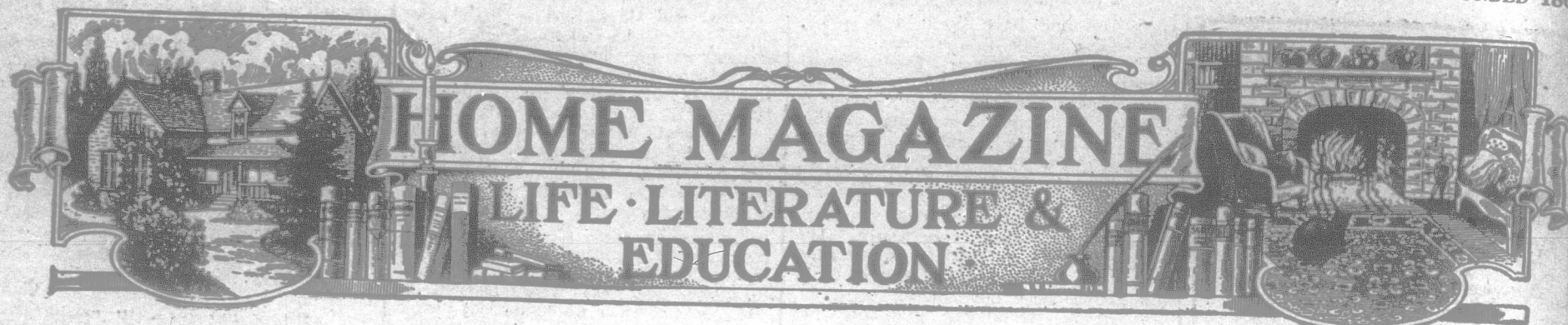




What is to Come?

W. E. HENLEY.

What is to come we know not. But we know
That what has been was good—was good to show,
Better to hide, and best of all to bear.
We are the masters of the days that were.
We have lived, we have loved, we have suffered
even so.

Shall we not take the ebb who had the flow?
Life was our friend. Now, if it be our foe—
Dear, though it spoil and break us!—need we care
What is to come?

Let the great winds their worst and wildest blow,
Or the gold weather round us mellow slow:
We have fulfilled ourselves, and we can dare
And we can conquer, though we may not share
In the rich quiet of the afterglow
What is to come?

Among the Books

"Child and Country."

"Town life had become a subtle persecution," says Will Levington Comfort in his new book, "Child and Country" (George H. Doran Pub. Co., New York, \$1.25 net). "We hadn't been wrecked exactly, but there had been times in which we were torn and weary, understanding only vaguely that it was the manner of our days in the midst of the crowd that was dulling the edge of health and taking the bloom from life. I had long been troubled about the little children in school—the winter sicknesses, the amount of vitality required to resist contagions, mental and physical—the whole tendency of the school towards making an efficient and a uniform product, rather than to develop the intrinsic and inimitable gift of each child."—Thus it was that a certain restlessness and dissatisfaction with "things as they are" drove this family from the heart of the city to the quiet of the country. Upon the crest of a hill lapped at its foot by the waves of broad Lake Erie a house was built, after the fashion of an old Spanish house that Mr. Comfort had seen at Luzon. Rose bushes were planted, and trees. There were problems of shore-conservation to be wrestled with, and all the incidentals attendant upon the creation of a new home.—Then planning and building shaded off into a new living and enjoying, and there was more time to devote to other things. There were little children in the home, and Mr. Comfort had wished, as may be gathered from the quotation with which this review opens, to see them evolve according to the personality within them, escaping the dead level to which the cut-and-dried system of the schools has a tendency to grind the little ones who pass beneath it; and so it came about that he began to educate, first his own children, then some others of the neighborhood. Incidentally it is interesting to note that among these last he discovered—in a boy "still as a gull," who "seemed natural with the dusk upon him"—a genius in astronomy. One wonders if this boy would ever have found the "giant within him" had he not come

under the influence of Will Levington Comfort.

—So life at "Stonestudy."—And out of it all—the experimenting and the finding, and the Being—grew the book "Child and Country."

One is tempted to quote wholesale from "Child and Country"—the copy that lies on the desk before the writer of this is black with underlinings of gems that can scarcely be passed over—here a bit indicated for the sheer exquisiteness of its artistry, there another for its touch of delicate humor, and then scores and scores of passages for a richness of philosophy, a depth of insight, a gift of vision that grip alike heart and intellect. Will Levington Comfort not only sees but can make others see; not only possesses inspiration but can fill others with it. And so he finds his world's work, not only with the children who gather about him, and the young men who come from afar and rent cottages to be near him, but also with the great outside world, where souls are thrilled of those who can never look upon his face.

If there is a regret at all in reading the book, it is that the writer has been so unfortunate in the type of country-folk whom, in the days preceding the writing of this book, he had met. Quite possibly, by this time he has been able to touch men and women of the farms who are different, and has learned to know that in the country as in the city, generalizations cannot be made from any one, or two, or three sections. For one rural district may differ as radically from another as differs Maida Vale from the East End of Old London. Nor is it altogether unknown that the silent countryman in even an unprogressive district, has "long thoughts" which he expresses only to those who possess the key to

house can be prevented from closing upon the growing child; that the giant is eager to awake. . . . I believe that an ordinary child thus awakened within, not only can but must become an extraordinary man or woman."

