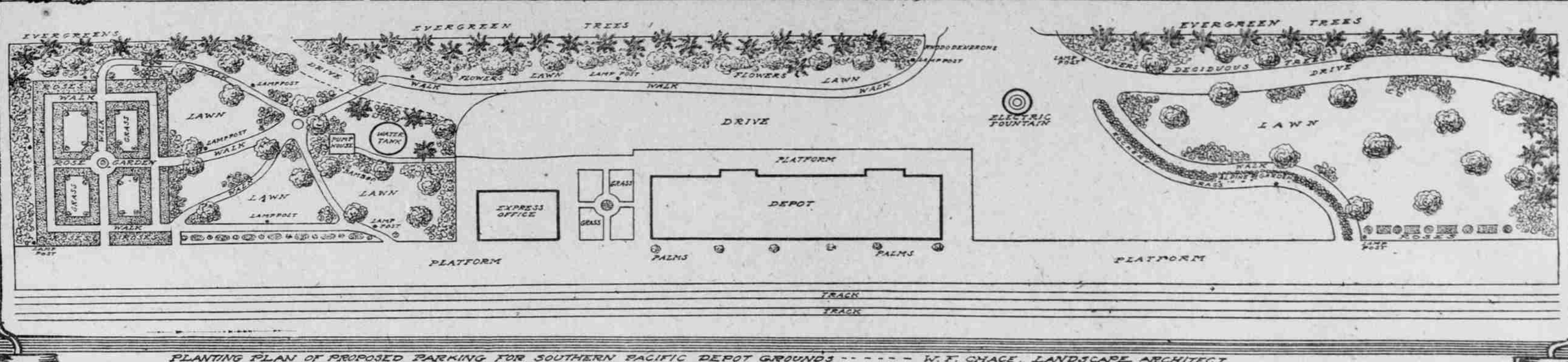
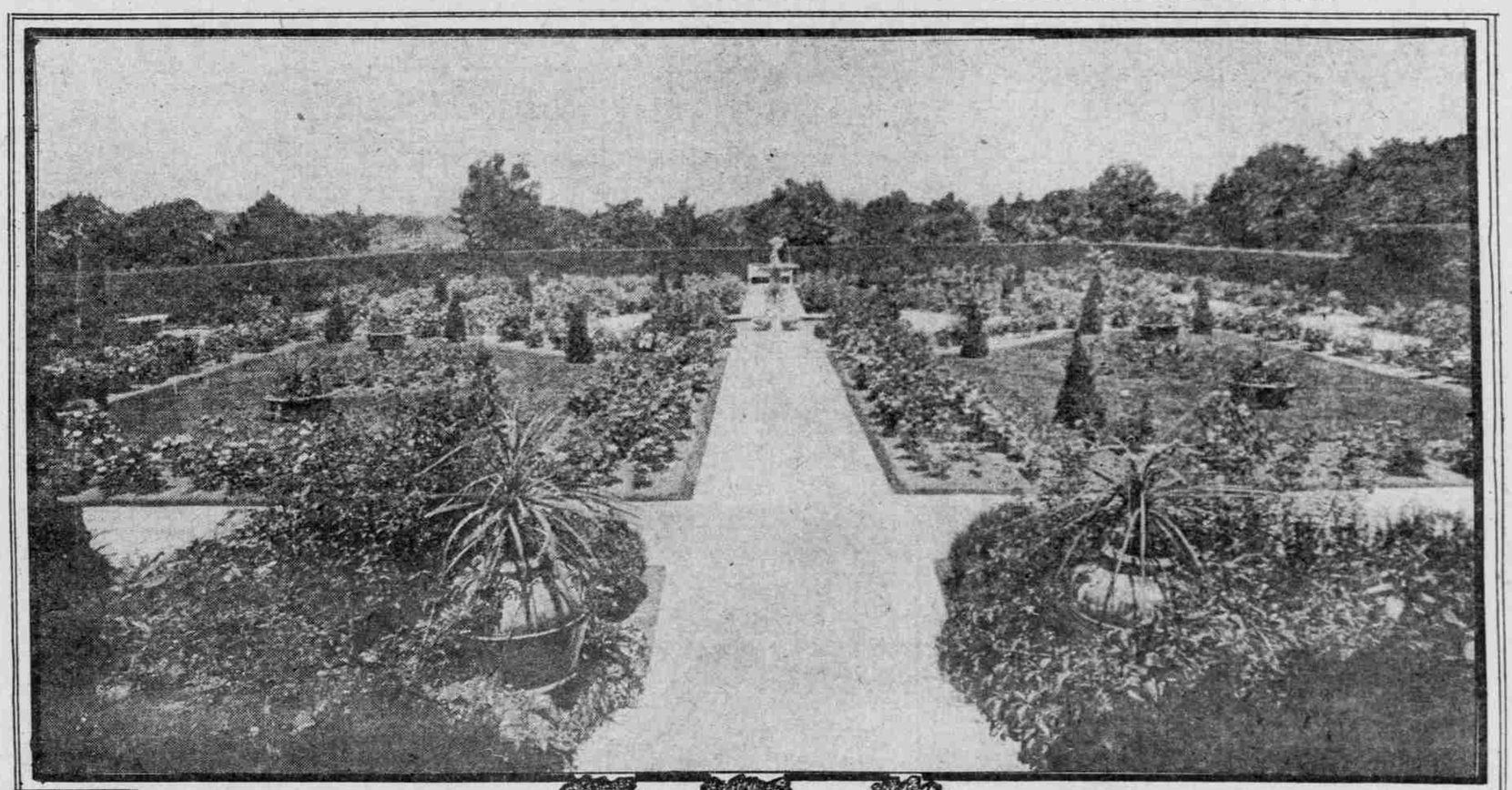
MAKING AN ATTRACTIVE PARK AT A RAILWAY STATION

