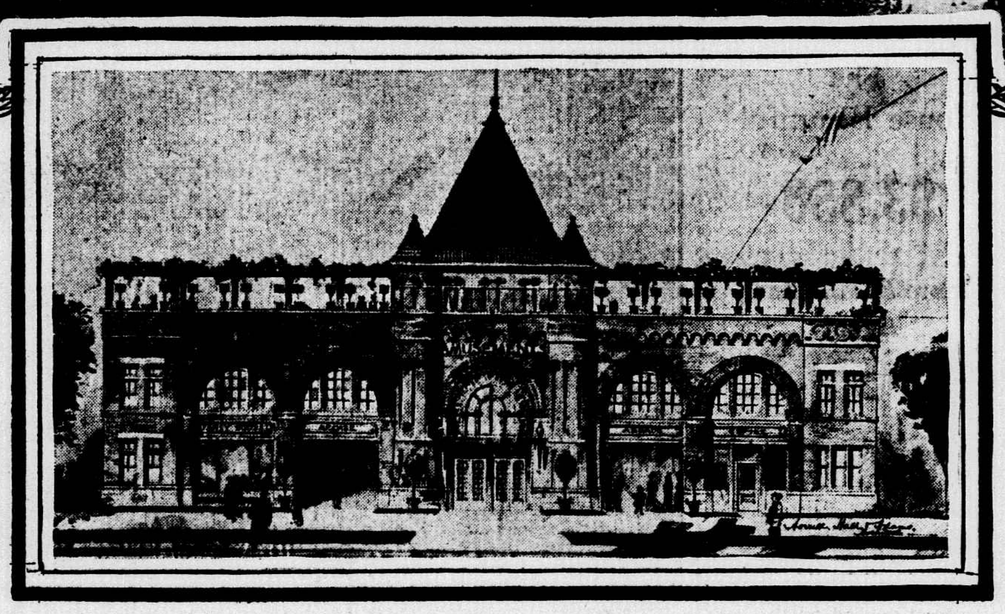
New Use for Car Barn.

The old car barn of the Capital Traction Company, on the west side of 14th street just south of Park road, is to be transformed into an amusement place.

The plans for the alterations have been made by Averill, Hall & Adams, architects. The building is to have a more ornamental appearance than at present. The property is owned by a company.

Some of the transactions in property made through the office of the Frank T. Rawlings Company in recent days are as follows:

Lot in Q street northwest between 1st and 3d streets, to be improved by purchaser; two lots on C street northwest, in squares 87 and 88, for out-of-town purchaser; lot 12, square 5084, improved by frame dwelling, for George Spitzer to Thomas R. Harney, for $2,250; 927 New Hampshire avenue northwest, for Mrs. Julia Evans, for $5,000, to be held as an investment; 324 4th street northeast, for Mrs. Sallie Pinkerton, to William Secrist, for investment; twenty-one lots in Burrville, D. C., for Mrs. Childs, to J. W. Rawlings; 1828 E street northwest, for Philip Christman, for $2,000, to be held as investment; 814 New Hampshire avenue, for M. F. Rawlings, to James Mansfield, for a home; 1824 E street northwest, for Lewis E. Collins, to J. W. Rawlings, for investment; 327 T street northwest, for E. T. Pettengill, to Miss S. Estelle Tucker, for investment purposes; four acres of land near Benning, D. C., for Mrs. Dunlap, to purchaser, who will subdivide and improve; 216 Elm street northwest, for $4,250, to person occupying premises as a home; 221 B street northwest, for Mrs. McCann, to William Smith, for $4,250; lot 3, square 780, for M. Fenwick, to J. Dorsey, for $1,750, to be improved; lot 47, block 14, Takoma Park, for $750, to Charles Shutt; 1868 V street northwest, for F. S. Collins, through Stone & Fairfax, to Ella D. Barrett, for $6,500; 2046 E street northwest, for Ella D. Barrett, to buyer who will hold as investment; 1524 21st street northwest, to B. H. Warner, for $5,000; a plot of ground containing 17,250 feet, near 17th and B streets northwest, for a prominent resident, to buyer who will hold as an investment; 3019 13th street northwest, for Mrs. Georgia A. Bentley, for Richard S. Wolfe, in connection with the New York real estate brokers; 325 15th street and 1430 D street southeast, to buyer who will hold same as an investment; 311 Dakota street northwest, for A. R. Taylor; lot on Elm street, Le Droit Park, for Miss Josie Ryon, for Norman E. Ryon; lot on M street, Trinidad.



