



Spinster City? Never, for Here's the Story That Proves She's Primpling Like a June Bride

BY DE WITT HARRY.

PAINT enough to constitute a lake, flowers enough to run a riot of colors over a township, shrubbery enough to embellish a wide-spreading farm, grass sufficient to carpet many miles of countryside—all manner of trimmings and embellishments have this season been lavishly distributed over the face of the Rose City in the biggest crusade of "primpling" the city has ever experienced.

The wonder of the matter is that it is spontaneous and by many unnoticed, yet even the most casual investigation will serve to show this embellishment in progress throughout the city to an extent unparalleled in Portland's history. There are neighborhoods where practically every house has been or is being given a new dress of paint. Accompanying embellishments are being made at the same time.

Property owners everywhere have stepped into the swing of the improvement wave without being urged. It is just a reaction from the past few years, and, without realizing it, a city beautiful campaign has been initiated that is surprising in its magnitude. So much so no one seems able to gauge the possibilities or ultimate development of the movement.

War, scarcity of labor, high prices, and other too important considerations caused Rose City residents to temporarily neglect their civic duties as to caring for their own property in the face of the tremendous national crisis that we have just passed through. Now comes the reaction.

Miss Portland is waking up and looking around herself, astonished that she should have relaxed into such slothful ways after being so well trained by nature in making her abode one of beauty.

Painting is the vogue. That three houses out of every four in the city had been neglected as far as painting was concerned during the past three years was the estimate given yesterday by a city contractor. The property owner knows that he cannot allow this to continue. With every item that enters into the construction of a house increased in value from 50 to 300 per cent people are beginning to appreciate as never before the economy of keeping the surface painted, for to save the surface is to save the whole structure. There is more incentive than ever to apply a coat of paint.

Investigation of the paint situation shows that the market is a rising one with little indication of any decline to cheer the property owner contemplating improvement. The war developed an enormous demand for flaxseed and oils, and now, with the tremendous work going on for rehabilitation in Europe, further large demands are certain. Linseed oil has reached an unprecedented price.

Other conditions unfavorable to the low market prevail, and paint ingre-

dients in every case are soaring, making high prices certain for a long time to come.

"The northwest is just initiating a clean and paint-up campaign of a magnitude that we have never before experienced," said C. B. Woodruff, manager for W. P. Fuller & Co. "In this work, as in many times the case, Portland is taking the leading part, with the result that this year we are doing a retail paint business here that was only equaled by the prosperous years of 1910 and 1911. People are prosperous and they are making up for their enforced neglect by an unparalleled use of paint. All stocks and materials in our line of business are very much higher than ever before in our history, but that does not apparently deter anyone in the necessary good work. They are becoming used to high prices, and with all indications for a higher paint and supply market they are stepping up now, doing their trading, and getting their work done before there is another raise."

"Painting everybody's doing it," exclaimed E. D. Timms-Cress. "There has been little outlet for our business during the past three years, and with all available help in the trade engaged that are to be had in the city we figure that it would take at least 18 months' steady work to catch up once more. Three out of every four houses in the city need painting, and they are getting attention as rapidly as the owners can get to it. Painters are scarce and all seem to be working. Business is 25 per cent better than the normal."

High Prices Ignored. S. C. Rasmussen, of Rasmussen & Co., stated that "with commercial work stopped for practically three years and slowed up for longer than that it is no wonder that we have a flood of business, now that conditions permit the much-needed work to be carried on once more. Neglect does not pay and owners realize this, and for self-protection they must keep their property in the proper repair, as deterioration is serious and rapid and upkeep expenses increased tremendously if there is any neglect."

But it is not only the paint that enters into the campaign here, though it must be admitted that paint is the big and most needed factor. Flowers, shrubbery, lawns and the inside of the home are all receiving their share of necessary attention. The impression must never get about that Portlanders are satisfied with a beautiful exterior for their homes to the neglect of the interior. It is doubtful if any other place in the world has such charming homes as here. With all the manifold attractions of weather and environment that home life has to offer Portland is essentially a city of homes, and with every owner taking the proper amount of pride in his little place the competi-

tion is usually exceedingly keen as to keeping up appearances.

