

day is a science, not even as a common laborer is there a place for the man with "the emptiness of ages in his face," "the peace of the plant, the stone."

The country life needs alert men and women with minds trained to grasp, not only the possibilities of the soil; but the needs and possibilities of their own lives.

**Country Life From Viewpoints**—In this paper, I shall speak of country life only as observed in our own little corner of the country, though no doubt conditions are very much alike in most, if not all of the state; and I shall speak of country life from two viewpoints; the economic and the aesthetic.

Everywhere we hear of the "back-to-the-farm movement," and of plans to keep on the farm the girls and boys already there. It will be no trouble to do either when the city boys and girls are taught something of the pleasures of agriculture, and all are convinced there is money in sight.

Two things take the young people to the cities; one is the social life, the other the dream of more money; then too, the life seems easier. All things seem possible to them; they say to themselves—

Not Jove, nor Mars, mine be some  
figured flame,  
That blends, transcends them all.

They think it comes for the thinking and asking. They know nothing of the struggle for place, the sordid life, the hand-to-mouth existence of the workers of the cities. They have seen the long working hours of the country, the fluctuating seasons, and they think city life and work spell success. They do not realize that the years of struggle in the cities do not in many cases, even bring a living competence for old age. Neither do they realize that many times false ideals of life are created for their children.

**Country Life Has Changed**—The ideas of country life need rearranging, for the country life of today is so different from that of 50 or even 20 years ago. The telephone that is in every home with central in a town, brings not only neighborhood communication, but puts one in direct touch with the cities.

The roads are a large factor in a contented country life. When California brought before the voters her \$18,000,000 bond issue for a great highway connecting county seats, the people voted yes gladly, with the thought that each county would have one convenient, well-kept main thoroughfare. This has proved a delusion. The road commission has in at least one county paid very little attention to existing roads, but has made it their object to reach a given point in the least possible time, and are paralleling the railroad, which necessitates buying expensive rights-of-way, and building a road that the general public cannot use with safety.

In our long, rainy season, it means everything to country people to have for their use a well-built road; it means equally as much during the six months of sunshine. It is a great pity that the people's money should go toward constructing roads that are not for the direct benefit of the people who live near them. It will be a long time before the automobile will come into general use as a carrier. Although one is found on many farms, it is only for family use. The good old horses still draw the loads of farm produce,

All these things are not money, and our farmer is harassed by debt before he realizes. The government loans money for 2 per cent to the same bank that loans it to the farmer for 8 per cent. If the farmer could borrow directly of the government at, say 3 per cent, pay every year on the amortization plan, say 6 per cent, half of which should go on the interest, and half on the principal, it would do more than anything else to help out the back-to-the-farm movement.

The currency bill, now before congress, while it helps the farmer somewhat, does not reach the man who has no credit with his local bank. He must have some help to acquire land. There is in cheap interest a possibility of inflated values, and unnecessary borrowing; but these dangers are small when compared with the advantages of acquiring a home without the tremendous drawback of high interest, the possible failure of crops, and the worry over "What shall I eat, and what shall I drink, and wherewithal shall I be clothed?" Add to that, "How shall I pay for labor?" and you have the problem that is not only driving the boy from the farm and keeping the city boy from it; but is keeping the immigrant from the land.

**Real Estate Agents Misrepresent**—A man comes with \$10,000; buys 40 acres of land, builds some outbuildings, and a small house; buys some stock, puts a mortgage on his place, and settles down to easy living, for has not the real estate dealer figured it all out? Fifteen acres of alfalfa, 12 tons to the acre, \$10 per ton average price, cost of production \$5 per ton, net per acre, \$60, or \$900 for the 15 acres, or he can keep cows on the 15 acres, and have a net profit of \$1600; then he can have 15 acres in fruit; the smooth-tongued real estate dealer easily figures a net profit of \$2500 a year from 15 acres of fruit; he is also to have eight acres in raisins, they will bring him a net gain of \$200 an acre or \$1600. The real estate man tells him a wonderful story of Jones, who came to the country ten years ago with his earthly assets on his back, and he is now a rich man from raisins. No wonder our buyer is dazed with our glorious California, think of it. A yearly income of nearly \$6000 from an outlay of \$10,000. Why should a mortgage fret him? He sees just before him a six-cylinder car, an up-to-date bungalow, a hammock on the piazza, and in it a man who looks like him, taking his ease. The mortgage is paid and all he has to do now is to lie in the hammock and cut coupons. This is all true, for he has seen the figures, and figures don't lie. If only the man who wrote the figures, didn't lie either, the millennial days would be at hand. In five years, our friend is a sadder and wiser man. He had dropped onto Elysian days too soon.

There is no royal road to fortune on the small farm. You have to use your head and your hands; but for the clear-headed, industrious man, there is a competence and a cheerful, comfortable old age, if he is willing to do his part. Even debt need not always daunt him; it need never daunt him if our patriarchal Uncle Samuel will come to his help. It would be a paying thing for Uncle Samuel, too; 3 per cent instead of 2; each year some of the principal coming in to help other men to start, and best of all, the consciousness of

helped to make it count for happiness. Clubs are scattered now through most country communities; not only the purely social club, but those that help to form the literary tastes of the country people. The county libraries, the farmers' institutes, the university farm, and the university extension through its correspondence courses are doing a wonderful work in helping to raise the economic life of the farm to a more productive plane, and at the same time, create higher ideals for the social and intellectual life.

**The Inner Life Most Important**—It is a sordid philanthropy, however, that does not try to touch our inner life. What is the money, what is the intellectual life compared to the growth of the soul, the love for the beautiful and good? Of what use to one is the beauty of the country if he has not eyes to see? The primrose by the river's brim,  
A yellow primrose was to him, and  
nothing more.

Part of the mission of the public schools ought to be the cultivation of the esthetic part of our nature; otherwise the farm life becomes a dreary monotony. One summer I had occasion to take an eight-mile ride twice a week for several weeks. There will always be in my mind the picture of those beautiful mornings when the earth was just awaking from her night's sleep, when the clouds lay in long white bars across her breast; when in the distance the snowy Sierras showed white, and crimson and gold, as the rays of the morning sun touched their summits. They were mornings to remember, when,

Over the valley, in early summer,  
Over the mountains, on human faces,  
And all around me, moving to melody,  
Floated the gleam.

**All Life Has Compensations**—Even the summer days of the hot valleys have their compensations. The heat for four hours lies in shimmering waves on the hot ground; the leaves of the trees droop, and you long for the ocean waves, or the cool mountain brook under the trees; then suddenly a cool breeze stirs among the trees; and as soon as the sun has set, the evening comes with its long twilight, and its wonderful star-lit nights. "They are nights to remember.

The work too has its compensations. To make the soil do its best; to see the grain, the trees, the vines, the flowers growing and know that you have helped to make their beauty; to care for the gentle animals that repay so well your care and affection; to hear the birds that year after year come back to you to rear their young; these are really joys to the eyes that see, and the ears that hear; yet one who has not experienced them cannot realize that there is in the country not only a living, but a pleasure and a growth for the soul.

These are the things I prize, and hold  
of dearest worth.  
Light of the sapphire skies, peace of  
the quiet hills.  
Shelter of forest, comfort of the grass,  
Music of birds, murmur of little rills,  
Shadows of clouds that quickly pass.  
And after showers, the smell of flowers,  
And the good brown earth—and the  
good brown earth.  
And best of all, along the way, friend-  
ship and mirth.