The Transformation of Our Back Yard

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Recommended Citation
Smith, Vera B. (1925) "The Transformation of Our Back Yard," The Iowa Homemaker. Vol. 5 : No. 1 , Article 12. Available at: http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol5/iss1/12

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The Transformation of Our Back Yard

By VERA B. SMITH

It was truly a case of the old saying "Needs must when the devil drives," for we did not know when we moved into our house and looked upon the miserable, forlorn patch of yellow clay which served as our back yard, that it could be evolved into a truly lovely garden spot. My father was the first one of us to see the possibilities of that ugly strip of ground. Gradually and methodically, over the years, he transformed the yard into a work of art. The yard was now ready for color and the sight for the kitchen nook father carefully planted his sages with utmost precaution as to the location. He then started one day while I was washing dishes when looking out of the kitchen window I saw father coming out of the barn with a rake and spade in his hands and the light of a conqueror in his eyes. He set to work with an easy, methodical way, carrying boards, iron, wire, cans and other loose odds and ends and piling them up on the rear of the lot. He burned all he could of the things he could not use and buried the rest. The usable things he stored in the barn, in the work shop and garage. With the debris cleared away he began the task of raking, leveling off the bumps and filling in the hollows. When the yard was cleaned, the next task was the planning. The space to be gardened measured about 65 by 60 feet. Father divided it into sections. The two thirds nearest the house he seeded to blue grass and clover. The third near the barn he packed down hard and covered with cinders. A good spring rain gave our grass a good start, and the cinders around the barn made an excellent driveway. To keep down expense father carried home the building materials which he used for fences and trellises. First he made a low lattice fence to separate the cinders from the grassy lawn, and at either end placed a hollow tile which served both as gate post and flower urn. He then painted the fence and urn a dull green. With the remainder of the laths he made trellises for the front of the house, for an outbuilding, and for the back porch. Truly the back porch was a master piece. It faced the street and so needed some elevation at the rear. To the back of the porch he laid red bricks for the distance of three feet. Five feet from this he built an L-shaped trellis which made a cozy corner and hide the porch from the public eye. The finishing touch to the permanent fixture for the yard was the building of two bird baths. These were made by cutting square holes in the yard and lining them with cement. The yard was now ready for color introduced by blossoming flowers.

There was a vacant lot next to our lot so father mowed the edge of this and planted a double row of red, pink and white cosmos for a border. Along the barn and along the alley he planted hollyhocks and along the cinder path castor beans formed the border. As summer advanced the trellises were covered with marigolds, verbenas, zinnias and narcissuses with utmost precaution as to the size and color of the flowers. This need to content, formed a lovely sight for the eye and was a source of cut flowers for the entire summer. The ugly patch of yellow clay that met our eyes when we first moved into the house had been transformed into a garden spot of no little beauty.

BETTER HOME PROJECT

(Continued from Page 5) the necessities of household furnishings, to the visitors who may come to see the possibilities of small houses simply and economically furnished, and to the students who may be planning homes either as class work or for themselves. It is a worthy problem, and one which will mean much for America's better American home.

Stuffed Baked Pork Chops

Can you give me a recipe for stuffed baked pork chops and cabbage relish?

Stuffed Baked Pork Chops

Have pork chops cut thick, wipe carefully, and slit side of each chop, making a pocket. Fill this opening with a dressing (your favorite kind if you prefer) made of 1 cup of soft crumbs, two or three sage leaves, a little onion, one-fourth teaspoon each of salt and pepper, one-fourth cup of melted butter or bacon fat, if you prefer. Bake until thoroughly browned, basting while cooking.

Cabbage Relish

Select a heavy cabbage, take off outside leaves and shred finely. Combine with a cream salad dressing—one-fourth tablespoon salt, one-half tablespoon mustard, two tablespoons sugar, 1 egg slightly beaten, 3 tablespoons butter, three-fourths cup cream, one-third cup vinegar. Cook over hot water until thick. If you wish to make this salad more attractive, sliced celery and pimento may be added. Peanuts give a good flavor.

CHILD LABOR

By W. A. B., in the International Book-binder.

Down in the depths of the factory’s gloom
They gather at early dawn,
Where the ceaseless whirl of spindle and
And the god of gold in the tained air,
An invisible Moloch stands,
As he watches the fabric woven there.

By the toil of childish hands.

Backward and forward, over and up,
Steadily still they go,
But they hold to the lips a bitter cup.
Whose dregs are the dregs of woe;
For the hopes of youth grow faint and die
Held fast in those iron hands,
And the cold, hard world has never a sigh
For the patient, childish hands.

Ah, ye, whose darlings, in flowery ways,