

COUNTRY and SUBURBAN LIFE SUPPLEMENT

THE EXPLANATION

A Wave of Interest in Country Living

IN looking over the list of publications in England and the States it is interesting to note the number of new periodicals devoted to out-door life. Sport has its organs as elaborately prepared, as varied in tone and as seriously reflective as those of politics, trade, society or the churches. There are automobile papers, golf journals, magazines of yachting, sheets devoted to hunting, fishing and racing. But wider than all in interest are the pages given in a general way to fresh air, the fields, the streams, the aesthetics and economics of country life.

These publications glorifying the out-of-doors do not exist without a demand. The demand does not arise without a call of the spirit. That call would not be heard unless nature itself were stirring in the human depths. So the signs of the times work back to a promise of large good for those weary of bondage to the narrow streets and narrowing influence of the man-made city.

It is not asserted, nor even suggested, that everybody can get away from the cities. The literature of the country does not counsel wholesale flight from the responsibilities that exist in crowded centres of population. Their urging is to get all the fresh breathing that we can and to acquire the peacefulness and breadth of view that spring from the look abroad—the look beyond brick walls and above skyscrapers. The description of quiet country ways cannot but be wholesome reading even to one who may rarely walk such paths. Pictures and papers in portrayal of the country dwelling arouse only healthful yearnings, even though the reader be not of the increasing number to whom automobiles and trolleys now makes rural home life possible. And in introducing a "Country Life Supplement," and making it a regular feature, we hope to encourage the tendency towards suburban living, and give it the enthusiasm and prominence it deserves.

Until now Canada has been so much country and so little city there has not been the same encouragement to develop suburban life, but with the steady influx of population, and the growth in wealth and resources, conditions are sure to change. Nothing in life equals the enthusiasm of growing things, and few city people form a just appreciation of what the country idea really means. To some extent it may be a "hobby," but any decided interest in life, whether dignified by the name of an occupation or merely an enthusiasm, is well worth while. With the means of communication quicker and better to-day than ever before, Canadian country life is assuming an entirely new interest. The growth of telephones, electric railways and automobiles sound the knell of isolation in the country, and with the trolleys reaching out in every direction, the trend will be back again to the smaller towns and villages—for the summer months at least.

Years ago living in the country entailed more or less hardship, inconvenience in domestic life, difficulty of access, and so people preferred to live in the city to avoid the disadvantages of the purely country life. Of late years this has all been changed, and many of our best citizens, realizing the benefits of out-door life, have established homes in the suburbs and in the further country. As the auto decreases in price for thoroughly serviceable machines the number increases of those persons whose income is large enough for them to live in the country and still do business in the city. The area and distance from the depot has been widened for such by new forms of transportation. They find more families about them. New suburban sections are springing up within a radius of twenty miles around Toronto and social life is being re-arranged on a country and outdoor basis.

The changed conditions have developed a new wave of interest in country living, and the city man's modern discovery of the country and his increasing

use of it during the summer months is worthy of attention. More people are building homes where acres abound and are giving Canadian country life a stimulus and enthusiasm it lacked before. The inspiration of it all comes from England, where the country has a positive charm and where people know thoroughly well how to get the most from life outside. And this movement will make the Englishman feel still more at home in Canada.

Closely allied with country life is suburban living. The suburbs of Canadian cities are growing in number and importance. There are suburbs worthy of the name and they are "shack-towns." The form should be understood and encouraged so as to eliminate the latter. The evils, dangers, glories, benefits and possibilities of suburban life will be considered from month to month. Here town-planning has its greatest present opportunity. It is a

tedious and expensive process to reconstruct a big city, but a little knowledge combined with common-sense will plan a suburb which will be a glory to the city and the pride of the suburban residents.



A PLEASANT AND COMFORTABLE SUBURBAN HOME.
Residence of A. E. Ames, Esq.

The Automobile in Country Life

THE one thing more than anything else that is bound to encourage country and suburban homes with city people is the steadily increasing use of automobiles. In Ontario alone over 8,000 automobile licenses have been issued this year, and their use is certain to develop a new enthusiasm for country life, with a consequent stronger demand for country property. Among the most attractive claims that are made for the automobile are that it helps to promote social relations, to bring villages and

small cities into closer touch with big ones, to increase knowledge of local geography, and to make village and farm life livelier and more attractive.

A little while ago any village that was not on a railway was apt to be pretty dead. That has been the worst feature of country life for the last half century. The people on the back roads lived too isolated. They did not see enough people go by the door. The country people constantly drifted to the villages and the smaller cities, and to people from the smaller cities the life of the big cities looked far livelier and richer in opportunity than the life at home. Country boys and girls felt strongly that there was small chance of their ever having a due amount of fun unless they got to town. It was not that the average of wealth and ease was so much higher in the cities, but that there was more society, and life was more stimulating and seemed more interesting.

People can live and make livings in the country if they know how and will work, and it is not very hard to learn how. The great problem is to make life in the country seem to them interesting. Successive things have helped of late years to bring that about. The telephone has helped, so has the bicycle, so has the trolley car, so have electric power and light, so has the automobile. Comparatively few farmers as yet have automobiles, but the new machine has carried life into the country. It has extended the suburbs into the cities, has been the biggest force in improving the roads, and has drawn upon the taxpayers of the cities to share the cost. Good roads make an enormous difference in the liveliness of country life. It is only since automobiles made it possible to travel long distances in a short time on the highways that the people of the cities have taken a hearty interest in country roads and have been willing to be taxed for their maintenance.

One great thing in favour of automobiles is that they are showing the country to the people who never would see it if there were not autos to show it to them. They not only show the country to the people, but show the people to the country. For the country likes and needs to see people, and in spite of the dust the autos make and the increased hazards they have brought to users of the highway, they make the farmers who see them feel nearer to centres of population, and make the farmers' children feel that, after all, they are not necessarily "out of it," and that there are things to be had, which are sure to be more generally attainable that will increase neighbourliness and diversion.