And all this arousing comes out of the eternal and is of the eternal. It is cosmic, not temporal. "A man must achieve that individuality which is not a three-score-ten proposition."

With the evolution of the soul comes, in direct ratio, the lovingness that makes men brothers. "All literature has overdone the dog-life fidelity of simple minds. The essence of loyalty of man to man is made of love-capacity and understanding—and these are qualities that come from evolution of the soul, just as every other fine thing comes. . . . The rising workman in any art or craft learns by suffering that all good is ahead and not elsewhere; that he must dare to be himself even if forced to go hungry for that honor; that he must not lose his love for men, though he must lose his illusions."

To Will Levington Comfort, work is life and prayer. To dream a dream and make it come true; to dream of work that shall be for the good of the Many and make that dream come true—that is to live, that is to justify one's existence here on earth. "All excellence in human affairs," he says, "should be judged by the workmanship and not by the profits. . . . I would inculcate in the educational ideal, first of all, that in every man there is a dream, just as there is a soul, and that to express the dream of the soul in matter is the perfect individual performance." . . . And so he would suppress, as far as possible, the cheap, unsubstantial machine-made article, and give every workman a chance to work out his thought in his own way.

who are gifted with vision become teachers. . . . A man who has seen many campaigns, he is agast at the present cataclysm in Europe. "War in this century," he declares, "is a confession, as suicide is a confession, as every act of blood and rage is a confession, of the triumph of the animal in the human mind." The patriot, the chauvinist, he holds, can have no part in the cleaning off of war from the torn earth, but only he of the international mind, the humanitarian.—And in the great humanitarianism that will regenerate the earth, woman must bear her part, and will do that best when she becomes of such quality herself, and so mates, that her sons will be messiahs incarnated, "true world-men."

Lack of space precludes touching upon the author's observations on the competitive system, ruinous to all that is finest in human lives; on orthodoxy and other topics. Nor is it possible here to incorporate anything of his talk to women, or his delightful descriptions of the children, the "Abbot," the Dakotan, who lend the human interest to the book. Carried away with his philosophy, too, there has been a reluctant leaving out of the fine brush-strokes that give so keen a sense of pleasure in the reading of other portions.—Just a few of these last as a suggestion of what this artist can do:

"The smell of the woods in the moist air was a Presence."

"It has been like a prayer to ride through that lane."

"Jack (Miner) is an individual. He has time to plant roses as well as corn."

Of Ireland—"Not a place, but a passion."

"Somewhere back of memory, most of us have strange relations with the wild things."

"I had gazed across the Lake, at one with it all, a friendly voyager of the skies, comrade of the yarrow and daisy."

"Rather it would seem that one must spend years to be worthy of communion with one hillside of dog-wood."

And now, do you understand why one should want to quote wholesale from "Child and Country"?

She is Not Mine.

BY SARAH K. BOLTON IN "OUR DUMB ANIMALS."

A child stood waiting before the gate,
Poorly clad, and of humble mien;
Worse than orphaned, a waif of fate,
She asked from hands unseen.
The lady paused in the busy whirl
Of a life of ease, from the book she read;
"I cannot care for the little girl;
She is not mine," she said.

A homeless puppy lay on the street,
Tired and famished, and asked to live;
A starving kitten was dropped at her feet,
Because, she had wealth to give.
"I have no room for the speechless throng;
No time to see they are warmed and fed:
My life is crowded with joy and song;
They are not mine," she said.

Death came; the lady was called away
From her beautiful home, and jewels rare;
Thousands of voices bade her stay;
"Too lovely, she is, too fair."
She stood where we all will stand at last,
When the record of life is closely read:
The angel paused, as he scanned her past;
"She is not mine," he said.



A Fine Roadway.

Residence of Mr. F. Hunter, Norval, Ont.

his confidence and an understanding of the world in which he moves.

Just to touch upon a few of the more striking points of the book:

Mr. Comfort makes much of the idea that we are all "better than we know" if we will but give the good a chance to develop itself and express itself. "Here we are upstanding," he exclaims, "half-gods asleep within us. Imagination alone—the seeing of the spirit of things—that can awaken us." And again: "I believe . . . that there is a sleeping giant within every one of us. . . . I believe, by true life and true education that the prison-

"Work and religion," he says again, "are the same at the top. . . . A man doing his own work for others, losing the sense of self in his work, is touching the very vitalities of religion and integrating the life that lasts."

And then he quotes from "Midstream" part of that magnificent chapter on "Labor" already given you in a previous issue, in "Among the Books."

Will Levington Comfort is an optimist. He believes in evolution, yet sometimes he becomes impatient—"The trouble is, the passage of the many from grade to grade is intolerably slow," and so he would have those