EUGENE HAS PIONEERED A CITY BEAUTIFUL MOVEMENT WHOSE COST IS BORNE BY THE MUNICIPALITY, THE COMMERCIAL CLUB AND THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC.



PLANTING PLAN OF PROPOSED PARKING FOR SOUTHERN PACIFIC DEPOT GROUNDS - - - - - W. F. CHACE, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT



ONE END OF THE PARK AS IT WILL LOOK WHEN FINISHED

FOR a municipality and a railroad corporation to work hand in hand for civic improvement and beautification is something novel in this country, but this has been accomplished in the city of Eugene. For months the Eugene Commercial Club, through its Promotion Department, has been working out the details of a plan, to which the Southern Pacific Company, the city and the club are the parties, each bearing its share.

It is an undisputed, yet little recognized, fact that the very best advertising a community can do is to beautify its appearance. Civic beauty is not only a source of pleasure and pride to the citizens of such a community, but every visitor forthwith becomes a walking delegate to sing such a city's praises wherever he goes. In addition to that, it is the very best paying investment that any city can make, for it makes visitors linger longer within its confines or come oftener, and it goes without saying that it is the stranger within one's gates who is the most apt to spend money.

Recognizing these maxims, the Promotion Board gave its manager their hearty support in carrying out his hobby for a beautiful entrance into the University city. It was described, written about and discussed long before Eugene's first year of publicity expired, so that when the soliciting committees went out on their errand to get signatures for 1909, they met with hearty response, for the citizens knew that the money subscribed would be used not only for advertising, but for the improvement of their town, the principal feature of which improvement was to be a splendid park right at the entrance to the city.

Eugene happens to be very fortunately situated for this kind of improvement, probably more so than any other town along the Southern Pacific lines in the Willamette Valley, for after the freight warehouses were moved north of the railroad track, after the completion of Eugene's new passenger station, it left a vacant space over a thousand feet long by 150 feet wide. The club first sought the co-operation of the railroad company, whose general manager, J. P. O'Brien, readily recognized that the plan suggested would be a good one. A Portland landscape architect, W. F. Chace, was then engaged to design a park, with the depot as the central feature. The Promotion Board thereupon authorized the expenditure of some $1200 of its funds towards the creating of a park, one that would be a credit to the railroad company, a fit framing for the new station and a source of pride to the citizens of Eugene. The landscape expert has selected every tree and shrub that will thrive in the valley, besides ordering some special species of flowers from the East. The club has ordered some California specialties from that state, more as an experiment to see if they can be made to grow. When every tree is labeled, the park will furnish quite a lesson in botany, in addition to its other merits.

Willamette street, Eugene's main artery, now ends 150 feet south of the station; its curb will be extended in a broad, circular line so as to make wide driveways up to the station and to the platforms. The station divides the park in two almost equal parts, and each of these two will have some special feature as a "piece de milieu," the western half having an Alpine garden and the eastern half an Italian rose garden as its special attraction.

