

We seldom stop to consider how hollow and what a sham it is to entertain those whom we do not care for, and who do not care for us. Is this artificial nonsense so much coveted that we are to sacrifice the comforts of our lives to obtain it? What! live in fear and anxiety that we may outdo our neighbor by putting a more costly pair of boot-tops on our coachman? Burden ourselves with a life of toil simply to increase the pomposity of our butler? I am satisfied that domestic melancholy sets in

with the butler. He is the melodramatic villain of society. Give me a tidy girl, with a clean calico frock and a neat little white cap — that's the height of my ambition! Look at her! there she stands with a cheerful smile and a willing hand, ready to administer to your comfort and laugh at your old jokes — ay, though she has heard them fifty times. What a delightful audience! I am satisfied that no butler ever laughs at the same joke twice: I have tried it.

(To be continued.)

Joseph Jefferson.

THE FORGOTTEN MILLIONS.

A STUDY OF THE COMMON AMERICAN MODE OF LIFE.

BY THE PRESIDENT OF HARVARD UNIVERSITY.



It is the fashion to discuss social questions, and to bring to the discussion many prepossessions and not a little warmth of imagination. The anarchist, socialist, and nationalist, each for his own reasons, have all an interest in magnifying and proclaiming every wrong, evil, and danger which can possibly be attributed to industrial conditions. In every important strike the strikers endeavor to enlist public sympathy by giving vivid descriptions of the injuries against which they protest by quitting work. Newspapers and magazines find it profitable to print minute accounts of the cruelest industrial practices, the most revolting human habitations, and the most depraved modes of life which can anywhere be discovered — in miners' camps, factory villages, or city slums. The evils described are real, though perhaps exaggerated; and the average reader, whose sympathy is moved day after day by some new tale of injustice and distress, gradually loses all sense of the proportion of good to evil in the social organism. He does not observe that, whereas almost all the evils portrayed are developed in unnatural agglomerations of population, three-quarters of the American people do not live in dense settlements, but scattered over great areas, only one-quarter of the population living within groups so large as four thousand persons. It has not been brought home to him that even in such a hideous mass of misery as East London sixty-two per cent. of the population live in comfort and with an upward tendency. He tends to forget the great, com-

fortable, contented mass of the people in his eager sympathy with some small fraction which is miserable and embittered; and little by little he comes to accept the extreme view that the existing social order is all wrong, although he knows perfectly well that the great majority of people, even in the worst American towns and cities, live comfortably and hopefully, and with as much contentment and gladness as can be expected in people of their rather joyless lineage.

In this fortunate land of ours the antidote for this empoisoned state of mind is the careful study of communities which illustrate the commonest social conditions and the commonest modes of life. By observing with accuracy the commonest social conditions of to-day, we also qualify ourselves as well as possible for imagining the probable social conditions of to-morrow; for it is the common, not the exceptional, conditions of the present which predict and prepare the conditions of the future. At the risk of dwelling upon elementary principles in popular government, and of describing as unknown things familiar to many country-bred Americans, I therefore purpose to delineate with some minuteness the mode of government, mode of life, and general social condition of the people who make up the sparsely settled town of Mount Desert, situated on the island of that name which lies on the east side of the wide Penobscot Bay. I select this remote and poor town simply because I am well acquainted with the habits and conditions of its people; there are doubtless thousands of towns which would answer my general purpose just as well.

The island of Mount Desert is divided into

three townships. The northeastern portion is the town of Eden; the southwestern is Tremont; and the intermediate third is the town of Mount Desert, incorporated in 1789. The town lies upon the sea at both ends and is irregular in shape; but its major axis, which runs about N. W. by W. and S. E. by E., is twelve miles long, and its width perpendicular to this axis varies from 3½ to 5 miles. Its area is therefore about fifty square miles, the greater part of this area being occupied by salt-water inlets, fresh-water ponds, and rocky hills. The population, which in 1880 numbered 1017, probably numbered about 1400

