

To collect the money was an enormous task. Appeals for contributions were made to women all over the country. Fifty-eight thousand dollars was raised by Edward Everett, who, to earn that amount, delivered a lecture 122 times.

The Masons, to which fraternity Washington belonged, helped substantially. The first payment on the purchase, \$18,000 was made in April, 1858, and not long afterward the entire sum required was procured and paid over, the property being thereupon transferred to the ownership of the Mt. Vernon Association.

The association is an organization of women. Mt. Vernon as it stands today owes its existence to women. Men have nothing to do with its control or ownership, which is vested in a board of regents, each state of the Union being represented in this body by one vice-regent. In May every year the ladies who in this capacity represent the association spend a week at Mt. Vernon and take counsel in regard to its affairs. There is not room for all of them in the ancient mansion, and so some of them sleep in the old servants' quarters and others on cots installed above the spinning-room of long ago. The present regent is Miss Harriet C. Comegys, of Delaware.

Mt. Vernon today is self supporting. It has an income of about \$20,000 a year, derived mainly from admission fees paid by 70,000 annual visitors. Vegetables, fruit and hay raised on the estate contribute something. There is also a dairy and the milk is sold.

Few people took the trouble to visit Mt. Vernon when it was empty and undergoing a progressive decay. Nowadays it is different. The place looks almost exactly as it did when Washington lived there. If his ghost were to revisit the mansion it would find things but slightly altered. The house is in all important respects as he left it. Most of the old furniture remains, having been returned by various heirs and other persons who came into possession of it. Even the crockery and the silverware are the very pieces that Martha Washington knew so well and used so often.

Various states of the Union have taken pride in furnishing one or another of the rooms. Thus, for instance, the bedroom formerly occupied by Nellie Curtis is now known as the "Maryland room," because it owes its "ameublement" chiefly to patriotic Maryland women who have contributed authentic Mount Vernon relics for its adornment. The "New Jersey room" is the chamber in which the Marquis de Lafayette is understood to have slept when he was General Washington's guest. Perhaps the only thing with which the former master would find fault is the arrangement of the lower floor of the mansion, which has been transformed into a sort of museum of Washington memorabilia.

What deserves most emphasis, however, is the admirable preservation