FORMER 14TH STREET CAR BARN TO BE AN AMUSEMENT PLACE.

Building in Alexandria County.

"Alexandria county is still growing," says W. G. Collins, of Clarendon, Va., realty operator. "More houses are being erected in the county than ever before, and those who have not been on the Virginia side for a couple of years would hardly recognize the place. There are at least fifty houses going up within a short distance of my office, and this astonishing progress is not confined to any particular section. The electric roads are doing everything possible to foster this growth, and another very gratifying feature is that outside capitalists are becoming deeply interested and are putting many thousands of dollars in the county."

Mr. Collins reports the following recent sales:

For Wood-Harmon Company, one lot at St. Elmo to George E. Garrett; for Richard H. Gaskins of Washington, D. C., two lots at Clarendon to John W. Funk; for Wood-Harmon Company, three lots at Clarendon to Mrs. Fannie Lee Stevens; for Wood-Harmon Company, two lots at Clarendon to George D. Acers; for Aleatha V. Gibson of Washington, D. C., three lots at Clarendon to Edward A. Wilson of Indian Head, N. Y.; for Allan H. Orndorff, house and lots at Dominion Heights to Edward Goucher of Washington, D. C.; for Wood-Harmon Company, one lot at Clarendon to Samuel M. Dodd.

Buys House for a Home.

Leslie E. F. Prince, real estate broker, has sold for James R. Ellerson and Thomas H. Pickford premises 1735 Church street northwest to Sarah E. Dillow for $5,500. This is one of a row of nine colonial-style bricks just being finished, and contains six rooms. The purchaser bought the property for a home.

Building at Classic Shore.

Among the recent houses erected at Classic Shore, the new addition to Colonial Beach, Va., during the past few months are the following: A four-room cottage for Mr. Samuels and one of five rooms for Charles Washington, both of King George county, Va.; Miss Sullivan, a three-room bungalow; Norman H. Cole, a cottage on 7th street; Mrs. Crouch, a bungalow on 9th street; an eighteen-room house and one of fourteen rooms on 7th street for Charles G. Taylor; Mr. Gouldman, a four-room bungalow on 9th street.

John C. Weldman of Baltimore has just closed a contract for a cottage to be constructed on 5th street and Beach avenue. Mrs. Cullen has commenced a three-room bungalow on 10th street just off of Beach avenue. A small hotel is being constructed at the corner of 8th street and Beach avenue. The building is to be pebble-dashed and will contain about thirty rooms.

Sale of Ingleside Residence.

Mrs. Harriett E. Berrian has sold to Henry N. Brawner, jr., the three-story Roman brick bay-window dwelling 3337 18th street, between Lamont and Monroe streets, in Ingleside subdivision. The house has ten rooms, two baths and hot-water heat, and occupies a lot twenty feet front by a depth of 120 feet to a rear alley. It is understood that $7,950 was paid for the property, which will be occupied by the purchaser. The sale was made by the office of Willige, Gibbs & Daniel, real estate brokers.

Her Qualifications.

From Harper's Bazar.

Proprietor of Intelligence Office—Bridget Farley, can you take a place as cook?

Applicant for Position—Faith, an' I can, sorr. I can both take it and 'lave it.

GRAND ARMY MEMORIAL.

Work Begun on Pedestal at Seventh Street and Louisiana Avenue.