1889, the polls having increased in that interval from 243 to 337. There is but one village proper in the town, namely, Somesville, at the head of Somes Sound; though there are several other small groups of houses, as at Northeast Harbor, Seal Harbor, and Pretty Marsh. In general the population is scattered along the shores of the sea and the inlets. The number of houses in the town in the summer of 1889 was about 280, of which about one-tenth were for summer use only. The average number of persons to a house is therefore between five and six. The surnames which are common in the town are chiefly English (Wall, Davis, Grover, Clement, Dodge, Lynam, Bracy, Savage, Kimball, Smallidge, Jordan, Gilpatrick, Roberts, Manchester, Atherton, Richardson, Somes, Wasgatt, Smith, Freeman, Bartlett, and Carter); but a few, such as Murphy, Callahan, and Fenelly, indicate an Irish descent, near or remote. The government is by town-meeting,—an unqualified democracy,—and the officers annually elected are three selectmen, who also serve as assessors and overseers of the poor, a treasurer, a town clerk, a commissioner of roads (not chosen in 1890), and a superintendent of schools. Most of these officials are paid by the day, and their total cost to the town is decidedly modest (\$400 to \$500 a year). More than half the polls usually attend town-meetings, and take part in State and national elections. A fair number at the March town-meeting is 175; but at the presidential election in 1888, 225 men voted, 140 for Harrison and 85 for Cleveland. The motive of many of the voters who give a day to the annual town-meeting is to keep down the tax levy, and to resist appropriations which benefit part of the town rather than the whole. Since each voter has the keenest appreciation of the fact that he is to pay his share of every appropriation, the tendency of the town-meeting is rather to niggardliness than to extravagance; yet new appropriations, or increases of appropriations, which can be shown to be for the common interest, have a fair chance of success.

In striking contrast to the common relation in cities and large towns between the number of taxpayers and the number of voters is the relation between these two numbers in Mount Desert. The taxpayers in Mount Desert are much more numerous than the polls, because many women, children, and non-residents are taxed. Thus in 1889 the taxpayers numbered 578, of whom 176 were non-residents; but these non-resident taxpayers are mostly people of the same county (Hancock), who formerly lived in the town, or have bought land there on speculation. The number of persons from without the State who had built houses in the town for summer occupation was only sixteen down to the summer of 1889.

The largest tax paid in the town for that year was \$152; and the rate being \$33 on \$1000, this largest tax implied a valuation of \$4606.06 for the estate which was assessed highest. The incidence of the whole tax levy, as shown in the following table, is interesting because it exhibits approximately the distribution of property among the townspeople. There are no rich persons in the town; very few who have not acquired some property; and fewer still who are not in condition to bear their share of the public burdens.

263 persons, or estates, paid each a tax between	\$0 and	\$5
105 " " " " " " " "	5	10
102 " " " " " " " "	10	20
47 " " " " " " " "	20	30
29 " " " " " " " "	30	40
9 " " " " " " " "	40	50
6 " " " " " " " "	50	60
5 " " " " " " " "	60	70
3 " " " " " " " "	70	80
3 " " " " " " " "	80	90
2 " " " " " " " "	100	110
1 person, or estate, paid between \$90 and 100; one paid \$127; one \$150, and one \$152.		

The principles on which the taxes are levied are highly instructive—this obscure, poor, and sparsely settled town having long practiced a method of taxation far more conservative than the methods which prevail in the rich and populous New England communities. In the first place the valuation is low and the rate high, the valuation remaining very constant and the rate being determined each year by the amount which the town votes to raise. A low valuation tends to keep the State and county taxes low, although the returns of town valuations are subject to correction by a State Valuation Commission. Secondly, the assessors pay no attention to speculative or fancy values. Thus, although a village lot may have been actually bought at the rate of \$500 an acre, it continues to be valued for purposes of taxation at say \$30 an acre, as if it were tillage land. If a cottage which cost \$2000 is let for the summer for \$300, it nevertheless continues to be valued at say \$700. Thirdly, no attempt is made to tax things in-

visible and undiscoverable, although the laws of Maine prescribe the taxation of bonds, money at interest, and other forms of personal property which are easily concealed. The items on the assessors' books consist exclusively of things which are under the public eye.

The low valuation for purposes of taxation is on the whole more acceptable to each taxpayer than an accurate or supposed market-price valuation would be; and it is a more stable basis for the annual assessment of the necessary taxes. The annual valuations, whether of real estate or of personal property, are never appealed to as indicating market price or actual value. The items on the assessors' books (which are open to inspection by any citizen) are divisible into real estate, personal property, and polls — land and buildings constituting the real estate; cattle, horses, mules, sheep, swine, pleasure carriages, musical instruments, household furniture above \$200 in value, logs, timber, boards, vessels, and stock in trade or employed in arts, constituting the personal property. All these things are visible to every neighbor. No inquisitorial methods are necessary, and no returns of property under oath are asked for. Stock in trade is roughly estimated at low figures, the contents of a well-filled country variety store, for example, being valued at five hundred dollars year after year. For purposes of taxation the land is divided into mowing or tillage, pasture, and unimproved land. From \$10 to \$30 per acre is the common valuation for tillage land; \$4 per acre is the commonest valuation of pasture land; and for unimproved land the range of valuation is from \$4 to \$20 per acre, according to its capacities. These valuations are still persisted in, although the access of summer visitors since 1880 has given a high speculative value to some shore and village lots.

