



### The Heart's Question.

BY CALE YOUNG RICE.

Is it such a little thing  
To find a wind-flower  
Twinkling in the wild-wood  
Hour after hour.

Dancing to the wind's pipe  
With a happy nod?  
Is it such a little thing?  
I think it is God.

Is it such a little thing  
To find the young moon  
Flitting through the tree boughs  
In her silver shoon,  
Seeking for the wind-flower  
There along the sod?  
Is it such a little thing?  
I think it is God.

Is it such a little thing  
To find in your face  
Something of the wind-flower  
And the young moon's grace?  
Something of the wild-wood,  
Ever faery-trod?  
Is it such a little thing?  
I think it is God.

—In *Wraiths and Realities*.

### Reconstruction.

(Continued.)

#### Little Things That Are Big.

BY "A. N."

AMONG the little things that are big, because they accomplish so much more than appears immediately on the surface, is the idea of *Community Halls*—as memorials to the soldiers.

Among farmers there may be one here and there so intensely individualistic as to think the movement for these halls "all nonsense," and the appropriation which the Government intends to make for them as well as that collected in the neighborhood, a useless waste of money. But even such a man may change his point of view if he uses his power of imagination enough to grasp what the nation-wide establishment of such places may mean if used as they may be used. True, the significance of one little community hall in a small country district may not seem very great; it is the significance of all the halls, taken collectively, that must be considered.

In a nutshell: Taken upon the whole, people are gregarious animals; the solitary life does not appeal to many of them and is not good for them. They must mingle together not only for the sake of the greater happiness and contentment they achieve by so doing in a right way, but because in the social circle they gain new ideas, have their wits and reasoning powers sharpened, find opportunity for discussion of important community movements, and attain that poise and confidence in the presence of people that is so great an asset all through life.

To all this the Community Hall provides a direct avenue.

It is a place where all kinds of meetings can be held which are in the interests of the community. . . . With seats primly in order it appears as a formal hall for lectures or a theatre for concerts, the drama, or movies. . . . The centre of the floor cleared, and presto! it becomes an admirable hall for dancing, if such is approved of in the neighborhood; add a few tables and the place becomes metamorphosed into a dining-hall for community luncheons and banquets. Another rearrangement, with a friendly grouping of the chairs and tables, and the room becomes an ideal spot for parties and receptions, or to be used for a "dropping-in" place or rest-room, exactly as club-houses are used.

Does all this seem trivial? Is any-

thing trivial that adds to the brightening and richness of life?

The wail "How can we keep the young people on the farm?" is so odd that it is fast losing its appeal by sheer force of useless repetition. Of course, no one with any common sense nowadays believes in trying to keep *all* the young people on the farm—there are always, and always will be, boys and girls born on the land who are from their cradles fitted for occupations other than farming—but the fact remains that every year young people who would do better on the land than anywhere else drift away from the country and into the city, where they put in comparatively insignificant and unproductive lives. The truth of the matter must be faced that the lure city-ward is fundamentally the wish for more brightness in life.—"Easier work," some of these migrants say, but the chances are that many of them find work just as hard, and less independent, in the city; the things that keep them there—if they will honestly confess—are the "shows," the frequent meetings with young people of their own age, the liveliness and sense of "something doing" in the brightly-lighted streets. It seems quiet and "lonesome" back there on the concession over the hills, where the roads are lighted only by God's stars and God's great silver moon.—Grasping at bubbles, these young folk too often miss the substance, until it is too late. And yet they are not wholly to be blamed. Young people cannot be other than young people. It is easy enough, perhaps, for the man of forty or more to find such unflinching interest on his own farm that he needs (or thinks he needs) no further diversion; it is not so easy to keep that frame of mind if one is only twenty or twenty-five.

