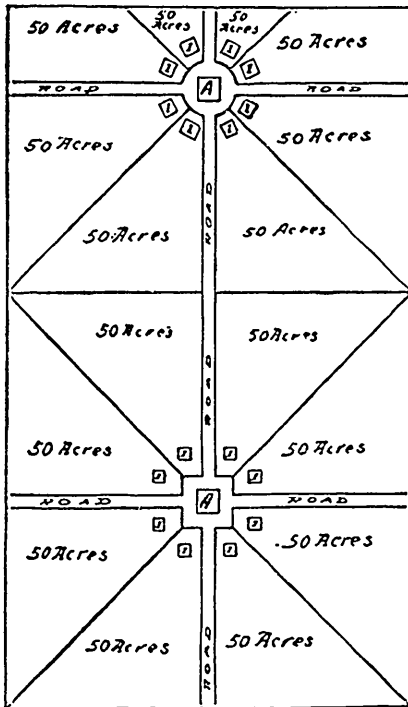


Current Topics and Events.

BACK TO THE SOIL.



A SECTION OF GOODE CITY.

1. Farm house. A. School, church, hall or other building.

A novel application is about to be made of Bradley Gilman's New England story, "Back to the Soil." A colonization project at Goode City, near Houston, Texas, is, according to Peter H. Goldsmith, writing in the Boston Transcript, to be nothing less than an application of Mr. Gilman's ideas in urbanizing the country. The story was published nearly four years ago, but in February of this year one of the editors of *The American Farmer* read it, and was so struck by it that he wrote an editorial which furnished ammunition for Mr. Solon L. Goode, the president of the company which publishes the paper.

Mr. Gilman's purpose in the book was

to demonstrate "the hopeful possibilities of country life," the object being to overcome the loneliness and isolation. "A company, so the story runs, is formed, and the sum of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars is raised to carry out an experiment. A site is chosen, several unremunerative, but sufficiently fertile, farms are bought at a moderate price, and thrown together, and development is at once begun. The four square miles of territory is laid out in one hundred farms, radiating from a circular centre, which is to contain the common, the public buildings, music-stand, promenade, etc. The houses are built at the apices of the farms or lots, facing the circular 'square.' The farms vary in form and size, according to their uses, and the nature of the soil which they contain. Each house-lot has a frontage of sixty feet, the houses being twenty feet wide, and costing somewhat more than eight hundred dollars each. The lots are alike for about a hundred yards back from the street on which they face, each one thus having about a third of an acre for a yard and garden. The company erected the houses, paved the streets, and constructed the roads, installed water-works, electric and gas lighting and sewerage systems, and supplied and managed the school, church, lyceum, etc. Later a line of electric cars is built.

"The plan supplies what they seek; a scheme for urbanizing country life, for furnishing fresh air, sunshine, varied industry, independence, a simple and normal existence, with all the advantages of social contact and co-operation. Stress will be laid upon the proximity of residences and ease of access. The town spirit of solidarity is to be developed. The main difference between Mr. Gilman's Circle City and the Goode City project lies in the simplification of the general architectural scheme, fewer houses being grouped together around one centre, and the number of centres being multiplied in the latter. Everything is in favor of the success of the enterprise. The farms are to be of about fifty acres each, and diversified agriculture, with numerous other industries, will be fostered."—Public Opinion.