This method of taxation is perfectly natural under the conditions which have existed in the town since its first settlement in 1760. The things taxed have made up the entire property of the people for generations, and for practical purposes they are still the only forms of property and capital in the town. The interests of the permanent residents explain the wise neglect of the assessors to take account of the altered values of shore and village house-sites. The greater part of the land which has acquired since 1880 a relatively high value, because of the summer immigration, belongs to permanent residents, who hold it tenaciously, and mean to live on a part of it. If this land were assessed for taxation at the prices its owners ask for it, the present owners could not long continue to hold it.

The total valuation has of course risen considerably since the town began to be a sum-

mer resort, but it is still very moderate. Indeed, it would no more than make a decent little property for a respectable merchant in New York or Chicago. The increase is mainly due to new buildings, \$40,000 of this increase being assessed to permanent residents, and \$50,000 to summer residents. The following table shows the steps of the increase:

VALUATION OF THE TOWN OF MOUNT DESERT.

	1880	1881	1882	1883	1884
Real estate of residents	\$62,531	60,999	85,393	64,470	68,203
Personal estate of residents	24,228	20,755		24,189	24,610
Real and personal estate of non-residents ¹	8,553	11,413	17,698	19,111	20,911
Total	\$95,312	93,167	103,091	107,770	113,724
	1885	1886	1887	1888	1889
Real estate of residents	\$72,326	73,884	89,157	98,090	104,453
Personal estate of residents	24,479	24,399	24,809	28,976	30,793
Real and personal estate of non-residents ¹	23,178	24,526	39,575	50,270	58,273
Total	\$119,983	122,809	153,541	177,336	193,519

It is noticeable that the personal property assessed to permanent residents did not increase at all between 1880 and 1887. The amount of vessel property diminished in this interval, and until 1887 the increase in other forms of personal property did not more than make good that loss.

A rate of \$33 on every \$1000 of the total valuation yields in most years, when added to the poll taxes (\$3 a poll), the money needed to meet the annual appropriations. What are those appropriations? or, in other words, for what do the voters spend the money which they have themselves contributed? The following table answers this question for the years 1880, 1885, 1889, and 1890, the year 1880 being before the invasion of the town by summer visitors, and the year 1889 being the year of largest appropriations:

APPROPRIATIONS MADE AT THE MARCH TOWN-MEETING.

For	1880	1885
State and county taxes	\$1055.60	\$833.48
Common schools	733.60	813.60
Roads and bridges	575.00	1400.00
Town charges	600.00	400.00
Poor	1200.00	1100.00
Bridge at Little Harbor Brook	150.00	Repairing Beach Hill Road
		Bridge at Somesville
		Land damage on road at Pretty Marsh
		30.00
Total	\$4314.20	Total
		\$4777.08

¹The personal property assessed to non-residents is insignificant in amount.

For	1889	1890
State and county taxes	\$789.98	\$800.00
Common schools	813.60	813.60
Roads and bridges	2500.00	2000.00
Town charges	1000.00	800.00
Poor	1200.00	1000.00
Road at Northeast Harbor	750.00	60.00
Damage on a horse	25.00	
Memorial Day expenses	15.00	
Free high school	200.00	150.00
		To buy school-books.. 800.00
Total	\$7293.58	Total \$6723.60

State and county taxes used to absorb nearly a quarter of the whole tax levy, but of late years have required less than one-eighth.

For common schools the town appropriates just what the Maine statute requires, namely, eighty cents for each inhabitant according to the last census; but this small appropriation is supplemented by a grant from the State of nearly as much more, which is derived from the school fund, the bank tax, and a tax of one mill on every dollar of valuation throughout the State. In addition to the town tax for schools, a separate district tax is occasionally levied for school buildings. For the year ending April 1, 1889, the number of scholars was 406, and the State grant of \$712.11 added to the town appropriation of \$813.60 made the whole sum available for common schools \$1525.71, or \$3.76 for each scholar for the year. Since 1886 the town has also appropriated annually from \$100 to \$200 a year for a high school, the State giving as much as the town raises, but not exceeding \$250.

Roads and bridges have been the largest item on the list of appropriations since 1884, and have of late absorbed from one-third to three-sevenths of the entire tax levy. This expenditure has undoubtedly been judicious; for driving is one of the principal pastimes of the summer visitors, and gives profitable employment at that season to the horses and vehicles of the permanent residents. Moreover, the roads and bridges, having necessarily been constructed originally in the cheapest possible manner as regards both laying out and surface, were costly in wear and tear of animals and vehicles, and costly also in annual repairs. Indeed, within the memory of men of middle age communication between the different settlements of the town was mainly by water, and the "stores" were situated near sheltered landings, rather than at cross-roads or corners. Of late years a fair proportion of the annual outlay on the roads has been devoted to permanent improvements, like the construction of adequate culverts and gutters and the reduction of the steepest grades.

