

A reminiscence of the silvery Thames—Paton's Island (left), the site of Mr. Hugh Paton's country home on the Ottawa, ten miles from Montreal. The estate comprises a thousand acres.

Photographs by Notman.

HOMES AND GARDENS OF CANADA

3—A Montreal Country Home

By A. G. SCLATER

SNUGLY tucked away amid the century-old elms and maples of a beautiful little island lying almost midway between the wooded banks of the Riviere des Prairies, that branch of the Ottawa River which separates the Island of Montreal from its sister island to the north, Ile Jesu, lies the country home of Mr. Hugh Paton, president of the Shedden Forwarding Company, country gentleman and millionaire.

Some thirty years ago, when a young man just out from Scotland, with his fortune still to make, but a true lover of nature then as now, Mr. Paton picked upon the little one hundred acre Ile au Chat (Cat's Island), near the French-Canadian village of Abord a Plouffe, buried as it then was in the almost primeval forest as an ideal site for a country home. At that time the island, which has since become known as Paton's Island, was the site of a small, old-fashioned French-Canadian farmhouse of stone, which the early French settlers with infinite toil had built there in the wilderness two hundred years before. For generations a French-Canadian family had lived and toiled in the tiny house, and cleared their little fields amid the virgin forests.

Hard times had come to Abord a Plouffe when Mr. Paton first came to know the place, and decided to buy the little farm on the Ile au Chat. The lumber trade, once a gigantic industry on the lower reaches of the Ottawa, had faded away to almost nothing, and the coming of the railways had destroyed the usefulness of the great trade road between Montreal and Ottawa, to which Abord a Plouffe was the half-way house.

The French-Canadian farmer was only too glad to sell. To-day his tiny stone house stands in the centre of Mr. Paton's charming country home, the nucleus of one of the most delightfully countrified country homes in the vicinity of Montreal.

"The Island," as Mr. Paton calls his country home, and the estate about it, has grown during the last thirty years with its owner's fortunes. Like most busy men of affairs, he has always appreciated the need for a hobby and the need for men engaged in the mad rush of modern business getting back once in a while to the pure air and the open sky of

the countryside, to freshen up their bodies and to sweep the dust of conflict from their souls. But unlike many of our wealthy men, he did not

wait until he grew old and wealthy to satisfy his liking for the country air. He started young and "began small." As a firm believer in hobbies, Mr.

Paton recognizes that a hobby to be a true hobby must permit of the hobbyist always having something to do. He thinks that his country home has been an ideal hobby, as it still gives him something to do. Ever since he bought the little farm that formed the nucleus of a great estate, Mr. Paton has been adding something to it, until now he has a big, modern house, in the centre of a beautiful park, with an estate about it of over a thousand acres.

"The Island" stands on the southern side of Paton's Island, facing the south and wooded shore of the Island of Montreal, and commands a beautiful sweep of the swift flowing Riviere des Prairies and a long vista of the magnificent parks on either side.

The scenery about the island, Mr. Paton has often been told, strikingly resembles with its long, level stretches, covered with splendid trees, the upper reaches of the River Thames. And looking at the long grey house, with its castellated cornices, from the river, standing amid the trees and closely clipped lawns, the illusion of an old English manor house is said to be complete.

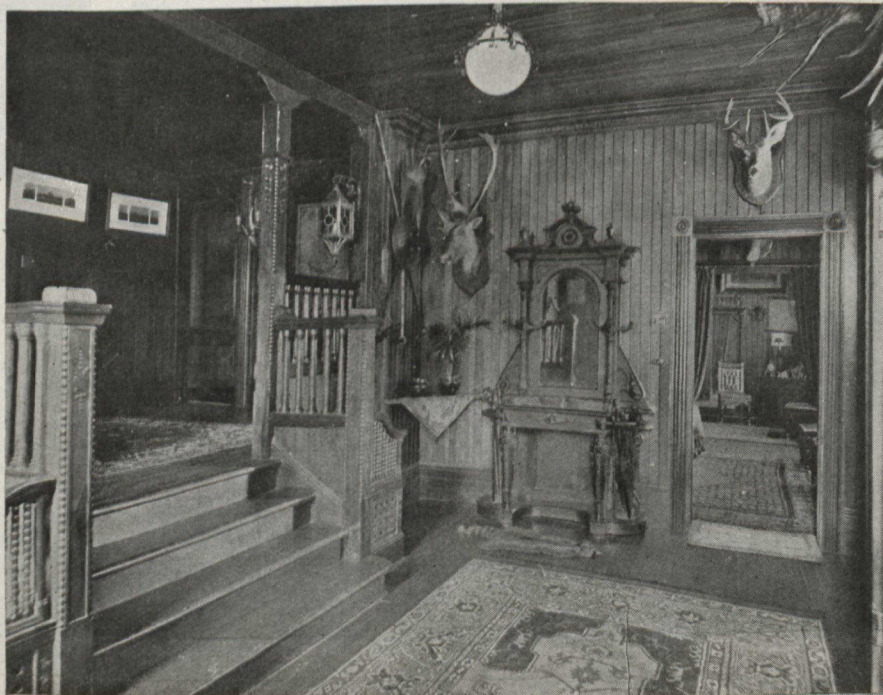
Mr. Paton's home is about ten miles from Montreal, and to-day most of the journey between the city and the island can be performed in a street car. From the end of the line one must drive along by the edge of the river to Ile Jesu Park, on the island of that name, which marks the beginning of Mr. Paton's estate. To reach the house one drives through this park of ancient trees, along a driveway almost a mile long, which terminates in the bridge which connects the two islands.

When I visited Mr. Paton's home, I had the pleasure of being driven from the end of the car line to the house by Mr. Paton himself, and thus came to know Mr. Paton a little better. I had met Mr. Paton in the city, but Mr. Paton in the country was, I found, a different man.

To visit Mr. Paton's home on Paton's Island is to know something more of Mr. Paton. His home is as much an expression of himself as it is perhaps possible for a home to be. If on your visit to Mr. Paton's home you have Mr. Paton with you, so much the better. He will help you to appreciate the home, and the home



Mr. Paton's home, "The Island," from the main driveway.



The vestibule of "The Island," with the cloak room on the right.