

PLAN OF THE LELAND STANFORD JR., UNIVERSITY

Senator Stanford, of California, when he determined to commemorate the short life of his only son by erecting a university in his memory, had the practical good sense to call to his assistance an artist trained by long years of experience in dealing with large questions of rural and urban improvement. The answer to the problem which was given to Mr. Frederick Law Olmsted to solve is found in the plan, a part of which is printed upon page 508 of this issue of GARDEN AND FOREST. The problem was an interesting and remarkable one. No one before, it is safe to say, has deliberately set about building a great university, with a university town and all the appliances thought necessary for a modern education, in a situation remote from any great centre of population. Mr. Olmsted, therefore, has had to deal with questions which are quite unlike those found in his own experience, and for which there are no precedents in the work of other landscape gardeners.

The ground which he has studied with reference to this plan embraces about 7,000 acres, the map here presented covering an area of about one mile in length by half a mile in width. It is situated in the San José valley, about thirty miles from San Francisco, overlooking the head of the Bay of San Francisco, and not far from Menlo Park, the suburban or country-home of several prominent Californians. It occupies the rolling slopes of the low hills of one of the interior Coast Ranges. The heights extending above and towards the left of the portion shown in the plan are covered with the remnants of what was once a fine forest of Firs and Pines and Redwoods, and over the lower ground are scattered widely the noble Oaks which give to the scenery of the California valleys the peculiar park-like aspect which distinguishes them from those of the rest of the United States.

Mr. Olmsted's plan embraces, in addition to the immediate surroundings of the University, the site for an arboretum, in which it is proposed to gather the arboreal vegetation of California and of other regions of the world with climates similar to that of California, and an artificially planted forest of several hundred acres, which will serve as a model to planters on the Pacific coast. It is needless, of course, at this time to call attention to the importance of this particular part of Mr. Olmsted's comprehensive scheme, or to urge the necessity for establishing

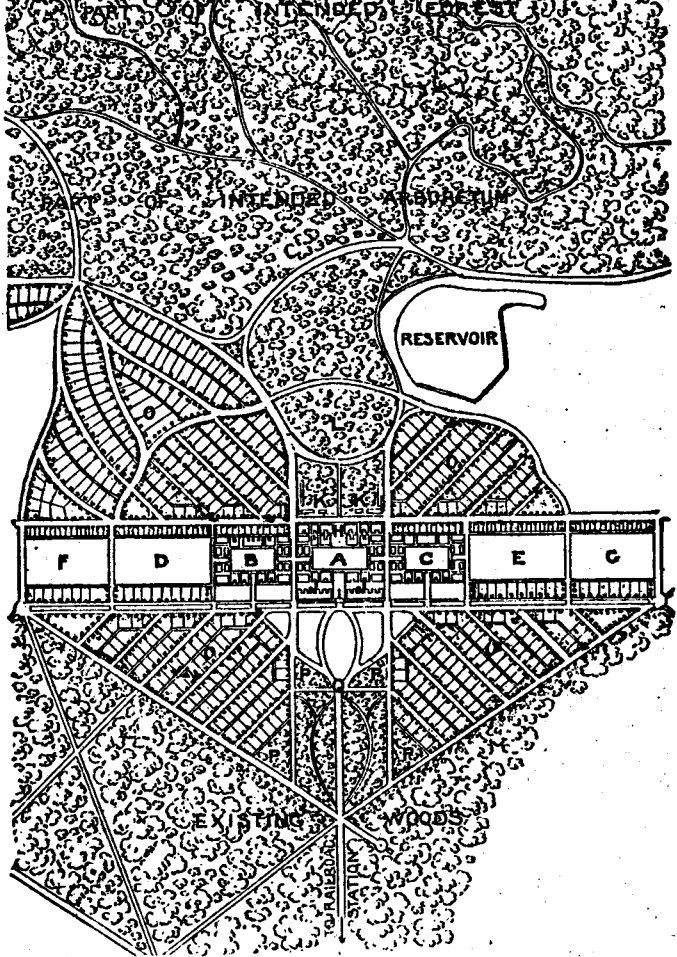


Fig. 79.—Plan of the Leland Stanford, Jr., University.

A: The central quadrangle, with buildings now partly under construction. **B C:** Sites for adjoining quadrangles, with proposed buildings. **D E F G:** Four blocks of land of form and extent corresponding to the above, to be held in reserve as sites for additional quadrangles and proposed buildings. **H:** Site for University Church. **I:** Site for Memorial Arch. **J:** Sites for University Libraries and Museums. **K:** Site for buildings of Industrial Department of the University, now partly under construction. **L:** Site for University Botanic Garden. **O O O O:** Four districts laid out in building lots suitable for detached dwellings and domestic gardens, with public ways giving direct communication between them and the University central buildings. **P P P P:** Sites for a Kinder Garten, a Primary School, an Advanced School and a School of Industry and Physical Training. **Q R:** A direct Avenue between the central quadrangle and a proposed station of the Southern Pacific Railroad, with bordering groves and promenades. Space is allowed in the wheel way for a double track street railway.

The plan for the Leland Stanford Jr., University, printed upon another page of this issue, records something more than the ideas of the acknowledged master of landscape art with regard to a great problem. It records the occurrence in our country of new and vast problems which spring from the wonderful development of commerce and the concentration of enormous wealth in the hands of individuals often willing to use it for the public good. And it records that the time has passed, or is fast passing, when great projects, more or less rural in their character, are to be undertaken blindly or without the counsel of trained specialists. The fact that an artist is called upon to locate the building and model the grounds of a University, to cut up to the best advantage the grounds of a suburban land company, or to suggest the proper approaches to a rural railroad-station, shows that the American people have made noteworthy progress during the last few years in artistic and economic education.

The value of a thoroughly studied plan, such as Mr. Stanford has secured, can be appreciated only by comparing it with the plans of some of the old Universities of this country, which have been built up piecemeal, without reference to any consistent scheme of general utility or convenience, and just as individual fancy or momentary convenience dictated. An examination of Mr. Olmsted's plan must show how convenience, to say nothing of appearance, is lost, and how economy of time and space is sacrificed, whenever a scheme of this nature is undertaken without the aid of a carefully-prepared plan.

The United States is now taking the lead among nations in the revival of the art of landscape-gardening, once almost lost from the face of the earth, and is adapting it to the solution of some of the greatest economic problems in modern life. The movement is still young, yet it shows itself more or less distinctly in every public improvement recently undertaken in this country, and still more unmistakably in the growing interest and appreciation of the American people for all that is good, and, therefore, beautiful, in Art applied to Nature.

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