The appropriation for the care of the town

¹ The first appropriation for a high school was made in 1886.

poor has been the next largest appropriation since 1884; but before that year it was usually the largest of the appropriations, as, for instance, in 1880, when it was more than one-fourth of the whole tax levy. The theory on which the voters act in making this appropriation is that the town is to take care of the incapable, crippled, and aged who are without means of support. No one in the town is to be hungry or cold. If some unusual misfortune overtake a family ordinarily self-supporting — like diphtheria among the children, or the prolonged sickness of the breadwinner — that family is to be helped temporarily by the town. In short, everybody who has a domicile in the town is assured of a bare livelihood at all times, and of aid under special misfortunes. The idea that it is the duty of the town to take care of its poor is firmly planted in the mind of every inhabitant. The town officers will try to prevent an hereditary or constitutional pauper from acquiring a domicile in the town; they will try to establish elsewhere shiftless families that are apt to need aid; but they will relieve every case of destitution which fairly belongs in the town. There is no poor-house; so that persons who cannot support themselves are boarded and lodged in private houses at the expense of the town. Beside this idea of the town's duty towards the unfortunate and incapable is planted in the breast of the rural New Englander another invaluable sentiment, namely, that "to come on the town" is the greatest of misfortunes and humiliations. Few aged people "come on the town." When a man and wife who have brought up a family get past work, they not infrequently, with the consent of the whole family, give a deed of their land and buildings to one of the married sons or daughters in consideration of an assured maintenance during their lives. This arrangement is generally regarded as one creditable to all parties, being in fact a natural substitute for an annuity.

The appropriation for town charges covers the town officers' bills by the day, the discount on taxes, abatements, stationery, and incidentals. On the whole the town is well served at small charge. In the appropriations for 1890 a new item appears, namely, "to buy school-books." The city practice of providing free text-books as well as free tuition for all children has just penetrated to this island town.²

An interesting element in the well-being of this rural population is their school system. It has already appeared that the town appropriations for schools are very small, and that

² It is interesting to compare the public expenditures of a poor Maine town like Mount Desert with those

even after the addition of the liberal aid given by the State the total sum available per child is not more than one-fifth of the sum ordinarily available in New England cities and towns in which the population is large and dense. The average annual expenditure per child in Massachusetts since 1883 has been about \$20. What do the people of Mount Desert, who by annual vote make the minimum provision for schools, get for their money? The number of schoolhouses in the town was ten in 1889, and on the average school is kept in every schoolhouse for two terms of about nine weeks each in a year. The summer schools are usually kept by women, who are paid from \$4.50 to \$5 a week besides their board and lodging; the winter schools by men, who are paid about \$40 a month besides their board and lodging. In addition, the so-called high school is kept three terms of ten weeks each, but in three different districts. Eighteen weeks in the year are all the schooling a Mount Desert boy can get until he is far enough advanced to go to the high school for ten weeks more. Moreover, the two terms in each year are far apart, so that the pupil forgets a good deal between terms. The teachers are in many cases untrained for their work, or very imperfectly trained. In spite of their limited opportunities, however, all the children of the town learn to read, write, and cipher well enough for practical purposes, and better than some children in cities and large towns who have twice the amount of schooling—and that under skillful teachers—but pass the rest of their time under unfavorable conditions in crowded tenements and streets. The favorable result depends, first, on the keenness of the children's desire to learn; and, secondly, on the general home training. In an ordinary Mount Desert household men, women, and children all work with their hands

for the common support and satisfaction. The children help the elders in the common family interest as soon as they can rock a cradle, drive a cow, sweep a floor, or bring from the post-office the precious weekly newspaper. Yet the children's labor, unlike factory work, is wholesome for body and mind. They thus acquire at home in the best way habits of application and industry which stand them in good stead during the short weeks of their scanty school terms.