After the plans had been completed and accepted by the railroad officials, the Common Council was appealed to by the club to do its share toward accomplishing the so-much-desired results. The board of governors appeared before the Council with plans and specifications and after due discussion the Council unanimously and enthusiastically entered into the spirit, and thus was the triangle completed, each side doing its share. The club in devising the scheme and paying for its accomplishment, the railroad company by allowing the use of its grounds, delivering the loam for top dressing and agreeing to maintain the grounds after they were completed, and the Common Council by agreeing to build the curbs along the driveways, to purchase ornamental lamp-posts, 18 in number, and furnish water for irrigation, and lights gratis.

Dr. George Wharton James, of Pasadena, the author and orator, deeply interested in civic improvement, happened to be in Eugene the day that the Council met to decide upon the club's request for aid, and after listening to the proceedings addressed the Council, complimenting them upon their sagacity in putting their shoulder to the wheel. He prophesied that Eugene's civic beautification would lead other towns along the railroad to follow suit in some measure, thereby making the entire line of travel more attractive to the traveler, advertising Oregon as a progressive state, for few Eastern States have paid much attention to improvements of the kind. As Dr. James put it: Most entrances by rail into American cities are through the very worst parts of such cities, and in many cases the evil is absolutely beyond remedy. The first impression thereby made upon the visitor or newcomer is one which is hard to eradicate, while with comparatively little outlay this first impression might just as easily be a wholesome, attractive, pleasing one.

And thus, after many months of work, Eugene holds up to Oregon and to the country at large the spectacle of a municipality and a corporation being brought together by an association of citizens to join hands for mutual benefit.

The M. J. Walsh Co., which secured the contract for making the lamp-posts, is also working on designs for an electric fountain. This improvement, while suggested by the promotion department of the club, will be turned over to the Ladies' Auxiliary of the club to take hold of. For the women of Eugene are full of the new spirit of progress which prevails in Eugene, and if this important feature of the decorative scheme is turned over to them they will have the satisfaction of having raised the money for and erected the finest and most attractive part of the entire undertaking. Where Willamette street is broadened into a street over 150 feet wide, it is planned to erect this fountain in the center and have it lighted every evening, so as to enhance still more the beauty of the surroundings.

In laying out the plans for the park itself, the background will consist of evergreen trees, such as cedar, cypress, fir, pine, etc., thus shutting off for good the present aspect of stables and barns with their natural unattractive features. In front of these evergreens will be put out some fancy deciduous trees, such as silver birch and the like, trees which are ornamental even when devoid of foliage. Along the tracks or platform will be flower beds, while between these and the driveways will be lawn, dotted here and there by shrubs, flowers and trees, making shady nooks and cozy walks. A person then arriving at Eugene will land in a five-acre park, with the pretty depot standing out by itself, and it will be quite a novelty for the average traveler to land in a bower of beauty instead of in the usual mass of debris, fences, tin cans and other such things which abound in the back alleys around so many stations.

The deal between the club and Mr. O'Brien was closed up a week ago; 1222 yards of soil is being delivered now, and stakes have been driven by the architect defining the highways and byways. While it will naturally take some years for the park to come into its full beauty, the club has not stinted on the purchase of trees or shrubs, but bought the largest specimens that it was safe to transplant. When the Eastern man wants to see orange trees, lemon trees, peppers or palms, he won't have to hanker after California, for he can see these and many more trees of that kind right here in Oregon. The Alpine garden will border the western walk, being built up out of Eugene stone and boulders, with ferns, palms and plants such as do well in rockeries, while the Italian garden in the eastern part of the park will be devoted entirely to roses, laid out in formal design and beautified with flower vases and other distinctive adornments. Lighted up evenings, when the through trains pull into Eugene, the improvement will be one of the greatest advertising features which any city has set out to accomplish.

VICTOR HERBERT TURNS FROM LIGHT OPERAS TO PRODUCING THE "GRAND"

Fritzi Scheff Will Appear as Prima Donna in His Premier Venture Into New Fields—Grace George and Her Newest "Hit."

NEW YORK, March 1.—(Special Correspondence.)—Victor Herbert is the topic of much speculation nowadays. He has been so long identified with light opera successes that one is hardly prepared to think of him as responsible for grand opera. Yet it is that which has taken up the larger part of his time this Winter.

"No," said Mr. Herbert, "I will not divulge any of it, no matter how winning may be the newspaper man or woman who tries to wheedle it from me. Grand opera is in a class by itself, and we shall see the end before I want any of the story to be given to the public."