A shaft memorial to the Grand Army of the Republic and to Gen. Stephenson, founder of that organization, will be dedicated next fall, probably in September. The memorial will be erected in the circle on the east side of 7th street, at the junction of C street and Louisiana avenue. A force of workmen is now employed in constructing a concrete foundation for the memorial. The work is being done by direction of Col. Cosby, engineer officer in charge of public buildings and grounds. Congress appropriated $10,000 for the foundation, including the pedestal.

The memorial was designed by J. Massey Rhind, the New York sculptor. It is in the form of a tall, triangular shaft of gray granite, with bronze reliefs on the three sides, representing, respectively, "Fraternity," "Charity" and "Loyalty," the principles of the order. The monument entire, exclusive of the pedestal, will cost about $35,000. The money was raised by the Grand Army of the Republic, mostly from members of the order. It is intended to present the memorial "to the people of the United States."

Site and design of the memorial were selected by a commission appointed by act of Congress providing for the erection of the memorial. The commission consists of Secretary Dickson, Senator Wetmore, Representative McCall, Gen. Louis Wagner and Thomas S. Hopkins. The last two named are treasurer and secretary, respectively, of the Stephenson Grand Army of the Republic memorial committee.

Partners in His Crime.

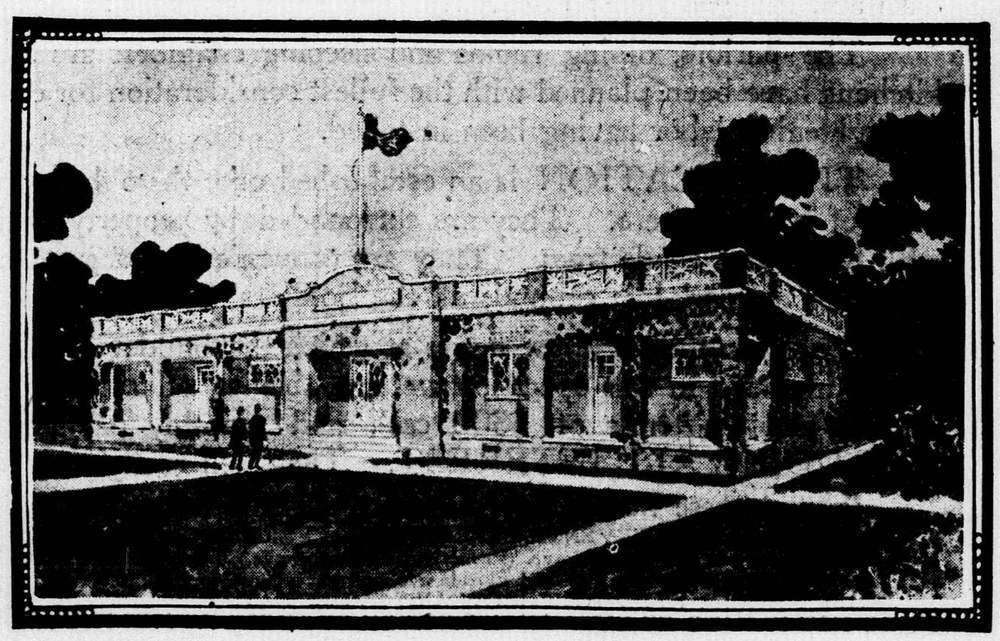
From the Peoria Journal.

The hard looking customer had been arrested for stealing an umbrella.

"What have you to say for yourself?" asked the police judge. "Are you guilty or not guilty?"

"I'm one o' the guilty ones' y'r honor, I reckon," answered the prisoner. "The umbrella had the name of J. Thompson on the handle, G. H. Brickley stamped on the inside o' the cover an' I stole it from a man named Quigley."

BACHELOR LAWN TENNIS CLUBHOUSE



RECENTLY ERECTED IN WOODLEY PARK.

Bachelors' Tennis Club.

