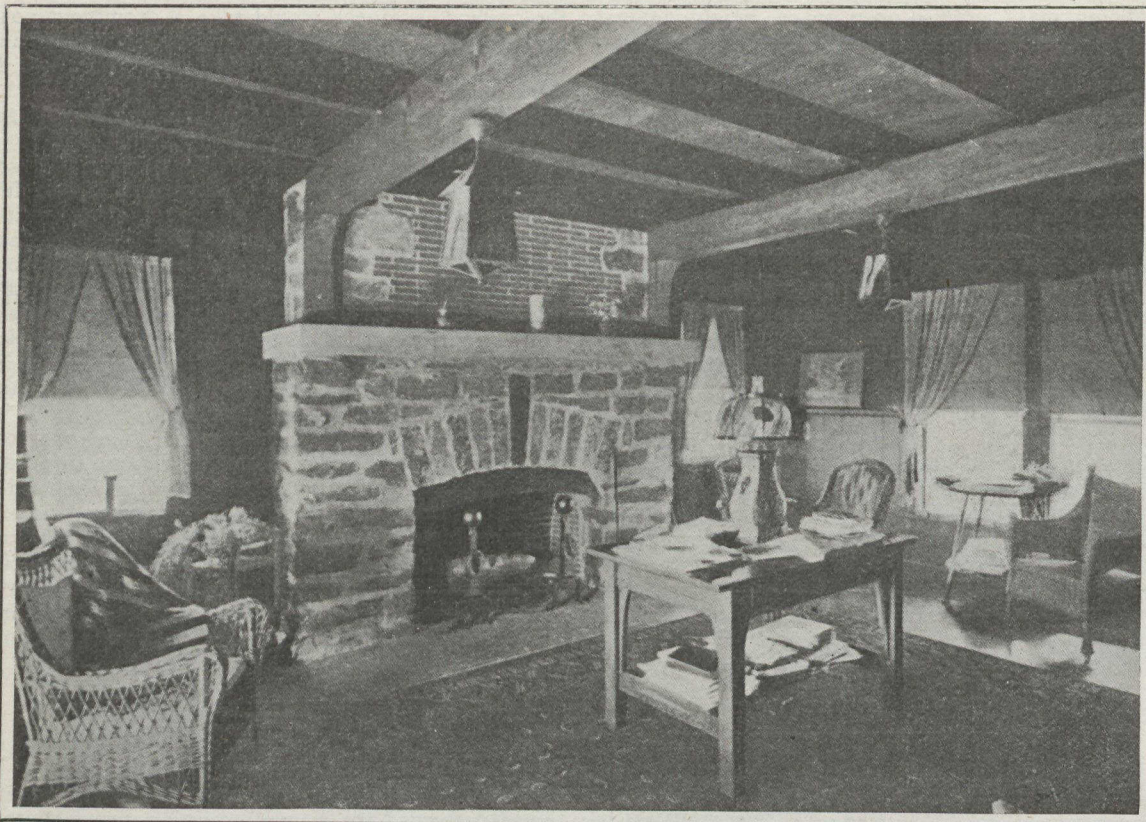




Living-room of rather more rustic style in a country house at Worcester, Mass.

wherever the purse can afford, and in every house an underflooring should be laid diagonally to the joists before the walls are carried up.

Decoration And Furnishing.

Volumes could be written on the possibilities of decorating and furnishing even the smallest dwellings. Suffice it to say that simplicity of scheme and most of all the presence of a scheme of decoration is essential; do not introduce a wide variety of colourings and styles into your

rooms. Nothing cuts up the interior of a small house and diminishes its apparent size more than to decorate each room and hall in a different colour and texture. Keep to simple colourings well chosen to go with each other and use care and discrimination in selecting your furniture, coverings and hangings. Do not be afraid to ask your architect's opinion. You do not have to follow it and it is probably good. He realizes that the decorating and furnishing can make or mar his work and will probably be glad to voice his opinions.

The Town Man on the Land

Why He Is Learning to Go Gardening

APPRECIATING land nowadays is becoming a peculiarity of city people. In a country with millions of acres yet unoccupied, or even reached by railways, we are confronted with the growing city where vacant lots are, if not unknown, at least inaccessible for even baseball; with fast-developing towns in the west staked off on the environs for future speculation; with farms selling in some cases for five hundred dollars an acre—if the land happens to be along a lake front anywhere within half an hour's ride of a city limit.

The paradox of the land is peculiar and it is becoming more acute. Seven miles west of the western limit of Toronto land sells not by the acre, but at twelve and fifteen dollars a foot. A mile or two east of Hamilton are the same conditions. In a few years Hamilton and Toronto will shake hands at twenty dollars a foot for country and suburban residences.

This may be a speculative value; but it is being paid. Every turn-over of a block of land means an increase in the average price. A few years ago land that sells now by the foot was sold by the lot. The man who bought three lots then is succeeded by the man who buys one lot; or he has sold two of his lots at so much a foot; and the inference is that the more people you can get on to a given area of land the greater the value of the land—which to the man desiring a comfortable, quiet life is an illusion.

So we persist in packing our towns and cities with people often at the expense of the rural parts. We build up big communities on small areas of high-priced land. The influence of the city community reaches out over the adjoining farm lands which go up in price for three reasons: sympathy with the value of town property, the rapid extension of the suburban subdivision, and the practical value of good land adjacent to a city for the market and fruit garden business.

