

THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL VALUE OF A GARDEN

By Mrs. Joan Hamilton Shearer, Poole, Ont.

Why bother with a garden when you can get fresh fruits and vegetables at the market and in the store all the year round! These people who "do not bother" with a garden never know the real taste and flavour of fresh vegetables, they never know the saving in dollars and cents, they never know the health and happiness they miss, and what is still more serious, they do not know that they are not being honest with their children.

If Canada maintains or improves her present standards of health and efficiency, our homes will have to awaken to a sense of their responsibility to their children. There need be few or no children in our country who are not physically fit and mentally and morally sound, for, when a child has a well developed and well-functioning body, the problem of being pure and honest in all things is more than half solved. A child with a sound body has a one hundred per cent. chance of becoming a worthwhile man or woman with good mind and clear morals, provided the parents understand how to train him or her to make decisions; and to respect the rights of others. Physically fit children are the product of intellectual understanding of their needs, strength or weaknesses, and an honest effort to meet sanely and intelligently the needs, to maintain the strength and to overcome the weaknesses, by use of proper foods and care, to administer which one must of necessity devote time and thought to the subject, and then make the application.

Farmers who are a credit to their profession are the ones who have devoted, and are still devoting, time, energy and thought to a study of the ancestry of each individual animal or fowl; to the production and procuring of the proper foods to develop their bodies, and to the training of these animals or fowls, so that they may secure the best record of performance at the least cost. Some farmers have made a study of the effects which different types of music have produced upon thin stock and have installed radios in their barns; but no loud music or jazz is permitted in these barns. We are proud of the men and women who are doing these things because through them they are raising the standing of our country among the other nations of the world, and we will be much prouder of them when they are applying these same principles to the development of their children. What is more pathetic than to see a father displaying a fine herd of cattle, while one or more poorly developed and untrained children stand beside him!

We are being awakened, in too many cases rudely awakened to the fact that all is not well in our homes; there are doctor and dentist bills, grocery, vegetable, fruit, and meat bills to be met regularly, and yet we are not healthy or happy; there is a restlessness, a constant wanting something or to go some place, and in their quest for that "Something" our children are growing away from home and parents, oftentimes bringing about other problems such as idleness, wrong-doing, increased taxation, etc.

The progressive parents of to-day are studying these problems and in many cases are meeting with a commendable amount of success. Step by step they are working toward a solution and toward a prevention of these undesirable conditions in the homes and in the community. They find that health saves those doctor's bills and promote happiness; health comes largely through proper food and wise feeding; proper food and wise feeding can be attained most economically by producing our own supplies; therefore, it is evident that it is a paying proposition, "to bother with a garden".

To those who have reached the stage of thinking that "perhaps a garden may help", the following food budget may be a guide. This budget, which is for one person, covers only that period of the year when we have to depend upon our canned and stored vegetables, namely from October first until June first, a period of thirty-five weeks, and allows one half cup for each serving:

CANNED VEGETABLES—	Amount per person
Tomatoes—four times a week.....	35 pints
Peas—once a week	9 "
Beans—twice a week	18 "
Corn—once a week	9 "
Spinach or Chard—once a week	9 "
Okra	6 "
Asparagus	9 "
STORED VEGETABLES—	
Carrots—once a week	35—5" long
Beets—once a week	35—3" in diameter
Cabbage—twice a week for 17 weeks	8 medium
Onions	105
Squash	2 large
Cauliflower—for twelve weeks	6 medium
Celery—for twelve weeks	12 bunches
Parsnips	20
Beans (Dried)	1 pint
Potatoes	245 medium & large

The work of growing, canning and storing this amount of food for a family of five or more persons may seem to be large task, but it is not all done at once. It begins in the fall when the fertilizer is scattered and the ground ploughed that the frost may do its part; then in the winter, with the aid of "seed catalogues" we plan our crop and select the seeds we need to supplement those we grew last year. Next, the spring cultivation and the planting of the early garden. How eager the children, as well as the parents, are to get the first seeds into that spot where the sun dries and warms the soil so early, and how we keep watch every day to see "if they are up!" Incidentally we

keep poking among the flowers, too, looking for the crocus or snowdrop or "what comes next". All the while we are getting the rest of the garden planted, (nice even rows, eighteen inches apart so that the scuffer may help with the weeding), as weather and soil conditions permit.

This is probably the time when our garden can do its most effective work in promoting a real understanding between parents and children. It is Our garden—parents the senior partners and children the junior partners, each with his and her own responsibility and each with his and her own share of the work, all necessary to make a successful whole, not each a plot by himself or herself, but Our garden, where all work and all have an interest which must fit into the interest of the others.

The weeding, thinning and staking, etc., each comes in its turn, so does the gathering, the eating, the canning, and the storing, and before we realize that summer has gone we are taking our friends to the cellar to show them our food supplies instead of to the garden.

A garden which means all this and far more to a family of six adults and two children, besides gifts of garden products to neighbours and friends, is 135 feet long and 60 feet wide (north sloping because they have no choice in this). It provides an abundant supply of all the vegetable listed in the budget, as well as cucumbers, parsley, mint, sage, dill, broad Windsor beans, lima beans, brussels Sprouts, Cole-Rabi and rhubarb. There are also three apple trees, one pear tree and one elm tree in this garden. The flower garden adjoins this garden; no, it is not a perennial border, just a flower garden where annuals, perennials, shrubs and wild flowers grow and gladden the passer-by as well as the neighbours and family; yet, and it provokes many a family discussion and always someone has to yield to the majority.