It must be confessed that the town was but ill supplied with churches before the advent of the summer visitor. Before 1881 there was but one church in the town, and that one did not always have a minister, and was practically inaccessible from large parts of the town. The native population, as a rule, felt no need of rites or sacraments; they were seldom christened or baptized, and were generally married by a justice, and buried by some minister imported for the occasion. A careful justice requires the town clerk's certificate of five days' intention of marriage. It has long been the custom to bury the dead near the houses where they had lived; so that on almost every farm one or more small burial lots are to be seen, inclosed with a wooden fence, and containing a few marble headstones, some wild roses, and perhaps a mountain ash or some maples. There were but few church members in the town, such as there were being Baptists, Methodists, or Congregationalists. By the zeal of summer residents and visitors who were devoted to the Episcopal Church two chapels have been built in the town, in which the worship of that church is maintained all the year round; and last summer (1889) a small Union church was also finished by the combined efforts of permanent and summer residents. It was, and still is, the practice of the natives of the town to secure a little preach-

of a comparatively rich Massachusetts town like Concord. For 1888-89 the expenditures of Concord, excluding payments on a new high-school building and payments of principal and interest on the town debt, amounted to \$54,135.48. Only 77 per cent. of these expenditures were for the same objects as the expenditures at Mount Desert. The other 23 per cent. were for street lamps, police, sewers, sidewalks, the fire department, the public library, the cemetery and public grounds, none of which luxuries are provided at Mount Desert. The expenditures in the two towns in 1888-89 for the same objects compare as follows:

	Concord total ex- pendi- tures.	Per cent. of total ex- pendi- tures.	Mt. Desert appropri- ations.	Per cent. of total appropri- ations.
State and county tax, Schools, excluding new buildings	\$6,603.59	12.2	\$789.98	10.8
Roads and bridges . . .	14,751.59	27.2	1,013.60	13.9
General expenses . . .	10,881.29	20.	3,275.00	44.9
Poor	5,023.06	9.8	1,000.00	13.7
	4,209.14	7.8	1,200.00	16.4
	\$41,468.67	77.	\$7,278.58	99.7

The striking differences are on schools, roads and

bridges, and poor. The percentage expenditures on poor and on roads and bridges at Mount Desert are more than double the percentage expenditures for the corresponding objects at Concord. On the other hand, the percentage expenditure on schools is very little larger in Concord than in Mount Desert; for the State aid given to Mount Desert, which is not included in the foregoing table, nearly doubles the appropriation made at town-meeting; whereas the aid which Concord receives from Massachusetts is insignificant, but is included in the table. The percentage of the total valuation of the town appropriated to schools in Concord in 1888-89 was .45 of one per cent.; the percentage of the Mount Desert valuation appropriated to schools in the same year was .52 of one per cent. Concord has only two and a half times the population of Mount Desert, but nearly twenty times the valuation. It is possible, however, that the Concord valuation represents more accurately than that of Mount Desert the actual property of the inhabitants. Concord has not twice as many school children as Mount Desert, but spends on schools seven times the money.

ing by inviting a minister or a theological student who lives in some neighboring town to preach once every other Sunday, or once every month, in one of the schoolhouses, and to accept as payment the proceeds of the collection taken up at the meeting, a guaranty being sometimes given that the collection should amount to a specified sum. The same minister could serve in this way four of the scattered settlements, provided he were strong enough to endure the inevitable exposure and fatigue. One who remembers the Mount Desert preaching procured in this fashion forty years ago describes the regular discourses of his youth as "them worm sermons"; but allusions to the worms which destroy this body, and to the undying worm in hell, are now heard but rarely. Singing by the local talent adds to the interest of these religious meetings, which indeed answer pretty well the common church purpose of bringing people together in search of edification, uplifting, and friendly communion. At Northeast Harbor the Union church, instead of the bare schoolhouse, is now used in precisely this way, it being quite impossible for the few residents to provide a salary for a settled minister. Sunday schools are from time to time carried on in some of the schoolhouses by the efforts of a few public-spirited persons, men and women, who make use of the printed lessons and guides which the various Protestant denominations provide in great abundance. Adults as well as children attend these Sunday schools.

In 1889 there were eleven general, or variety, "stores" in the town, and nine trades were practiced, namely, the trades of the carpenter, painter, paperhanger, milliner, blacksmith, harness-maker, plumber, mason, and undertaker. These are, of course, the trades first needed in small communities. A little lumber is still sawed; in winters when ice fails on the Hudson some ice is cut for shipping, and cord-wood is cut for home use and for shipping; but the only considerable industry in the town is quarrying and cutting granite. The commonest product of the quarries is paving-stones; but stones of large size for building purposes are also produced. The splitting out of paving stones is piece-work, at which a strong and skillful man can earn good wages (\$3 to \$5 a day); but it is hard work, and it cannot be pursued more than six or seven months out of the year. Almost every young man follows the sea for a time in either fishing or coasting vessels; and almost every householder does a little farming—that is, he makes some hay, raises pease, beans, beets, carrots, and potatoes for his family, and keeps a few hens, a pig, and one or two cows. The proceeds of