The new grounds of the Bachelor Lawn Tennis Club in Woodley Park and on Woodley road, just south of Cathedral avenue, were ready for use during the past week. There are fourteen courts all told, and they appear to be in excellent condition, showing that they have been well made.

The work of building the clubhouse on the north edge of the grounds is going on and the plans for the new structure prepared by B. Stanley Simmons, architect, provide for a building with ample porch room from which access will be to the large room which will occupy the space of the central portion of the building. On each side of this living or lounging room will be the locker rooms for the men with shower baths, while upstairs will be the locker rooms for lady members of the club.

COMPROMISING WITH NATURE IN CONSTRUCTING HOUSES

Some Ground Picturesque, But Not Regarded as Practical---Retaining Wall of Rip-Rap---Lots in the Air---Problem of Grades.

A building lot that lies for the most part in the air, or, if projected on a level with the front portion, would extend out on the atmosphere, does not appeal to the average builder of houses, or, in fact, to the average occupant of houses. A house lot needs a more substantial foundation than air even if a portion of it is to be used only as a place for hanging clothes or for the family dog to roam about.

However, holding such views relative to foundations, Kennedy Brothers bought some time ago a tier of lots on the east side of Woodley place, the latter being the first street to the north after passing the street railway bridge from the city over Rock creek. They also bought the lots on the west side of the street, and have about completed the erection there of eighteen three-story houses. Some of them have already been sold and are occupied.

Picturesque, But Not Practical.

Woodley place is parallel to Connecticut avenue until it reaches Cathedral avenue on the north—that is, at least, its course on the plat books. But in fact it stops short just north of the last house built on the west side. Beyond is a ravine about forty feet deep and extending nearly to Cathedral avenue. The ravine winds to the east as the railway bridge is reached, and the consequence is that the lots on the east side of Woodley place are mainly in the air, or rather pass down the steep banks of the ravine at a grade of about 80 per cent.

However, the bank is covered with shrubbery and trees and looks picturesque, so that everybody but extremely practical persons are apt to exclaim in looking down the foliage-bedecked steep: "What a lovely place." However, Kennedy Brothers thought it would be more lovely if the back yards were larger and there was less embowered bank, and so they have filled in to the limits of their holdings, and in order that the earth would not follow its natural impulse and slip off to the lower levels they have built up against the bank of earth and above the level of their land a stone wall.

How the Wall Is Built.

This wall is of rip-rap construction, which means a dry wall with stones laid with some regard to regularity, but, of course, with no uniform line of joints. The stones are laid with the slope of the bank, and in consequence rest against the bank, having a width of about three feet at the bottom.

The thrust of the bank is resisted by the weight of the wall, which rests on it, and in addition the danger of seepage of the surface drainage has been averted by providing for a proper drain along the top of the wall. Iron rods are also drawn along the face of the wall at intervals, and besides there is at the base a footing of concrete, and the same material in the form of grouting has been forced between the interstices of the stone for a distance of several feet from the base of the wall.

More Lots in the Air.

There is a coping, or balustrade, at the top of the wall, and where it rounds to the west there is a curved seat of concrete, from which a view can be had of the ravine and the wooded slopes beyond.

The bottom of the wall, resting on the sloping sides of the ravine, is still some twenty feet above the level of the roadway of Cathedral avenue, which passes along the border of the Zoo.

It does not so appear as the land now lies, but the plat book shows a tier of lots along the west side of Cathedral avenue and fronting on the Zoo. No doubt some day the building sites on that level, which at that part is fully forty feet below that of the next parallel street on the west, Woodley place, will be occupied with residences, thus continuing the line of dwellings which are now being built by Middaugh and Shannon on the north end of Cathedral avenue, just before it turns from the boundary line of the Zoo toward the west.

Problem of Grades.

At present the southern section of the thoroughfare does not suggest a place for homes, and neither does that portion of it to the south of the railway bridge. In this latter locality there is not the same width of land, but the upper tier of lots has already been built on, or, rather, two houses are up and the third is being finished and now faces the northern approach to the new Connecticut avenue bridge.

