

OUR SUMMER MIGRATION.

A SOCIAL STUDY.



DURING the last thirty or forty years our summer migration has been increasing until its magnitude can be grasped only by a wide treatment of details coupled with some exercise of the imagination. Figures on the subject are not easily accessible. The statistician does not deal with them. To sift them from the records of railroads, steamboats, hotels, boarding-houses, cottages, and camps, would be an almost impossible task. The summer boarder of twenty-five years ago no longer represents the mixed multitude of which he was the herald. All classes and conditions of men enter the streams of population which from the middle of May to the middle of October ebb and flow through the land. Every social grade, every occupation, is represented. The rich and the well-to-do middle classes appear most conspicuously, but the currents are swelled by small tradespeople, by pensioners on limited legacies, who hive in the city during the winter, and swarm early in summer among the country orchards, where cheap living is to be had. Then come the work-people, who in one way and another manage to move with the rest. Your colored barber, when trade begins to slacken in the large town, informs you that he is thinking of taking a little vacation. The carpenter and joiner sends his wife and babies a hundred miles away to spend weeks or months on a farm that takes boarders. Factories frequently shut down for a week or more, and empty their armies into the open fields of retired country places. Household servants go in part with the families which they serve, but hundreds pack their trunks and bundles for the homeward journey. Professional men, college students, teachers, seamstresses, and fresh-air fund beneficiaries pour forth to the mountains, the seaside, the lakes, where they spend their summer outings in rest or in various forms of service.

This migration is limited to no region of country. It sweeps over all portions of the land available for summering—in Maine, and northward beyond the great Gulf of St. Lawrence, along the seacoast far to the south, in the mountain ranges of the Carolinas, in the interior and the great West, among the Rockies and the Sierras, on the route to Alaska, along

the northern lakes, in the wildernesses of the States and the Canadas. In order to comprehend, one must see what is taking place along all thoroughfares, over every mountain trail, in innumerable hotels and boarding-houses, each of which harbors from ten to a thousand or more of these fugitives from heat and toil.

Those who limit their excursions to the principal routes and resorts have little conception of the manner in which these people push into out-of-the-way places. It has been my practice for years to take long tours by private conveyance through various parts of New England, sometimes driving the entire distance from Long Island Sound to northern Vermont, coursing through the seclusions of our mountain ranges, stopping at out-of-the-way taverns, loitering by trout brooks, dreaming through old villages, sleepy and quaint, in the late spring, in midsummer, or in the yellow autumn. While on these journeys I have been surprised to learn into what regions visitors penetrate. Wherever one stops in front of a neat farmhouse commanding a view and overshadowed by maples, he will hear, while taking the draught of water which he has begged, the oft-repeated announcement, "We take summer boarders." By the unfrequented road the house with its piazza, and the red chairs set out, and the hammock swung aloft, advertise the same fact almost as unmistakably as did the old swinging sign, with its fierce lion glaring down on our childhood, show that the village tavern held its doors open to travelers.

Less inviting places have their guests. While making a long detour through a lake-dotted region in western Vermont I was drawn to a low, rambling house of cheap construction, without other inviting feature than a veranda of the simplest kind across its front, though near by slept a lake in tempting beauty. Here were to be had only mean accommodations and coarse fare. The people were kindly, but of uninviting appearance. They kept summer boarders. During a portion of the hot season all available space had been packed with factory hands. Released for a time by a shut-down, they had rushed hither for rest, under what would have seemed to most of us hard conditions. I doubt not they had a good time, lounging by the water, breathing the fresh air, flirting and courting, and at last going back to

their work refreshed; some of them to honeymoons that might never have shone but for the boat ride on the lake, the stroll along the beach, or the sunset seen from the rocky ledge, and the robin's twilight note flung from the opposite shore.

Any numerical estimate of this migration for the whole country would have to be taken with allowance. We may aid our impressions by calling to mind the vast extent of our transportation systems, and by reflecting on the proportion of our public travel which is made up of those who, in the warm season, move for pleasure rather than for business. The accommodations of our railroad, steamboat, and stage lines are crowded in early summer with those who are leaving their homes, and in autumn with those who return. Thousands of these would not journey but for our habit of summering in the country. The excursion business of these lines assumes enormous proportions. It covers all movements for outing, from the mammoth crowds which respond to advertisements for a single day's run to some point of interest, to the thousands of tourists who buy round-trip tickets to seaside resorts, mountains, western parks, or whatever regions attract their fancy. I have before me a volume of some 240 pages, large octavo, devoted by a single railroad corporation to its thousand or twelve hundred excursion routes. A single railroad system of limited area reports, in kindly response to my inquiries, an estimate of 500,000 tickets taken up from summer migrants, by far the larger portion being long-distance tickets. As each person must show a going and a return ticket this number would represent 250,000 passengers. Another road reports about the same number, and another makes a showing of about 2,000,000 tickets to summer resorts, only a small proportion of which represent local traffic not connected with summer travel. This last system annually honors about 300,000 tickets of other corporations. If roads covering comparatively small territories are able to report such figures, what millions must pass over a system like that of the Pennsylvania Railroad, covering the great seaside resorts of New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland, while it stretches out to our inland waters as far as Lake Michigan.