a lucky season in a mackerel-catcher or "Banker" are sometimes sufficient to build a house for the young fisherman, particularly if only two or three of the rooms are plastered at first. A young man who has laid up money enough to build a small house, and furnish two rooms in it, is in a position to marry and settle down; and a young woman who, with the assistance of her parents, has saved one or two hundred dollars by working in summer hotels or teaching is distinctly a desirable match—first, because she has proved her capacity; and secondly, because she has capital. There is probably not an able-bodied man in the town, leaving out the summer residents, who does not work a great deal with his hands. The doctor is also a farmer; and the minister at Somesville, when there is one, probably raises his own vegetables, takes care of his horse, and saws, splits, and carries in his wood. Almost all the men are rough carpenters and painters, and they are equally at home on a boat, a jigger, or a buckboard. The most substantial citizens work on the roads; tend their live-stock; milk the cows; drive buckboards; cut ice and wood; haul stone, firewood, and lumber; bring sand, gravel, and brick in scows; go a-fishing or tend lobster-pots. Ten years ago many of the women spun the wool of their own sheep into yarn, besides making all the family clothes, taking care of the poultry, making butter, and doing all the household work. The girls work very hard in the summer boarding-houses of the island for eight or ten weeks, but do not, like the Nova Scotia girls, seek domestic service far away from home. From the necessity of the case division of labor is not carried far in the town, and most of the people learn to do many things passably rather than any one thing perfectly.

The diet of the population is sufficiently varied, and is agreeable to them; but it is perhaps somewhat defective in the elements needed to form bone and muscle. This chemical defect may possibly account for the premature decay of young people's teeth, which is noticeable in many cases. The staples of their food are white flour, corn-meal, sugar, butter, lard, stewed fruit (apples, crab-apples, damsons, bog and mountain cranberries, blueberries, raspberries, and prunes), beans, salt pork, salt and fresh fish (cod, haddock, mackerel, alewives, smelts, and frost-fish), clams, lobsters, fresh vegetables and berries in summer, tea and coffee, salt and spices. Fresh meat is too costly for common use, except in midwinter, when large pieces can be bought at wholesale prices and kept frozen. Moreover, the women, as a rule, do not use beef and mutton to advantage, because they do not know how to make the savory stews, broths, and soups which

French and Canadian women prepare from the cheapest pieces of meat. Instead of boiling or stewing a piece of the round of beef, for example, the Mount Desert cooks broil or fry it, cut into thin slices, the product being, of course, dry, tough, and indigestible. Eggs are too useful for barter at the "store" to be eaten freely, and chickens must be sold to extravagant summer residents, or to collectors of poultry for city markets. The diet of the inhabitants of Mount Desert might be greatly improved at very small cost if they would only adopt oatmeal from the Scotch, pea-soup from the Canadians, sausage from the Germans, and the *pot-au-feu* from the French. It should be observed, however, that their present diet is satisfactory to them. They like hot bread made in fifteen minutes by the aid of chemical baking-powders; they are used to cakes, doughnuts, pies, and sweet sauces, and they probably would not like the more nutritious and more nitrogenous diet which their summer visitors affect.

The cost of bringing up a family of five or six children comfortably in the town of Mount Desert does not exceed \$250 a year if the house, a garden-patch, and a cow-pasture be already provided from savings of the husband and wife before marriage, and if the family, as a whole, have normal health and strength. Very few heads of families earn more than that sum in a year; for, although a day's wages in summer is commonly \$1.75, work is scarce, the winter is long, and few men can get more than five months' employment at these wages in a year. The man and boys of a family can, however, do much for the common support, even when there is no work at wages to be had. They can catch and cure fish, dig clams, trap lobsters, pick the abundant blueberries on the rocky hills in August, and shoot ducks at the seasons of migration. Wild nature still yields to the skillful seeker a considerable quantity of food without price. Dwellers in a city may wonder how it is possible for a family to live so cheaply, but there is no mystery about it. There is no rent to pay; the schools are free; water costs nothing; the garden-patch yields potatoes and other vegetables, and the pasture milk and butter; two kerosene lamps and a lantern supply all the artificial light needed, at a cost not exceeding \$2 a year; the family do all their own work without waste; there is but one fire, except on rare occasions, and that single fire is in a stove which delivers all its heat into the house; the wife and daughters knit the family stockings, mittens, and mufflers, mend all the clothes, and for the most part make all their own. The ready-made clothing which the men buy at the stores is very cheap (\$10 to \$15 a suit), being made of cotton with but a small admixture of wool. The cloth