So much did I discover. Joseph Redding, the popular San Francisco man, is responsible for the book, and it deals with a story of Southern California or Mexico. As a matter of fact, Mr. Herbert has been drifting away from the spirit of light opera for some time, and his last work, "Algeria," has so little in common with what is accepted as light music that it did not make the success of some of the other works.

Fritzi Scheff as "The Prima Donna," has moved to Boston, where it is believed that she will have the success that is coming to her charming self and to the Herbert & Blossom musical comedy. The principal song successes of the play are: "Here's to My Comrades and Me," "Dream Love," "Something Always Happens When It Shouldn't," "I'll Be Married to the Music of the Military Band," "Everybody Else's Girl Looks Better to Me Than Mine." If the plans of Charles B. Dillingham do not miscarry, the entire company will go to Boston for an extended engagement. Fritzi Scheff, her new husband and all.

While a Californian will figure as responsible for the Herbert book, another will be presented to New York as the author of a drama for which great things are prophesied. This is Maurice V. Samuels, formerly of San Francisco. His play "The Conflict" will be put on with a fine cast early in April. Rehearsals are now in progress and the cast includes: Robert Drouet, Sheldon Lewis, Frank H. Gardner, Harry Leighton, Edward W. Lyons, Miss Florence Lester, Helen Robertson and Helen Beresford who will create the role of Mme. Dorian. Mr. Samuels has written several plays, some of which are said to be quite as good as the one which will be produced. He is the author of "The Florentines," a drama in book form, and of "Joan D'Arc," a stirring romantic drama based upon the story of the French heroine. An excellent story is told of his writing of the present play, and one for the truth of which the writer can vouch.

A couple of years ago, Mr. Samuels went abroad and while wandering through the French galleries and museums became deeply interested in the literature of France. Upon his return he mentioned casually to a friend that while he was in Paris he availed himself of the opportunity to transfer some of the atmosphere into a play which he began while there. His friend replied: "That is all very well, but I have an idea, and one which I wish you would get at immediately. While you were away I have found something which for your qualifications and trend of mind ought to be of infinite value, because I can imagine the subject under your treatment." Mr. Samuels was very decided that he would not lay aside the present work for anything else, no matter what it might be. The consternation of both may be imagined when it was disclosed that both referred to Balzac's "Peau de Chagrin," which the playwright produced upon the instant. "The Conflict" will be produced by Paul H. Leibler.

Grace George opened her season on Monday afternoon at the Hackett in a special Washington's birthday matinee. Her play is called "A Woman's Way," and it is bright, diverting and pretty. It appears that Mr. Thompson Buchanan has his ideas on the subject and they are agreeably expressed in the comedy, which will occupy Miss George until she is ready to put on the play that was left for her by Margaret Mayo, which she finished while she was yet packing trunks for her Oriental trip. The plot deals with the way of Mrs. Howard Stanton, a young wife whose husband and a dashing friend, his friend, by the way, and a young widow at that, have had an automobile accident which promises complications dangerously near a scandal and a divorce.

Mr. Stanton thinks he likes the "other woman" better, but he is not sure, and his wife, most accommodatingly, gives him the opportunity to find out. She says, however, that if the other woman wants her husband she will have to earn him and she begins by inviting Mrs. Blakemore to a dinner party to meet the various members of her family, including her young married brother, her brother-in-law and the several women folks of the family. Mr. Stanton discovers that nearly all of his own family have had flirtations with the widow and it does not take him long to discover the superiority of his own wife.

There are many amusing incidents while the story is working itself out, one of the most sparkling devolving upon the arrival of the newspaper reporter who comes to find out how sensational a story can be worked up. Mrs. Stanton meets him on his ground and startles him out of the notion of a scandal when she calls Mrs. Blakemore from the adjoining room and treats her with all possible affection. Another painfully amusing situation is brought about when the mothers of both the husband and wife are left alone to entertain each other. This they do, of course, by blaming the other one's child for all possible misunderstandings and more troubles are added, when Mr. Stanton finds himself at the mercy of both while trying to be as polite as the calling of host requires. Miss George is delightfully arch and coquettish and makes a winning figure of the heroine. Frank Worthing as Mr. Stanton is an excellent companion and one who has a following of his own.