We may obtain further help by a glance at the extent of that hotel industry which caters mainly to the wants of summer visitors. The capacity of the summer hotels is an indication of the demand for accommodations. Throughout the months of July and August many of them are full to overflowing, but we may be content to take as a fair basis two-thirds of the advertised capacity. Perhaps in most instances one-third of this number arrive

each day, and an equal proportion departs. The number of individual visitors in a season of sixty days would thus be one-third of two-thirds the capacity into sixty. This would give, for a hotel capable of accommodating 300 guests, 4000 visitors in a good season. On this basis we may roughly estimate the visitors to the hotels of any region of which the hotel capacity is known. Passing by such places as Asbury Park, Atlantic City, Newport, and Saratoga, and reaching out after more rural regions, we find in the Adirondacks hotel accommodations for 8000 people, in Bar Harbor for about 4000, in the Catskill Mountains for over 5000, on Lake George for 4000, at Old Orchard 3000, among the Rangelly Lakes 1500, in the White Mountains over 8000, in Bethlehem alone, of the White Mountain region, over 3000—figures which show what proportions the hotel interest is assuming in answer to the demands of our summer migration. These few regions offer accommodations for over 33,000 visitors, and by our method of estimation would welcome in the course of a sixty-days' season in the neighborhood of 440,000 guests. To those who are entertained at hotels must be added, in some instances, an equally large number of persons who go directly into camps, cottages, or boarding-houses. Cottage life and camp life are becoming more and more popular. In late years these methods of summering are gaining, as compared with that of the hotel and boarding-house. Cottages and camps are erected in all of the more frequented regions, some with an endeavor to imitate primitive simplicity, and some on a magnificent scale. One who twenty, or even ten, years ago was familiar with our inland waters or our coast lines is surprised, on resuming some route of former days, to note the change which has taken place. Elegant or cozy cottages greet him at turning-points of the ride or sail, while displays of bunting, and waving handkerchiefs, and shouts draw attention to the fisherman's or hunter's lodge.

The magnitude of such a movement as this justifies the assumption that the social influences exerted by it are worthy of serious consideration. They may be none the less powerful, and may become more ineradicable, because they work quietly and attract little notice.

The prevailing motive for this change of population from town to country is sanitary, and the aggregate result in this direction is of unspeakable value, though the least calculable. Laying aside the consideration of comfort as affected by health, and passing over the moral conditions dependent on physical soundness or unsoundness, the economic value of the sanitation which comes from a yearly bath of the body in fresh air, supplemented by a changed

diet, and by the immersion of the mind in new currents of thought suggested by new surroundings, can hardly be exaggerated. To do more and better work, to be more capable of planning and executing, to invent and to utilize invention, to prolong a working life or the working period of many lives, are aims fundamental to national production and to the success of our people in the world competitions into which we are rapidly being drawn. Business men subjected to a heavy mental strain secure, by means of the summer vacation, not only added vigor for enterprises but a prolongation of the active period of life. A like result may be anticipated for all employees, and especially for in-door workers. If it is true that lessening to a reasonable extent the number of hours which constitute a laboring day does not diminish the yearly product of a mill, it may be presumed that a limited annual period of release from the routine of manual labor, and the devotion of the time to out-of-door pleasures, involve no loss and probably bring gain. We have yet to learn how much the wealth of the country depends on the health of its producers. The rise of a single degree of average annual temperature over a continent might tell heavily on our total rainfall, though to the senses of the people the thermometric rise might not be noticeable. A like difference in the health of our laboring population must materially affect the aggregate production of the country. From a purely economical point of view, therefore, the migration of our people pays in the increased intellectual and material product of the land.