With this made as easy as here it is generally found one of the greatest pleasures to aid and abet Mother Nature in making the home surroundings as beautiful as possible. Florists and landscape gardeners are having one of the busiest seasons of their career, and trade is increasing day by day. The work, dormant for so long, must be handled no matter what the cost, and so, people reconciled to high figures for labor, materials and the like are giving the contractors when they are lucky enough to be able to get a contractor or, in many cases, getting on the job for themselves and getting results. Whatever we may say the experience of the past several years has not injured the American in further developing his spirit of self-reliance, for he has learned by now that he can only rely on himself for most things, so he goes out and does his own painting and gardening.

Owners Do the Work.

Along this line there is a further incentive, that of costs. They are practically prohibitive for the small employed home owner. Then he has learned of late that his spare time labor has a value that he never dreamed of before. His garden in the back yard realized him table foods worth hundreds of dollars—all assets. Just so his work about the home. He cannot get the labor now so he turns to it for himself, and he is not unaided for the whole family team get on the job.

Father comes home in the evening after staffing the painting job the day before and finds Florence on the ladder busily plying the brush and with half the end of the house finished. He did not know that she could paint a house, and neither did she, but it had to be done, and without telling all her secrets she had been watching a painter at work nearby and picked up some of the tricks of the trade. The rest was easy, there was the paint ready mixed, the brushes, the ladder in place where it was left, what simpler than to slip on a pair of father's overalls and have a try at it? So she found that she could do it, and then that the work was fascinating for it gave such a feeling of partnership and help, and the house began to look so much better under your hand.

So the family forms a close company and, with all in the work, it is a real game and each one becomes a specialist in some branch. They do not ride their hobbies to death and there is always some interesting little thing to do and it all adds to the general ensemble. The house and grounds begin to take on that appearance only given by loving care, and from being an ordinary dwelling in ordinary setting it begins to take on an individuality of its own, and to some extent reflect the characters of those living within. Take the

home of A. Ruppe illustrated with this article. Shrubby, flowers, paint and the labor of the family themselves created this metamorphosis in the short space of three years. Anyone could be excused for being proud of an accomplishment of this kind, and it serves as an apt illustration of the possibilities of home beautifying. Mrs. W. R. Funk's home, also shown, is the result of only about 18 months' work.

Charmers Are Enhanced.

