

GARDEN CITIES AND SUBURBS.

Many movements, indeed most movements, which find their field for working out on this side of the Atlantic, will be found to have their origin in England. The Garden City and Garden Suburb projects will no doubt turn out to be one of these steps forward in modern life.

Two years ago, as a consequence of a book promulgating a Garden City Scheme, a large area was purchased in Essex by a company of philanthropic investors and called Garden City. It was opened with some ceremony and is now in process of development. Since then, in the course of this year, a second project has been started at Hampstead under the name of the Hampstead Garden Suburb.

Since the time of the Tudors, Eton College has owned an estate of 320 acres, adjoining Hampstead Heath and making part of a celebrated view. Hampstead Heath is to have 80 acres of this estate and the rest at a price of £470 an acre, has been handed over to Mrs. Barnett, (wife of the clergyman who established Toynbee Hall, the University Settlement at the east end of London), and a committee of public spirited noblemen and gentlemen, under the name of the Garden Suburb Trust.

These schemes are the outcome of a tendency to seek the country for residence which is just as marked as the tendency to seek the city for work. The very flow towards the city is that which, by increasing the density of its population, makes it undesirable as a place to live in and causes the counter-flow towards the country. To this end electric railways and motor conveyances contribute, so that suburban residence is a natural state of affairs now-a-days.

The suburbs themselves are, however, seldom satisfactory as a refuge, either in London or on this side of the water. They are compounded of building speculations in which, in so far as the speculators think of beauty at all, they think of it only as it affects their own land, without reference to that of their neighbors. There is no general design, only more streets added to the town. There is no difference from the rest of the town but in the more open character of the streets. There is no variety of public and private space; no composition of functions, or classes; but long strings of houses, all of the same kind.

Garden City is as far from this as possible because it is a complete town in itself. Even factory sites are included. It is distinctly not an attempt to get "back to the land", or to realize again any condition of affairs that is past or belongs to other situations; but is a proposal to make an ideal city with the existing conditions of town life; a purely artificial creation, beginning with vacant land. Without doubt, as the place is only an hour or so from London, there will be many residents who will go to London to do their daily work; but Garden City will have a life of its own, and will acquire interest thereby.

The Hampstead Garden Suburb is more directly in the line of suburban development. It is a true suburb and, though there is public spirit at the bottom of the scheme, it is not intended to be in any way a gift, but will be as truly as the builders' work a speculative venture. The one point in which it is peculiar is that a good piece of land will be developed on a plan, so that profit will not be separated from the amenities.

Here is the Times' account of the intentions of the trustees:

"Plans have been prepared for the treatment of the whole estate, with a view, not to covering it with the greatest number of houses, but to preserving the best features of the land, giving every house a pleasant prospect, interspersing buildings in every part with public open spaces and private gardens, and providing houses adapted to every pocket. On one of the best sites will stand a group of public buildings, a church, a chapel, a public hall, a public library and picture gallery, and a club. Schools and school playing fields will find their proper place. In one spot a piece of water will be the central feature; another part of the ground slopes down to a running stream. In addition to houses of all sizes, from the large villa overlooking the Heath to workmen's cottages, it is suggested that quadrangles of chambers or flats should be provided for single men and women, where some joint management may relieve the inmates—the old as well as the young—from the cares of individual housekeeping. The existing timber will be carefully preserved, and all the roads will be planted. Nowhere will nature be shut out; within sight of every house will be waving trees and pleasant green-sward. If only the ideas of the Trust can be realized, there can be no doubt that, in place of the dull builders' roads and rows of monotonous cottages which are the common feature of the suburb, a very agreeable quarter will have been added to this gigantic and ever-extending metropolis."

This seems a good deal to get into 240 acres but the laying out must be done compactly in order to pay, and the scheme will not be realized as an ideal unless it does pay. As the *Times* says, "it will be necessary to form something in the nature of a land company; and the problem will be that of the ordinary development of a building estate, with this difference that the regulations and conditions which are of the essence of the scheme may somewhat postpone the realization of profits, while eventually they will largely increase the value of the property." Eton College is said to be prepared to arrange easy terms of payment. This is an essential condition of carrying out any largely conceived scheme. The initial expenses in the way of roads, etc., will be large in proportion to the early returns—to say nothing of experiments which, in a first venture, may not succeed. But in no long time an estate laid out in this manner, in the neighbourhood of London or of any large city, must become valuable.

The exact conditions of development—whether the company should itself undertake building operations, and how far it should keep control of the land—are a matter which may receive different decisions in different places. In London the building lease is in common operation and seems a sufficient means of maintaining the peculiar character of such an estate.

The success of this scheme is of much wider interest than as it applies to the preservation of Hampstead and the amelioration of life in London. It is a common complaint of early residents in outlying districts of a town that the beauty of neighbourhood which attracted them and makes the charm of their homes is destroyed by the haphazard growth of building about them. This might be prevented by concerted action in the acquisition and control of land to preserve features and