is strong and warm, and looks fairly well when new, but soon fades and wears shabby. For children the old clothes of their elders are cut down, the wear being thus brought on new places. The Hessian country girl wears proudly her grandmother's woolen petticoats, and well she may, for they are just as good and handsome as they were sixty years ago. A Scotch shepherd's all-wool plaid withstands the wind and the rain for a lifetime. The old Swiss porter, who is carrying the mounted traveler's valise over the Gemmi, puts on a thick woolen jacket of a rich brown color when the shower begins with the remark, "The rain won't wet me, sir; this coat has kept me dry for twenty-five years." The American farmer and laborer use no such good materials as these, and therefore they and their children look shabby most of the time; but their clothes are very cheap in first cost, and, like the cotton clothes of the Chinese, they answer the main purposes of all clothing. In a city the best clothes of the family must be often put on, in the country but seldom. Shoes and boots must be bought for the whole household, but these articles are also very cheap in New England, and the coarser sorts are durable in proportion to their price. For protection from rain the Mount Desert man who is obliged to be out-of-doors in bad weather uses, in sailor fashion, not rubber clothing, but suits of oiled cotton cloth, which keep out not only water but wind, last long, and cost little (\$2 to \$3 a suit). However hard it may be for city people to understand it, the fact remains that \$250 a year is a sum adequate to the comfortable and wholesome support of a family of seven or eight persons in the town of Mount Desert, provided that a house, a garden, and a pasture are secured to them.

The people are, as a rule, well satisfied with their surroundings and their mode of life. Why should they not be? They are individually self-supporting and independent; they manage their town affairs, as free citizens should, with frugality and conservatism, feel no external restraints, and, being quite ignorant of the practical working of the national tariff, are conscious of no burdens which are not self-imposed. They are not anxious about the morrow, for their well-being does not depend on any single industry, or on the good feeling or good judgment of any one man or set of men. They all feel sure of a modest livelihood while health and strength last, and the poorest know that in emergencies they can rely on help from the common purse or from sympathetic neighbors. If the father of a family break his leg just when the winter supply of wood should be sawed and split, the men and boys of the neighborhood hold a "chopping-bee" at the house, and in a day the

winter's supply of fuel is prepared and piled ready for use. If the cow of a poor family dies, the friends club together to provide another. Such poverty as exists in the town is the result of disease, bad habits, or shiftlessness. The persons supported by the town in 1888-89 were two orphan children, two insane adults, one boy in the reform school, and one infirm woman. If the wife is lazy, careless, or wasteful, the family cannot thrive. "That woman will throw more good stuff out of the window with a spoon than her husband can roll in at the door in a wheelbarrow," said a town official in describing the causes of the straitened condition of a family which sometimes needed the help of the town. A good proportion of the families of the town are thrifty, kindly, and intelligent, and there is helpfulness and self-respect throughout their households, and therefore comfort and contentment. Of course there are some blackish sheep; and, as in all small communities, there are some quarrels between neighbors who ought to be friends, and some chronic misunderstandings and antagonisms between kindred families which ought to be united. One must not imagine that people who live in the country are *ipso facto* more virtuous and high-minded than people of the same stock who live in the city. Bunyan's man with a muck-rake, who could look no way but downwards, raked to himself, not coupons and rubies, but the straws, the small sticks, and the dust of the floor. In making a bargain with a Mount Desert man one must not expect to find him less skillful and wary than a city Yankee. On the contrary, he may appear more suspicious, because he is less self-confident. The men do not always take their hats off in the house, even in the presence of women, and men, women, and children are habitually reticent and undemonstrative in manner. One who engages a Mount Desert laborer or mechanic to do a piece of work will probably receive the impression that it is the employed who consents to do a favor to the employer. On the other hand, the employer is pretty sure to get a fair day's work done. The butcher, the fish-dealer, and the grocer dispense their goods for a consideration, to be sure, but chiefly, it would appear, to accommodate their neighbors. "Can you let me have some eggs or some halibut to-day?" is a natural mode of opening a negotiation for these commodities. In short, the manners of the people express the independence they feel; and if they have not so much responsiveness and alertness as city people, it is because they have not so much practice in meeting strangers.

But perhaps to people who live crowded together in closely built cities the life of a Mount Desert family seems solitary and dreary.

