

198 ADVENTURES IN CONTENTMENT

(the morning newspaper reaches the tin box at the end of my lane at noon), the farmer's telephone, the spreading country trolleys, more schools and churches, and cheaper railroad rates, have all helped to bring the farmer's life well within the stimulating currents of world thought without robbing it of its ancient advantages. And those advantages are incalculable ! Time first for thought and reflection (narrow streams cut deep) leading to the growth of a sturdy freedom of action—which is, indeed, a natural characteristic of the man who has his feet firmly planted upon his own land.

A city hammers and polishes its denizens into a defined model : it worships standardisation ; but the country encourages differentiation, it loves new types. Thus it is that so many great and original men have lived their youth upon the land. It would be impossible to imagine Abraham Lincoln brought up in a street of tenements. Family life on the farm is highly educative ; there is more discipline for a boy in the continuous care of a cow or a horse than in many a term of school. Industry, patience, perseverance are qualities inherent in the very atmosphere of country life. The so-called manual training of city schools is only a poor makeshift for developing in the city boy those habits which the country boy acquires naturally in his daily life. An honest, hard-