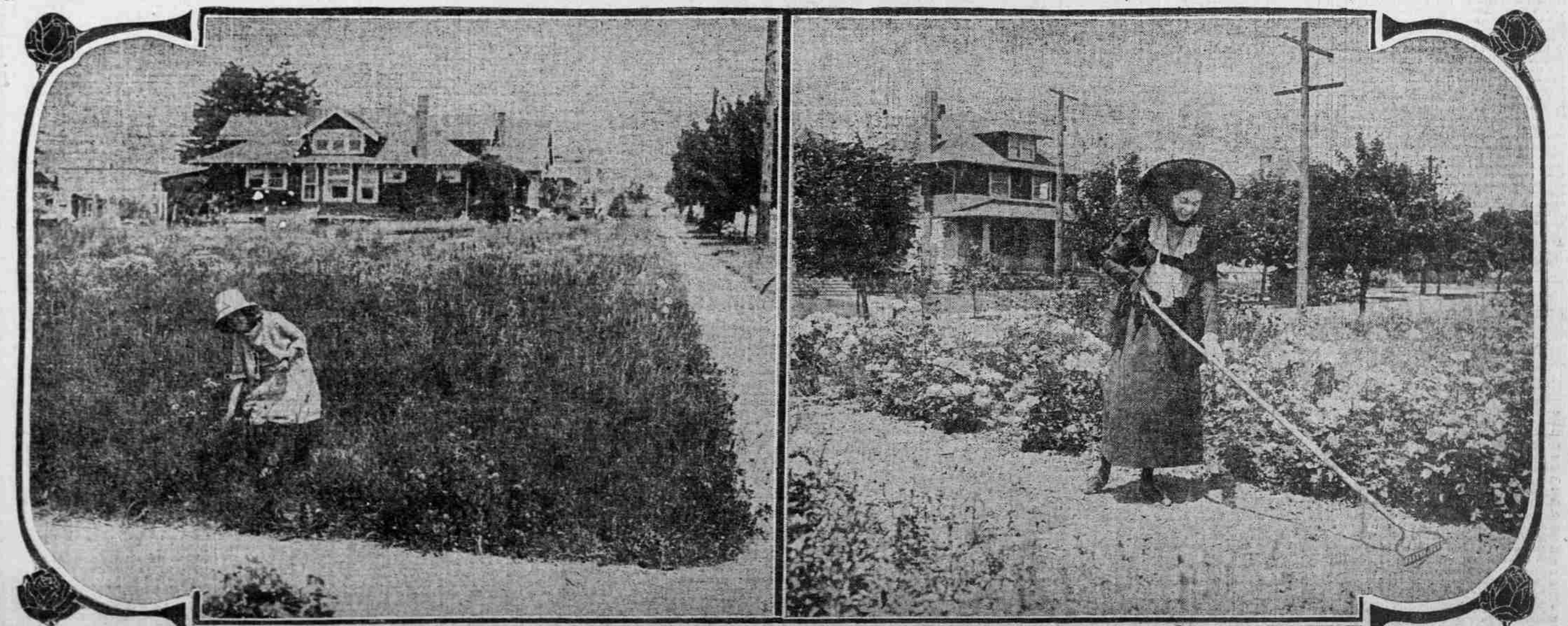
The idea is not copyrighted and almost every home owner in the city seems imbued with it. America is entering on a campaign to capitalize her scenery and tourist traffic is soon expected to open up as never before. Portland may experience the first of this new tide this year and she intends to put her best foot forward. With the natural beauties enhanced by the civic spirit of the residents an irresistible combination will be formed that will make the charms of the city difficult to resist. With beauty as an asset, Portland has unlimited capital.

Neighborhood clubs have taken up the beautifying of the vacant lots in their districts, both as a measure for making their localities more attractive and to remove the fire menace from high, dry grass and weeds. Unlimited possibilities are opened up in this manner. Many people living near vacant properties have made arrangements with the owners to utilize the grounds for flowers and shrubbery, but more often vegetables. These vacant-lot farms are a great asset to families who develop them both as means of keeping healthy by the outdoor work as by the money saved by the welcome fresh vegetables.

Owing to the scarcity of labor, the city park commission has not been able to much more than keep up with their necessary work for several years, but many improvements and betterments are under consideration or being started at this time. A co-operative meeting of three civic bodies called last week by Mayor Baker initiated a movement for the utilization to the utmost of all available city property. The first good fruits of this meeting and the spirit engendered was in the determination to develop the seven acres in front of the Franklin high school.

The school board, working with the park commission, giving the park commission permission to use the grounds and improvements about the school for the public, including even the baths in the building, in consideration of the park body improving the grounds and caring for them. Doubtless other improvements will be evolved.

The city government, it is felt, can hardly afford to lag behind the citizen in the crusade for the beautification of Portland. The crusade is on, full swing, and Portland is fast emerging as a better kept and more beautiful city.



FROM AT THE LEFT IS A TYPICAL VACANT LOT, SERVING VERY WELL AS A PLACE TO PICK DAISIES AND GROW WEEDS, WHILE AT THE RIGHT IS A NEARBY LOT CONVERTED INTO A THING OF COLOR AND BEAUTY AND INCOME THROUGH A FEW HOURS' ATTENTION OF THE CIVIC-SPRITED OWNER.