

beat with sympathy when we find a man who has turned his back upon it all and who says "I will live it no longer." How we flounder in possessions as in a dark and suffocating bog, wasting our energies not upon life but upon *things*. Instead of employing our houses, our cities, our gold, our clothing, we let these inanimate things possess and employ us—to what utter weariness. "Blessed be nothing," sighs a dear old lady of my knowledge.

Of all ways of escape I know, the best, though it is far from perfection, is the farm. There a man may yield himself most nearly to the quiet and orderly processes of nature. He may attain most nearly to that equilibrium between the material and spiritual, with time for the exactions of the first, and leisure for the growth of the second, which is the ideal of life.

In times past most farming regions in this country have suffered the disadvantages of isolation, the people have dwelt far distant from one another and from markets, they have had little to stimulate them intellectually or socially. Strong and peculiar individuals and families were often developed at the expense of a friendly community life: neighbourhood feuds were common. Country life was marked with the rigidity of a hard provincialism. All this, however, is rapidly changing. The closer settlement of the land, the rural delivery of mails