

50 COTTAGE & FARMHOUSE FURNITURE

leaning towards the unwieldy, and often massive without the accompanying grandeur of the highly-trained craftsman's work, there is a breadth of treatment in such pieces which is at once recognisable. They were made for use and no little thought was bestowed on their lines, and, rightly appreciated, they possess a considerable beauty. There is nothing finicking about this seventeenth-century farmhouse furniture. There is no meaningless ornament. Produced in conditions suitable for quiet and restrained craftsmanship, contemplative cabinet-makers began to evolve styles that are far removed from the average design of furniture made to-day under more pretentious surroundings.

The gate table, with its long history and its amplification of structure and ornament, to which a separate chapter is devoted (Chapter III), is a case in point. It was extensively used in inns and in farmhouses and found itself in set definite types spread over a wide area from one end of the country to the other. Its practicability caught the taste of lovers of utility. Its added gracefulness of form, in combination with its adaptability to modern needs, has recaptured the fancy of housewives to-day. It is the happy survival of a beautiful and useful piece of ingenious cabinet-work.

To-day one finds unexpectedly a London fashion lingering in the provinces years afterwards. A stray air from a light opera or some catch-phrase of town slang is gaily bandied about as current coin in bucolic jest long after its circulation in the metropolis has ceased. The fashions in provincial furniture