

THE GARDEN FRONT.

For five months in the year, in this country, it is a pleasure to have some land about one's house and be able to get out of doors. During the course of three of these months there are days so hot that to sit out of doors, instead of in the house, and if possible to dine out of doors, is the only way to keep reasonably comfortable. The invariableness of the porch or verandah in new houses, even of the smallest kind, and the outbreak of additions of this sort to every kind of old house shows that public attention is aroused to the inadequacy of the old fashioned habit of sitting on the front door steps in hot weather.

But a porch in the same position, close to the street, is no great gain; especially when the street has rails upon it and has reached the high development of a three minute service. Here the porch is not the poeti-



FIG. 1.

cal feature it might be in a village. It suggests not the fresh air of summer and the quiet of moonlight nights but the crude disturbances of the trolley car; a rush and a roar every minute and a half, followed by a cloud of dust that spreads wide and settles on everything.

The proper place for sitting out of doors in connection with a city house is at the back. The English house shown in the cuts (taken from an English journal), is an excellent example of the difference between



FIG. 2.

front and back as a place for out of doors life. In this case, if anywhere where the house is on a street, the front would be acceptable; the neighborhood is suburban, the house set well back from the road, and the

road is quiet. But how much more retired the "garden front" is! How much more dignified to live out of doors there than in the front, in the face of the public!

The difficulty with us is how to get back the use of the rear of the house for the family, after having for so long devoted it to the service department.

With a basement kitchen the problem is easy, but usage in a great part of the country is against that plan. Servants prefer, in a small house, to be penned up in the smallest possible kitchen in the rear of the ground floor rather than have plenty of room in the basement and the possible privilege of an outlook on the front. The trouble is difference of level between the kitchen and the dining room and front door. And prospective housekeepers will not accept the risk of having a basement kitchen and finding that they cannot get servants to fill it. That this is, to a great extent unnecessary apprehension is proved by the smoothness with which domestic affairs continue in the cities which were built before the "extension kitchen" plan came in, and which continue to have houses with basement kitchens. In the more modern city of Toronto also there are certain old families, with old houses and basement kitchens, who are better served than the moderns. And in at least one new house, where the mistress, greatly daring, decided for a basement kitchen, the result has been peace below stairs and happiness above, where they have the whole floor to themselves, and (which is the present point of interest), a verandah in the rear, in which they can dine overlooking the garden.

It is worth remembering, as we are apt to think the ground floor kitchen is a modern product from which there is no retreat, that the only thing modern about it is its application to the town house, since the taste for space grew with the opportunity this country affords and the English idea of building in rows in a town was abandoned. We must remember that rows and the basement kitchen have never gone out in the United States, where the necessity for compactness came upon them as early as the taste for space, and that when our time comes when the kitchen must be either at front or back (because there is no side) some relief will come to us from the United States in the form of the high basement.

The "American basement" is this much better than the English, in point of service accommodation, that it is all out of ground and the servants are not interred. In point of service again, attendance on the front door is reduced in labour for all calls that do not involve communication afterwards with the living rooms. Otherwise there is not much difference in this point, except that in small houses it is very likely that the dining room will come down stairs and occupy the garden side, transforming the plan thus from an elevated basement to a lowered ground floor, for there will probably be a sub-basement for heating.

This is, in effect, what we have to aim at in the meantime, in our ground floor which has not descended. If we are to have the garden front free for family use the kitchen must come to the front. The servants will not object to that; and it will keep them cheerful, which nobody else will object to.

There are examples of this plan in houses facing north, which thus get the kitchen in its proper quarter,