Thus begins a backward movement to the land. City dwellers burdened with high rents and crowded quarters begin to acquire suburban and even country residences where the time and the money re-

quired for transportation do fall a margin below the cost of rent and of other items of living in the city.

The whole thing becomes a mathematical problem, whereby a man figures an hour each way on a suburban and street railway car as worth so much in both time and fares; comparing this at so much a week or a month to the extra cost of living in the town and allowing so much for the increase of comfort by living in the country.

One of the results of this backward movement is that the city man with a plot of land near his house learns to go gardening. He finds that with an hour a day in the summer he can tend his garden more or less, do a little casual hiring and produce vegetables and small fruits enough to supply his own table with perhaps an occasional sale to friends of his in town.

The experience of some city men in keeping gardens and raising chickens would be of immense interest to farmers who have taken half a lifetime to discover that a real truck garden is absolutely necessary even on a farm; and of even more interest to the townsman who hankers to be delivered from the tyranny of monopolistic prices for vegetables and fruit. And it often happens that the townsman who turns himself to the problem of gardening is able to give lessons to the villager or the rural dweller who all his life surrounded by idle or half-idle land has to learn the real productive value of land from the man who has been living on the edge of a boulevard.

But the technic of the garden is not easily learned by the average man who has been brought up in town. For the instruction and encouragement of townspeople who are contemplating removal to the suburbs or the open country books have been and will continue to be written. Among the most practical of these is "The Canadian Garden," by Annie L. Jack, which deals simply and experimentally with how to raise fruits, flowers and vegetables. It contains chapters on the land, on hotbeds, on the kitchen garden, the fruit garden—including raspberries, plums, cherries, currants, gooseberries and strawberries; on pruning and grafting; on fighting

insects and diseases; on ornamental trees, window and cellar plants and bulbs for all seasons.

This is the sort of book that will be read by hundreds of city dwellers ambitious to get back to the land. Scores in every hundred will probably conclude that the quest is too complicated and will give up the idea. A percentage will take the problem seriously and whenever they get a chance will learn from the experiences of those who have gone out to the suburbs and the open country just how far book knowledge is capable of being translated into profitable work on the land.

Suburbanite's Adventures

"ISOBEL was born in a flat, and that was no fault of her own; but she was born in a flat, and reared in a flat, and married from a flat, and, for two years after we were married, we lived in a flat; but I am not a born flat-dweller myself, and, as soon as possible, I proposed that we move to the country." Isobel and her husband did move to the country. The flat dwellers took a little house in the suburbs. Isobel's husband gardened on his small lot until his hands were white with blisters; raised chickens; played golf; and went automobiling. In all these activities, Isobel was his chum; she was like a wondering child lost in the mazes of a new world.

Isobel and her genial husband are the chief characters responsible for the fun in a new book by Ellis Parker Butler, entitled, "The Adventures of a Suburbanite." On picking up this thin volume, anyone, who had no previous acquaintance with Butler, might perhaps think it a serious dissertation on the country life movement. But the author of "Pigs is Pigs," "The Great American Pie Company," etc., has made another excursion into the humorous. "The Adventures of a Suburbanite" is a scream from page 1 to page 224. Some of the incidents in Butler's book are rather grossly exaggerated, but the writer can be forgiven these departures from verity, because of his good natured fun. Butler is that type of volatile American who sees much humour in the veriest trivialities of existence. "The adventures of a Suburbanite" is one great, big lark. The city man, contemplating a country residence, won't get many sane hints on house-planning from it. But "The Adventures of a Suburbanite," by helping him to see the humour of his new environment, will, none the less, smooth the way for his making a success of a rural venture.

"The Adventures of a Suburbanite" is published by the Musson Book Company, Toronto.

Madness of Bigness

THERE is a certain amount of madness in the desire for bigness now evident in so many cities. Why should a city have a million inhabitants? Can any person advance one sound and sensible reason why Toronto, or Montreal, or Winnipeg should be bigger than it is now? Isn't it really a desire based upon false ideas and vain ignorance?

In London, a skyey apartment of two rooms costs its occupant 7s. 6d. a week. The same apartment in Cork, Ireland, cost 1s. 9d. Is it to force working men and clerks to pay high rents, that Toronto, Montreal and Winnipeg work day and night to make themselves grow?

In a city of 200,000 people, the working man can walk to and fro the factory. After the city gets larger, he must pay a toll to the street railway. Is it to build up street railway profits that Toronto and Montreal and Winnipeg are working might and main?

Glasgow boasted that it would supply model suburbs for its working people, but it failed. It crowds 800,000 people into a space about one-thirteenth the size of Greater Melbourne, Australia, with only 600,000 of a population. Are Toronto and Montreal and Winnipeg anxious to emulate Glasgow and Birmingham and London, where men and women exist but do not live?

Unsavory slums, degrading tenement-houses, uncleanly citizens, under-fed and uneducated children, wickedness and vice—these are the results of large cities wherever they are created. Are these the qualities and the distinctions sought by the larger and more ambitious Canadian cities?

Are the rulers of our cities trying to produce mean citizens or clean citizens? Is this a mad race for bigness, or do they think that they can build big cities without the attendant evils to be found in every other large city on the globe?

Here is something for every person to think over. It would seem wise, when a city reaches 400,000 people, to say "Stop!" The interest of humanity forbids you to go farther."