The amount of money distributed from the great centers over the rural districts by our migration forms an important element in our estimate of its value to the nation. Whatever tends to the distribution, as opposed to the concentration, of wealth must be accounted a healthful influence. What does it cost to move an army of a hundred thousand men a hundred miles? The people who come from the large towns constitute an army, of which the transportation and forage are paid in cash. The men, women, and children thus annually transported, all of them with some baggage, and some with piles of baggage, are numbered by the hundred thousand. The money which changes hands in the process runs into the millions, distributed among railroads, steamboat lines, stage lines, hotels, and other places of entertainment, as well as among guides, *voyageurs*, and helpers innumerable. For actual figures I am indebted to the courtesy of railroad officials who have made such rough estimates as they were able concerning their departments. Three systems report the probable value to them of summer travel as respectively \$700,000, \$550,000, and \$500,000. In other instances, such as that

of the Pennsylvania Railroad system, the sum would doubtless exceed a million, and perhaps reach millions. The total for the country can not be estimated, and can hardly be exaggerated. Any interference with this source of income becomes a serious matter. A not large but prosperous corporation, owning one of our main steamboat lines on an inland lake, was compelled to reduce its dividends by the occurrence, in summer time, of the smallpox in one of the chief cities towards which travel by that route was directed. Other lines terminating in the same city must have experienced a similar diminution of profits. When we take into account the magnitude of our system of transportation, extending in all directions over the land, and by all water-ways interior and coastwise, and when we consider that, in so far as the summer migration is for its own sake and not for business, it spends money which would not otherwise get into the hands of those who operate these lines, we realize what an effectual agency of money distribution we have here. Every employee on every route, from the hackman to the section hand of the railway, or the deck-hand of the steamer, or driver of the stage-coach, shares in the benefit of our passion for summering in the country. For the accommodation of the moving population railroad trains that have been discontinued through the cold season are set in motion, steamers that have been put into winter-quarters are set afloat, and freshly painted stage-coaches are brought out. These enlarged facilities of intercommunication involve the employment of more labor, not only in the direct work of transportation, but in the branches of manufacture subsidiary to transportation. Our migration thus becomes the occasion of increased production, as well as of scattering hoarded money. Some lines are built and maintained with well-nigh exclusive reference to summer travel.

The pecuniary significance of the migration only begins with the cost of transportation. Every person who thus temporarily changes his abode carries money for his support during his stay in the country, and gradually gives it over to the inhabitants. Bills for board or for camp forage, pay for numerous services, constant outgo in the thousand and one ways incident to summer travel or residence, swell the total expenditure to an aggregate far exceeding the millions which go to transportation lines. Some of all this finds its way back to the city, but a large part is scattered by increasingly minute distribution over wide regions of rural territory, to the wealth or sustenance of which it becomes an important contribution. How much is thus annually yielded to the State of Maine? How much goes into New Hampshire? How much is scattered along the shores of our northern

lakes, and in the far West? Figures now inaccessible may sometime be gathered which will open the eyes of dwellers in these and many other regions to the total brought to them every year by the stream which sets from the cities and large towns towards the seashore, mountains, country villages, farms, and wildernesses.¹

What this outlay means for thousands of recipients scattered through our land needs only to be suggested. Without it whole villages now rendered flourishing would have remained stationary or have fallen into decay. Local tradesmen secure an increased volume of exchange during the summer months. Many a farmer who opens his house to strangers gathers from this source the principal return of the year, and the same is true of numerous villagers who let rooms or furnish board. Our summer migration means to many an obscure home the return to it in autumn of one or more members who have been out to service in the hotel or boarding-house, bringing a large share of all the money which such a poor family will handle in a twelvemonth. It furnishes a home market for products such as milk, butter, poultry, eggs, lamb, veal, and other supplies from the farm or garden, not forgetting hay, grain, and fruits. As these are in demand at first hand, better prices are realized than when they go to distant markets through middlemen and at cost of transportation. A region occurs to me in which the call for early poultry caused by a few city families produces a scarcity, and in the same region we have an amusing result of the advent of summer visitors, in that sweetbreads are worth in summer double the price paid for them in winter, at which time the local inhabitants are content to eat them.

We need not enumerate the occupations benefited by a migration which calls into its service well-nigh every trade and handicraft. The rural market for labor is perceptibly strengthened by this cause, and the variety of employments is increased. Preparations must be made for guests. Hotels must be built, with their appendages of barns and small cottages. Farmhouses must be enlarged and fitted with conveniences. To this is to be added the building of country-seats on a grand scale, the erection of modest cottages, the putting up of permanent camps, the building of boats, the manufacture of sportsmen's outfits. Occupation is thus furnished to laborers, many of whom, but for these industries, would be compelled to seek employment in the larger towns and cities. Household servants are secured with increased difficulty throughout those regions

towards which the tide of travel sets. Farm help is interfered with and commands a higher price. The laying out of estates frequently involves the purchase of hundreds of acres and the employment of hundreds of hands during a term of years in the erection of houses and barns, as well as in grading, draining, road-making, gardening, and all the work of a great establishment. After this initial labor is performed the maintenance of such an estate furnishes permanent occupation for a large company. The effect of this is felt over the surrounding country in the greater difficulty of securing laborers, especially in the busier seasons of the year. Where operations are less conspicuously centered on a single country-seat they may be equally influential, because of the employment of a corresponding amount of labor at numerous scattered points. A not inconsiderable influence is in these ways exerted on the wage question. Any support given to labor in the country tends to equalize wages and to prevent the concentration of work-people in the great centers of population.