There is another section of lots fronting to the east, but the depth of them is for the most part lost in the steep descent of the ground to the level of Rock creek. The adaptation of ground to meet the requirements of the uniform level of city streets has thus far in the development of the city as a rule been neither difficult nor expensive. But as the city's advance passes beyond the fringe of hills that border the original limits, such engineering questions arise.

Adaptation of Nature.

The broken and irregular character of the ground of Cleveland Park has not deterred the subdivision maker, and what has been accomplished there in the way of meeting the natural obstacles to uniformity shows a disposition to compromise with nature rather than to subdue her to the plans of man, and, in consequence there is a diversity in the streets and the surroundings of the homes there which is attractive, but which, of course, could not have been done if the building had gone on in rows instead of detached dwellings.

In that locality are found houses overlooking the roofs of dwellings on the next street. A couple of houses now being built on Newark street had to be supplied with sufficient ground for the house alone by erecting on the slope of a ravine piers of concrete and then filling in with earth and placing the brick piers of the house on the substantial footing thus supplied.

SCHOOL IN CANAL ZONE.

Every Town Has American Schools for White and Negro Pupils.

From a Colon Letter to the New Orleans Times-Democrat.

At the present time there is a school in every town of the Canal Zone. There is probably no place in the world where children of so many different nationalities receive their instruction in common. In fact, this has probably been the greatest difficulty in the work. In the first place, the teachers come from sixteen different states. The number of pupils in the white schools is 722, of which 530 are Americans. These latter come from thirty-nine different states or territories, and, as each state has a system of instruction differing more or less from all the others, it can readily be seen how difficult it has been to get all pupils properly graded for the advantage of all. The foreign children attending the zone white schools number 161, and represent twenty-one nationalities. The remaining thirty-one pupils never attended any schools before they came to the Canal Zone.

The colored schools, made from eighteen American children, are represented by twenty-eight nationalities. It is true, of course, that many of these so-called nationalities are simply insular possessions of the different European countries having colonies in the West Indies, but inasmuch as the inhabitants of each island differ from all the others, even to the extent of employing different dialects, they can be classed as of different nationalities. The number of colored children in attendance upon their separate schools is 1,215. The greatest obstacle, which will never be wholly overcome, is the constant moving to and fro on the isthmus. In the first place, the population here is naturally shifting, the numbers of those leaving the isthmus being nearly as great as those coming. In addition, there is a continual changing of employes from one point to another, as necessity demands.

A Volunteer Motor Corps.

From the New York Tribune.

To move an army of fifty or a hundred thousand men in automobiles is, of course, out of the question. When transportation for so large a force cannot be accomplished by rail, troops must go in the old-fashioned way—on foot. To carry a few soldiers in motor cars, however, is entirely feasible, and emergencies are likely to arise in which the rapid transfer of a small force from point to point would be an extremely valuable kind of service. These vehicles might prove more serviceable than cavalry for reconnoissance, and a good one might take an absent commander to the front with a speed surpassing Sheridan's on his famous ride.

Motor cars cannot fail to prove highly useful in the transportation of such cumbrous but necessary articles as machine guns, wireless telegraphic equipment and hospital supplies, and in time will be regarded as essential to the highest efficiency of an army. Tents, other paraphernalia of the camp, commissary stores and ammunition will always be moved, perhaps, in wagons drawn by horses, but there are several classes of things whose usefulness will depend largely upon the celerity with which they can be carried to the places where they are needed. As a long time may elapse before the national government will be disposed to purchase any considerable number of automobiles for military use, it is a happy thought to inquire how many private vehicles could be put at its disposal. Training in marksmanship and in obedience should supplement offers of the cars themselves. This might take a good deal of time, but a reason is thus afforded for making an early beginning of such preparatory work.

Mabel—Of course, you speak to Lena when you pass her? Helen—Indeed, I do not. Why I don't even notice what she has on!—Puck.