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Gardening and the Economic Reconstruction

By J. R. Foote

All up and down the street, old neighbors are moving out to distant cities, to Chicago apartments, to less pretentious rooms nearby or moving out and back to the country home. They have sold out or rented out, and clustered around each family shift is a story with plenty of interest.

Wherever a family moves out, some other family moves in, from Detroit, from Chicago, from the East, or maybe newlyweds. And there is cause to guess that the family coming in has been having some financial good luck, just as we have reason to guess that the family just moving out is changing to adjust the declining family budget. There is a good story surrounding the family moving in, and perhaps it is a more hopeful story.

The new neighbor who has bought the home has visions now of having that dream garden, the garden she has always wanted, with plenty of old fashioned flowers, a roomy lawn, a cozy nook out under real trees, and the kiddies can have a dog and a pair of banties.

The new renter, with a lease all signed and sealed, for a year or two, can now go out and actually cut a bouquet of flowers for the indoors, whenever she wants, and can revel in giving away a blossom every now and then.

Of course the lawns and gardens will need some little attention and not knowing a sumac from a horse chestnut has its influence on the general garden problem, but these trifles are smothered in the joy of watching each plant shoot and each shoot grow.

These new homesteaders have not had the raising in garden surroundings, garden clubs, they usually know little of Landscape Gardening as an art, but they enjoy flowers, fresh air, and they are going to get as big a kick out of gardening as anyone else. I betcha.

The vegetable garden episode will show up the advantages and disadvantages of buying from the stores and will show up the same things about raising one's own table greens. Home grown vegetables have quali-

ties peculiar to their freshness, and yet the grocer's wonderful stock of good garden produce will still supply much that the year-around table requires.

THE FAMILY GOES GARDENING

Balancing the budget may call for smaller expenditures for grounds upkeep, so the family must experience the comforts of work clothes and manage somehow to get the necessities done in family style.

Now dad has to be a good sport and set the example for the family and let golf go hang on Saturday afternoon, take his place at the wheel and try out the wheelbarrow. He will find that the kink which develops in his back Sunday morning and improves later in the week, will not last forever, and his appetite gets better, his nerves less and his disposition becomes remarkable. Really, he gets to liking gardening and he finds out things about his family which he never knew, as he mixes with them in working clothes.

The corner lot baseball gang is not so well or regularly patronized, as the big boys have appointments at home, gathering leaves instead of scoping up grounders, sorting out the weeds from the flowers, pushing the latest model lawn mower. Terribly humiliating, what? But the garden fever grows with the general rise in temperature, and somehow, home becomes more homey.

Mother's bridge gang is going to suffer, but there are two sides to every story, so, many are taking a chance and trying out their own skills at gardening this year, saving money, uniting the home, and who knows where this thing will end.

GARDEN EXPANSIONS DEFERRED

In the big estates, operations which employed five, ten or fifteen men, have been boiled down to where they are handled by a mere retaining force of one, two or three men, just doing such things as will preserve the plantings which are permanent, mowing the lawns occasionally and perhaps raising the standard vegetables.

This temporary reaction may eliminate a high prices garden superintendent and may call for a closer supervision by the home owner, but it may also develop some of the younger fellows into capable garden foremen. It is surprising how well a place may be kept looking, with a small force, by cutting off expansions and developments, eliminating the annual flowers and cutting beds.

A general change in the program brings out many interesting and useful facts, as to garden economies, best policies, and general methods of growing.

The widespread transfer of ownerships and changes of occupants, does and will, bring plenty of garden activity, fitting the gardens to the needs and likings of the new occupants.

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