There are many such gardens, with even a better record of production than this one to be found throughout Ontario, but, alas, there are in this same Ontario thousands of farm and village homes where there are children and no gardens.

A YOUNG WOMAN'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The word accomplishment means an acquirement or attainment that tends to perfect or equip in character, manner or person. Real advancement is measured by the number of facts and principles thoroughly mastered, and so made our own that we can at any time call them up and utilize them. Let our motto be "few and thorough" rather than many and superficial.

A prominent American educator has said that everyone should learn "something about everything and everything about something", which means that we should get an outline knowledge of as many subjects as possible but should completely master one department. As there are a number of so-called accomplishments such as art, song, music, literature, teaching, housekeeping, etc., we must confine ourselves to one or two. Doubtless, we will agree to the chief one for each of us here being mastery of the art of home-making. If we use accomplishments as aids in making others happy, their social value will be multiplied.

What shall the young woman do with her time? I am speaking now of the young woman at home. Says Beverly Warner, "A young girl ought to make herself as attractive as possible. She ought to enhance every charm the good God has given her, but she ought along with this to remember that the true charm of womanhood is not in being able to do many things, but in the development of character."

With a mistaken view of this subject, we have girls from finishing schools who paint badly, not being artists, and who perform on the piano poorly, not being musicians.

It is indisputable that an honest kindness in manner is a most valuable asset in life, extending the influence of the individual and his power for good. Too many of our girls mistake superficial formality for real polish. A courteous cultivated manner is greatly to be desired in all men and women, but let us look well to a commonsense view of it. Many of our ladies' colleges have roused to this fact, and more young women leave with an aim in life.

In this connection, it may well be said that the knowledge to be attained in Macdonald Institute is of such practical value, dealing as it does with the first principles of housekeeping, that the student may not only learn what other cultivated women do, but she is given opportunity to become proficient in some line of work, and if needs be self-supporting.

"That knowledge is of most worth to woman which emancipates her from dependence, either on her friends or fortune, and enables her, with calm courage, to face life, if need be, alone; which acquaints her with her own nature and the laws by which it is governed, and reveals to her the path to the highest perfection of all her powers."

It is a beautiful achievement to build a true home—an immortal achievement. The home life is the strong spiritual level by which men are lifted heavenward. Take this away or turn it to the mere uses of extravagance, show and folly, and that power is gone. All religion which is taught outside of home without the existence of a religious life in the household, is like the apples of the Dead Sea—beautiful to the sight, it may be, but ashes within. If this is true, then woman's greatest accomplishment is being a perfect home-maker. Notice, not merely house-keeper, but much more than that!

We can much better afford to be ignorant of things above, beneath and around us, or of the arts and languages than to be unacquainted with this body which we inhabit, which is indeed "fearfully and wonderfully made" and of this spiritual nature which is "opened to the infinite and destined to the eternal". Sciences that centre in or relate to the body and to physical health,—physiology, hygiene, chemistry in its relation to food and drink—are as essential to every woman as the knowledge of navigation to the sailor.

Certain persons as Judges, persons working in an election and other persons deemed by law as incompetent are not permitted to vote.

The right to vote in Ontario elections is known as Universal Franchise. To be a good subject, the Canadian must not only be obedient to laws, but must actively participate in the governing of his country by voting wisely and intelligently, and by knowing and appreciating the work and method of government; thus only can he fulfil his civic responsibilities. Laws affect each and every individual, but each and everyone has a share in choosing what laws shall be made; and which by wise and intelligent voting helps him to meet the responsibilities imposed upon a citizen of a democratic government.

Program for Instructing Girls in Household Science

We are pleased to be able to announce that the Institutes Branch will be prepared to provide instructors for a larger number of centres in each county and district during 1934. A program has been sent to the officers of all Women's Institutes who were asked to bring the same up for discussion at either the March or April meeting of the branch with a view to securing the co-operation of the members in inducing girls to take advantage of the instruction and to send the names and addresses of girls who would possibly take advantage of the opportunity to the Agricultural Representative for the district concerned.

The program includes Family Menus and Meats, judging of Costumes and Methods of renewing tears, worn places and holes by the darning method. Each girl will be required to do practical work in darning. Then in House Furnishing, Kitchen Plans with possibilities in labor saving conveniences and attractiveness will be considered. Each person who takes advantage of the coaching classes will be furnished with valuable literature on nutrition and will be presented with a meat chart with accompanying notes.

Girls who take advantage of the coaching classes will be furnished with material instructing them how to carry on various projects, including Clothing, Food, Home Beautification, and Gardening and Canning.

An interesting feature in the program is the county judging competition. We wish to remind the Institute officers, however, that the purpose of the whole undertaking is instruction which will be of lasting worth, and not preparation for judging competitions. While we appreciate the assistance which the Institutes have rendered in providing suitable prizes for judging competitions in each of the counties, we trust that no assessment will be made on the individual member to raise funds for this or any other purpose. The general regulations provided for membership in the Women's Institutes and the privilege to take advantage of the services available through the Department, without being assessed more than Twenty-five Cents per year. If it is found desirable to raise funds beyond the membership fee, this should be done without taking up collections to which each member will be expected to contribute, or making an assessment.