They cannot hear the newsboys' and hucksters' cries, the rattle of vehicles and clatter of hoofs on stone pavements, the buzz and rumble of electric cars, and the screaming of factory whistles. They cannot see the thronged street and the gay shop windows, the electric lights, the grand houses, and the public monuments. They cannot ride in street-cars, parade on Main street or Fifth Avenue, and visit at pleasure the dime museum, the dog, cat, horse, or baby show, or the negro minstrels. These indeed are some of the sights, sounds, and social privileges which are denied to a rural and seaboard population. Still, they have compensations. They hear the loud monotone of the surf on the outer islands, the splash of the waves on the inner beaches, the rushing of the brook, the cawing of crows, the songs of robins and thrushes, and the rustling of the leaves in the breeze. They see the sky, the sea, the woods, the ponds, and the hills in all the varying lights and shadows of winter and summer, evening and morning, sunshine and storm. Then, too, they have many social enjoyments. Town-meeting gives the men a whole day of pleasure: first, the long drive or walk in company to the meeting-place; then the morning session; then the dinner provided by public-spirited women for twenty or twenty-five cents a head, the proceeds to go for some public object, like a plank sidewalk or a fence for the cemetery; then the afternoon session, big with important issues; and then the cheerful return home. Sewing-circles are maintained in the most populous neighborhoods; sometimes two in the same neighborhood, one for the mature matrons and another for the girls. A circle sews, not for the poor, for there are none, but for some public object like an organ for the Sunday meeting, or a library for the Sunday school; and when it holds its sale of the articles it has made it gives a supper-party — admission ten, fifteen, or twenty cents, according to the costliness of the supper. There are hulled-corn suppers, ice-cream suppers, strawberry suppers, and turkey suppers. Then there are dancing-schools and singing-schools, and latterly there have been choir rehearsals in addition. Now and then a traveling showman summons the population to his ten-cent show. Occasionally a combination of native talent gives a recital or a little play. The "lodge" draws the men together, and the women too, for simple entertainments. The necessity of giving and receiving help in household emergencies adds variety to the lives of the women. If the mother of a family is disabled somebody must go and help her, for few families can afford to hire assistance. The neighbors do the work until an aunt, a sister, or a niece can arrive from the mainland or

from some other part of the island. There is no little visiting for pleasure among relations, the visits lasting, not twenty minutes or through a single meal as among hurrying city people, but for several days. Thus a Mount Desert man and wife will go to Bangor in the fall, when the steamboat fares are reduced one-half, and pay a week's visit to some cousins who live in that metropolis; in the next June the Bangor cousins will return the visit. The cost of the exchange of visits is only the steamboat fares; for the two families have just about the same food and mode of life, and what the hosts expend the guests save. The system may be extended even to remote places like Massachusetts. A married aunt in Boston entertains her nephew and his wife for a week in the early spring; the next summer the aunt comes alone to Mount Desert, and spends a fortnight with her nephew. Of course the men get more variety than the women, because they often work in "crews"—as on vessels, on the roads, on new buildings, and in the quarries; and also because they travel more by land and by sea, vote, serve on juries, and act as town and county officers.

The people of Mount Desert are free and at ease, very conservative for the familiar reason "we're well 'nough 's we air;" and very indifferent to the social speculations of nervous residents in cities. The single tax on land strikes them as absurd. The socialists' proposition that the community owes everybody at least a livelihood seems to them an old story. "It has always been so in this town," they truly say. Whether or no cities should make their own gas, as the Nationalists propose, is a matter of profound indifference to them. Kerosene is their reliance. On the question whether Government should manage the telegraphs—the other practical proposal of the Nationalists—they might possibly have an opinion in the negative, because they suffer from the wretched management of their post-offices by the National Government. The postmasters are frequently changed, the routes are badly arranged, and the mails are carried by horses which can hardly drag one foot after

another. "The meanest and worst-used horses on our roads are hitched to the United States stage," said an indignant villager last summer. They hear of strikes, lock-outs, and boycotts in remote regions like New York, Pittsburg, and Chicago with much the same sort of pitying interest that the tenement-house horrors, the midsummer slaughter of infants, the great conflagrations, and the multitude of accidents, crimes, and disasters which happen amid a dense population excite in them. "Why will people stay in such places?" "How thankful we ought to be that we don't live in cities," are common expressions among them. It is difficult to transplant Mount Desert people. They prefer their sterile but beautiful island to any other place in the world, and if they leave it for a time they are always desiring and expecting to return to it. Factory operatives, unsatisfied mechanics, and city folks generally—they would say—may find as much fault as they please with the constitution of their own society, and may upset their social pyramid as often as they choose, provided it be clearly understood that the institutions and society of Mount Desert are to be left untouched, since they are already perfectly satisfactory to all concerned.

The manners and customs of the people of the town have thus far been very little affected by the inroad of summer visitors. About a dozen families have learned to take boarders, and have enlarged their houses considerably for this purpose; a few more families have sold portions of their farms, and with the proceeds have built for themselves better houses; and there is more work both for men and women in summer than there used to be. Still the habits of the people are essentially unchanged, and the town is managed precisely as it was before 1881.

Now this sequestered, wholesome, and contented community affords a fair type of the organization of basal American society. Due allowance made for differences of climate, soil, diet, and local usage, this is very much the way in which from thirty to forty millions of the American people live.

Charles W. Eliot.

