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ORCHARD AND GARDEN.

THE TENANT'S GARDEN.

It is Quite Possible For Him to Have a Good Garden Even Tho He Has the Place But For a Year.

WHAT kind of a garden can a tenant make?" This question was recently asked at a farmers' institute, and while there were a number of answers, yet it seemed that the majority of renters present had a wrong idea of what could be done in the line of gardening. One tenant came forth with the point that the majority of landlords did not care to let the tenant have a plot for a garden, and if he did, generally it was so small that it did not pay to bother with it. There were a few tenants present who did not endorse what he said, but the larger per cent of them did.

While it may be that it is not quite correct to judge the renters all over the South by the ones that were present at this meeting, yet I rather think one could do so, and not go very far wrong. They were mostly honest, sober, hard-working individuals, and of all ages, from the young man just out of his teens, to the man past middle age. In short, they were the typical renters of our Southland, men who perhaps did about all the muscular work that they should, but neglected their brain work just a bit. So, judging that the sentiments expressed regarding the garden are about the same as held by the average tenant, I shall here try to "talk the matter over" in a cool, conservative way.

If you think the plot of ground the landlord has assigned you is too small for your needs, try to rent a larger piece of ground and pay him money rent in advance for the same, and unless he is an exception to the average landlord, you can make a deal with him. But it is not always the case that the landlord is unreasonable in this matter, for I have known some to be so kind to their tenants as to allow them to select what ground they wanted for a garden and not charge them any rent, and the renters abused the privilege by selecting about twice or three times as much land as they needed, just because there was going to be no rent to pay. The abuse of this free garden privilege has caused many landlords to be stingy in their allowance or eliminate it altogether.

Another objection comes in the shape of early preparation being prohibited by the tenant moving so often and not getting on his place in time to start a garden until after the first of the year. Well, admit that the earlier the ground is broken in the fall the better, but because you cannot start your garden until the first of January is not a sufficient excuse for not making one. One of the best gardens I ever made was not broken until the first of March. It would have been better had it been broken earlier, but I did not let the fact that I could not get it broken earlier prevent me from planting. And I tried to make up in the matter of cultivation what I lacked in early breaking.

Another excuse offered by many renting farmers is, that they are over-cropped and do not have time to handle a garden. Well, again it must be admitted that a great many tenants are asked to take more land than they can properly handle, but still this should not crowd out the garden, for if no other way, the good woman, the renter's wife, can see to the garden hoeing, and it will not take long for the man to do the plowing. It is best to plow the garden the first plowing that is done after the rain, so as to be sure about it. Last year I saw a tenant farmer who was over-cropped, and yet he had a pretty fair garden and the rows were so arranged that every time he went

to and from the cotton field he could, by a little turning, plow a row thru the garden, thus cultivating it often without consuming but very little time.

One can have a pretty good garden on a much smaller amount of space than is often used. Recently I visited an old man and his wife, who were enjoying a nice lot of vegetables off of a space measuring just 30 by 100 feet. While this is smaller than the farmer's garden should be, it goes to show what can be done when one is limited. Since the garden should be well fertilized, and the highest type of intensive cultivation used, it is a waste of time and money to have more ground than is needed or intelligently used.

While the tenant farmer is not expected to grow anything in his garden to market, yet it can often be done. There is always a demand for such things as early cucumbers, radishes and lettuce, as well as late tomatoes just before frost. These the average farmer can have, be he either landlord or tenant. The early things mentioned can be grown in hotbeds, occupying but a small space, while the latter can be grown on ground occupied by the beans, peas and like garden crops.

But back to the question, what kind of a garden can the tenant farmer make? He can make a garden such as will cut short his monthly grocery bill at the store, and provide his table with the kind of vegetables that the climate and season affords. This can best be done by planting such vegetables as the family are particularly fond of, and those that thrive in that particular latitude. For early table use one can grow mustard, lettuce and radishes in small beds where they can be forced. A little later one can have onions, cucumbers and turnips. These need not occupy much space, just a few drills. Beets, peas, beans and cabbage can soon follow, as well as potatoes and tomatoes. Between the onion rows one can plant some later crop, and have it well along when the onions are ready to harvest. When the potatoes are dug the ground can be planted in beans, or some other crop, thus keeping up a constant rotation and rapid succession in the garden.

Where one desires to grow sweet potatoes, sweet corn and such crops that necessarily call for a little more ground than we find in a small garden, and that really demands a truck patch, it is always best to pay money rent on the amount of ground desired to use. This makes it better for all parties concerned. Sometimes there is an old corner cut off by a gully or a hill that is fairly good land and would make a good truck patch. The landlord doesn't usually value such corners very highly, and you can get it very reasonably. By utilizing it this way you accommodate him and yourself at the same time.

A. M. LATHAM.

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