

starts off at his unalterable pace, you look back through the dust with a respectful interest at the home of virtue and contentment.

Contentment is a marked feature of this rural life I should judge from my investigations into the incomes of the postmasters, for in one case the whole remuneration for the year amounts to twelve dollars. It is true the village is small (three houses visible) but the farmers in the vicinity do not like to have to journey to the next village for their weekly papers with its prognostications of rain or no rain.

Past three or four villages in twelve or fourteen miles, the more important village of Rockton comes into view, boasting, in addition to its ten or twelve houses and cottages, of a townhall, a tavern, a store, a woollenmill, and a church, besides the necessary and useful waggonmaker and blacksmith's shop. To any one suffering from paresis, caused by the rush and anxiety of business life in the large centres like Montreal or Toronto, I can recommend Rockton as a place where they can live in undisturbed quiet (unless interested in the rain question); and where nothing more terribly exciting than the political crimes of Mr. Laurier or Sir Somebody, according to the bias of the weekly paper, will disturb him, and even this difficulty may be survived by reading both or neither.

As to the artistic aspect of these little villages and the surrounding farming community, there are many characteristic subjects awaiting that famous coming man. The Township and County Council meetings have never received the prominence they deserve. The village Hampdens and the guiltless Cromwells, who discuss the vital questions of the day—should cattle run at large, and the amount of damages due for sheep destroyed by dogs—these men have never had artistic justice done them. Then the villagers themselves—there is the blacksmith's shop always full of artistic possibilities, and in the evening, when the whole male population sits down on the sidewalk with its feet in the ditch to discuss rain or politics with long intervals of silence as the landscape darkens round, and the speaker of the moment can be heard at the other end of the silent village, the artist may find some characteristic subjects that are thoroughly Canadian. Then the country tavern, perhaps the most inartistic building in the known world by daylight, puts on a charm of its own after sunset when the lamp with its bright reflector behind it, stands on the ground outside the door and casts mysterious shadows of the belated farmer and his wagon and horses across the road, up the opposite fence, over the lilac bushes and apple trees of the wagonmaker's garden; then also a warm glow of red light is diffused through the curtain of the bar-room window, diversified sometimes by a dark but unmistakable shadow of the belated farmer becoming still more and more belated by throwing back his head, by the application of his hand with some translucent object therein to the lower part of his face.

Other subjects, full of human interest, perpetually recur with the changing seasons—the digging out the narrow pathway to the pump through the deep snow in winter, the driving homeward of the empty hay sleigh with its long pole extending behind, most picturesque of vehicles and staying outside the blacksmith's while the smith repairs the off-horse's shoe, as well as all the incidents of farm life and the meetings of the little congregations at the roadside churches in their Sunday best—all these are worthy of being commemorated before they, too, disappear in the monotony of dress fashions now so fast spreading into the remote corners even of these apparently forgotten byways of Canada.

Already since last July an electric railway has been opened from Galt to penetrate this very district, and soon it will be difficult indeed to find districts where the old fashioned farm and village life will remain. Not only the spinning wheel but the leach trough and even the churn are passing into disuse, and the wagonmakers' shops are already, many of them, closed by the establishment by syndicates of large manufacturing shops where all the latest machinery is employed to replace the old picturesque bench and screw, spokeshave and mortice chisel, and the hum and whirr of wheels and belting replace the whistling of the workman in his shop.

The few miles of country we have passed in review, and the scattered villages, are samples of what may be found throughout this section of Ontario. A little farther west, however, we arrive at the County of Waterloo, and here we find a change, for here the population, being for the most part German, and having, with their usual love of the father-

land, its methods, customs and manners, reproduced in their houses and barns the styles they were accustomed to, we seem to have entered a new and foreign country, especially on some of the older farms, for it must be confessed that the later generations are adopting all the latest improvements, bankbarns and modern houses, and coming more into line with the national life of Canada.

As a matter of course the old fashioned buildings and methods are the more picturesque and form fit subjects for the artist, and it would seem appropriate that some of the old manners and customs should be secured before they entirely disappear. I have seen on some of the older farms a building put up apparently for the sole purpose of boiling soap, an enormous pot in a wide brick fire-place being the principal feature of the interior. Here, too, the big spinning wheel is still in use for winding yarn, and the large homemade leach trough hewed from the trunk of a basswood tree may be found.

The old fashioned gardens, too, with all the ancient favourites, not forgetting chamomile and southernwood and the row of rustic looking beehives, make fine backgrounds for the bright print dresses and pretty sunbonnets, to say nothing of the blooming cheeks and sparkling eyes that rather increase in comeliness than diminish by being transplanted to our wholesome and vigorous Canadian climate. Yes, on the whole the Canadian artist need not wander far for subjects for his brush, while he has not only the peculiar features of Canadian life proper to draw upon, but in one part of the country, the old French life and in another the old fashioned German, not to mention the peculiar features of Indian and halfbreed life and manners for his field of supply.

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### Parisian Affairs.

GERMANY is to have a demi-jubilee this year—after the Kiel fraternizations, of course, in honour of Sedan, for there collapsed the resistance of France in 1870. As a consolation, France will hold in the autumn a demi-jubilee to celebrate the birth of the Third Republic, but which was not voted by the Legislature, and even then but by one of a majority,—a fact Lord Rosebery ought to utilize—till five years later. Then the Teutons will further take note that all the cakes and ale will not be on their side, as France is going to erect the biggest of collective monuments to those who fell in resisting the invasion. These tit for tat historic symbols are better than war. If Germany decided to erect monuments, commemorative of those who fell resisting the French invasion of Fatherland, the country could become as crowded with statues as a Fine Art School or as Munich. Growlings, but less loud, are to be heard, respecting the French fleet going to Kiel; they are of no importance. Are not the Russians to be there? so France can be chaperooned through the squeamish ordeal. All is sound and fury signifying nothing.

Until the Duc d'Orleans recovers the use of his legs, the royalists say they can do nothing for the deliverance of France—a calamity the country supports with a Spartan fortitude. The jokers are waiting to see if they can make any capital out of the discontent of the 63 of the 81 bishops—a diocese nearly tallies with a department—on account of the Government subjecting convents and monasteries to the property tax, just as if such premises were palaces or simply huxter's shops, for nothing is *sacré* for a Minister of Finance, with an unplugged hole in a budget of 56 millions frs. deficit. The Church would display great want of tact by breaking a lance against the Republic on that ground. The Republicans would *ripaste* by abolishing the concord at and applying the endowment annual grant of 54 millions frs. to school extension and to old age pensions for the wornout industrial workers. Neither the Republic nor the Church have anything to gain by warring. They ought to try and live happy in their *mariage de raison*. France being now in a mess and muddle respecting her financial tightness, might spring a surprise on the Church. If a socialist deputy, in case the antagonism deepens, proposed that the moiety of the 54 millions frs. be devoted to reduce the land taxes that are such a fardel for the peasant farmers to bear, that would be a terrible thrust at the clergy, as it is among the small cultivators they find their chief supporters. No religion could exist long that was hostile to their *filetes* putting a little cash into their empty purses.