The higher education foreshadowed in some of the new movements afoot in

Ontario in favor of rural young folk should do much to create a new interest in all rural life—the joy of *scientific* agriculture, interest in Nature study, and appreciation of field, wood and sky—but there will always be a class of young folk who demand more, who find *each other* more interesting than beautiful landscape, flowers and bugs, and for these the Community Hall steps in. The Consolidated and Secondary Schools will bring one class of city advantages to the very doorsteps of the farm home; the Community Halls another. May we repeat—such meeting-places open the way to sociability, to entertainment, and to such educational influence as can be derived from lectures and music.

Last, but not least, may they not easily prove the training-ground for future orators and statesmen. The "old red school-house" served its day and with credit, too. But how much more inspiring to the youthful orator to deliver his thought in a large and beautiful hall, to which people may come from far as well as near so that motor cars are ranged in rows outside! Splendid training, surely, for the farm lad who may one day test his powers in the Legislative halls of the Dominion!

But in all this zeal for the young people, the older folk must not be forgotten. It is perhaps true to say that *normal* elderly folk need and enjoy just as much as the younger ones such pleasure and stimulus as association with others, lectures, plays, and nearly everything else that has been mentioned. People are just as old as they permit themselves to be; they do not have to get up on a shelf unless they want to. Life is an opportunity for steady development all along the way. One can't stand still, for if he is not going ahead he is slipping behind, and that does not pay. Only in moving

forward and keeping abreast of the times is there real joy and profit in living. . . . And so the Community Halls afford opportunities for the fathers and mothers as well as the sons and daughters.

ONE thinks the Community Hall should be just as bright and beautiful as can be afforded. The outside surely should be architecturally pleasing, a real honor to the memory of the men who fought in the great War for humanity's sake; but especial pains should be taken to make the interior at once homelike and well suited to all the needs to which the place may be put. There should be plenty of windows, and the seats should be comfortable. A store-room to which some of the seats may be removed when it is necessary to have clearer floor-space would seem a necessity; also cloak-room, and a kitchen for the preparation of refreshments. One would like to see, in the main hall, a big fireplace, with easy-chairs grouped about it. A few small tables will be needed, and if bookcases and good pictures can be added all the better. Of course, it goes without saying that the place of honor will be given to photographs, framed in groups, of *all* the men who went overseas to fight,—not only of those who fell, for all have been equally worthy. Also there will be a brass or marble tablet inscribed with the names, and placed either outside or inside of the building as may be preferred.

Most of the above details answer to rest-room and club-house requirements, but certainly there must be a stage for concert and drama uses, roomy and provided with wings and dressing-rooms. It should be placed at the point where it can be most easily seen from every part of the hall.

—This reminds: Reference has been made to the possibility of using the Community Hall as a movie theatre. It seems necessary to suggest, just here, that the strictest censorship should be exercised over the movie presentations admitted to the rural districts. The cities have failed in this, and as a result the great majority of such performances in city theatres are absolute trash, neither artistic, inspiring or instructive, and often introduced by a vaudeville stunt vulgar to an extreme.

This, however, does not do away with the fact that many excellent screens are presented by movie-people,—good plays by distinguished actors, representations of books that are classics, travel films, films of various industries, etc. In short, there are *vast* possibilities in the movies that people cannot afford to miss. Surely it is up to the country folk, with eyes opened by the experience of the cities, to see that only the best shall be admitted to the Community Halls. Anything short of that must soil the carrying out of the purpose for which the "memorials" are erected.

### Among the Books

#### "Robert Browning."

BY MARY J. TURNBULL, R. R. 5, GALT.  
[One of the essays submitted in the Christmas Number Competition.]

ANYONE who undertakes the study of Browning begins to understand why there are so many Browning clubs formed. Many of his poems are puzzles; he makes us think, unlike Tennyson who is his own interpreter. When some of his poems were published, some of his friends who could not understand them, wrote derisive letters to him asking what he intended to say.

Browning ranks among the first of great British poets. In the study of his life and works, there is a whole season's



Darwin Tulips Make a Wonderful May Border to this Well-kept Lawn.