It isn't any easy thing to get an interview with Charles Frohman, principally because he is never in one place long enough. However, when you succeed in doing the seemingly impossible and tell him that the people in America who have for years loved the man Barrie through his work, and do not understand his seclusion from our hospitable shores you discover, perhaps not entirely to your surprise, that simply saying J. M. Barrie is like striking a match to the memory of the man who, of all persons in America, knows the playwright best.

But it is easy to see that Charles Frohman shrinks from confiding in a stranger. "You see, Barrie just happens to be a playwright," he explains. "He is really a man of letters, and the little group of authors with whom, rather than the playwrights, he chums, have a very distinct idea of the real use of printer's ink; they like to see the creations of their fancies, not themselves, in type.

"Most people are surprised at the statement, but it is a fact that Barrie has visited America. He was over here just 13 years ago, while his novel, 'The Little Minister,' was still the craze of the English-speaking world of books. He said he came over just to shake hands with a few friends. It was a short visit. He spent a few days in New York, a few in Chicago and Milwaukee, and then hurried back to England. That was the first time I ever met Barrie. I had had correspondence with him about dramatizing his story of 'The Little Minister.' I had sent him a check as his advance payment, but the prospect of his doing the work grew slimmer and slimmer. Then when he got to New York he came into my office to return me the check. He could see no way of turning the novel into a play. However, I persuaded him to keep the check and asked him if he would not go to some play that night. Finally he went to see 'Rosemary,' which was being played by John Drew at the Empire Theater. I saw no more of Barrie until just before he was sailing. Again he walked into my office, but very hopefully this time.

"'I shall turn the little story into a play for you,' he began without any preamble, 'if you give me the little actress to play the part whom I saw last night.'

"That actress was Maude Adams.

"I suppose the intimacy of understanding between these two artists in different and yet the same walks of life, is quite without parallel in the history of the modern theater. They understand each other in a surer and finer way than anything that could be conveyed by the most illuminating of words. You get just a little of this, for example, in Barrie's saying of Maude Adams' 'Peter Pan': 'When Peter took flight from my fancy he found a haven in the spirit of Maude Adams.'

"Next to the children who play the parts in the Christmas performances of 'Peter Pan,' I suppose Barrie is most fond of Mrs. Barrie, and then that they are both fondest of the wonderful family dog at their cottage in Leicester Road. The creature is a shaggy Newfoundland dog, with really remarkable intelligence. He is the original of Nana, the dog in 'Peter Pan' and Barrie has forever immortalized him in that wonderfully ingenious description of the way Nana should deport herself, which Barrie put into the manuscript of 'Peter Pan.' One time Barrie brought his dog to the rehearsal of 'Peter Pan,' when the dog in the play 'was getting up in his part.' After apologizing to the actor who played the part for the way in which the really hard work in it used him up, Barrie said, looking affectionately at his own dog, 'You see how easily she takes it all, but she's just a dog.' Barrie is very fond of repeating the remark one old lady made to another as they came slowly out if the theater after seeing the performance of 'Peter Pan,' when one said to the other: "'Well, it's wonderful how they can train a dog to do this.'

"And so he will ramble along in conversation when the mood strikes Barrie to talk. Perhaps he has wasted any number of wonderful stories that would have become famous in print or told in drama, but I am sure they never would have given him nearly as much pleasure as he gets from telling them to the 'Peter Pan' children, the little children that play in the fantasy, with whom he chums between the matinee and the night—which is always a great event at the Duke of York's Theater in the large room off the stage where tea and cakes are served and everybody gathers around the floor, with Barrie sitting in the middle telling stories.

"The first meeting of Barrie and Maude Adams occurred in London and was a great surprise even to me. Miss Adams had just arrived, following her success in 'The Little Minister.' I was going to superintend the meeting myself and I set out for Barrie's home with that idea in mind; but when I got there I found the little playwright and the little actress already very fast friends. Without a word to me Barrie had himself called on Miss Adams. It seemed that when they first met but one word passed between them—'Well!'"

"It is a saying with Barrie that Miss Adams understands his characters better than he understands them himself. When Barrie first told me the story of 'Peter Pan' he always spoke of the character as 'Peter Adams.'

"During the writing of 'What Every Woman Knows,' when I wrote Barrie asking him how he got on, his answer was, I think, the finest and the fullest ever sent by playwright to manager. It was the simple remark that 'Maude Adams dances all over my pages.' Barrie's great desire is to have Miss Adams appear in one of his plays in London—a wish I am going to grant him some day—and that day—or night—will mark the birth of the next play in the great cycle of Barrie dramas."

EMILIE FRANCES BAUER.

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