The amount of taxable property in the country towns is largely increased by these activities, and in many cases the price of land is measurably enhanced. Confining ourselves to strictly rural regions, the now famous town of Lenox, Massachusetts, ranked, fifty years ago, with other agricultural towns of New England. The number of visitors at any one time staying there has gradually risen since then to 2500 or 3000. A large proportion of these are dwellers in cottages. Whole farms have been bought for country-seats. A recent sale of 100 acres is quoted at \$1000 per acre. This may be regarded as the price of farm land which includes a building site commanding good views. In the village there is no fixed valuation of land. Recently a corner lot three by four rods in size sold for \$15,000. In Bethlehem, New Hampshire, about the same number of visitors have brought up the price of village lots to \$1000 per acre. Even outside the village, farm lands are quoted at \$120 per acre. These values are three times as great as those which prevailed before the influx of summer visitors. Those who knew the Adirondacks in their primitive wildness can hardly realize that on Mirror Lake, close by Lake Placid, land which twelve or fourteen years ago could have been obtained for \$50 per acre now commands \$1000 per acre, while eligible sites on Lake Placid itself are worth from \$100 to \$500 per acre. Industries new to those regions, such as truck-gardening, milk-farming, and so on, have sprung up, and laborers' cottages occupy clearings by the roadsides.

Similar results may be noted at Mt. Desert, with its 25,000 annual summer visitors, and its

¹ The amount of money paid in the season of 1890 to the hotels and boarding-houses of New Hampshire alone is placed at \$5,000,000.

sales of large tracts of land at a high average per acre. Such facts as these might concern us little did they mean nothing more than that considerable sums of money are thrown into the hands of a few original owners of building sites; but they mean much more than this. The value of surrounding lands is affected, and there is a general transition from a relatively sluggish life, or even from lifelessness, with exceedingly low values, into a stirring life with increase of numerous industries and a general betterment of material conditions. Processes less rapid but hardly less important are going forward on a broad scale in many States. Wherever minute ramifications of the great tide of migration penetrate, industries are proportionately revived and values increased. A modest influence of the same kind is exerted wherever sons who have gone from among their native hills to engage in commercial enterprises finally realize a life-long dream in returning to the ancestral home, putting decayed buildings in order, and spending the summer amid the scenes of their childhood. Every old homestead thus appropriated is taken out of the market, and by so much, as well as by its improvement, enhances the desirability of surrounding lands.

We reach here the of late so widely and profitably discussed problem of deserted farms. That these are numerous in the older States is well known, though the impression that they are more frequent in this country than in others is erroneous.

It is not my purpose to discuss the causes of this phenomenon. Two correctives present themselves, each of which must operate slowly, but each of which is prophesied by present tendencies. The first, though not perhaps the earliest, of these is the reflux wave of population before long to set from the western portion of our country as the wild lands are occupied. The agricultural migrations of our times are subject to the law which has ruled barbaric migrations. Such movements exhaust themselves for want of new fields. When the barrier of the ocean or the desert is reached the advancing tide of population rolls back on itself, and lands lately deserted are reoccupied. The reflux wave from the far West is already sending out warning of its coming. The fearful scramble for the opening Indian reservations shows how scarce are desirable agricultural lands. Another generation will see the wave flowing back and taking up sites which the present generation has forsaken. Against such a time it may be hoped that the new agriculture, now so rapidly supplanting old methods, will have become sufficiently established in practice to enable farmers to restore these valuable but much abused lands without too heavy an outlay of capital.

The second, and possibly more speedily op-

erative, cause of resuscitation is to be found in the tide of population from the cities. This comes at present in the form of summer migration; but that is only a premonitory symptom. A change is already observable in the habits of those who annually seek the country. The period of their stay is gradually lengthening. Boarders come early and remain till late in autumn. Owners of country homes leave the city sooner each year and linger as long as possible. There is an increasing disposition to spend the autumnal months in the seclusion and amid the splendors of the country. People are beginning to talk of Christmas as the proper time to return to the city. Many houses are kept open all winter with a view to possible occupancy when sleighing and other winter pleasures are at their height. Country life is asserting its charms as compared with life in the city. The time seems to be approaching when an increased number of people will regard themselves as permanently domiciled in the country, and as visitors to the town only for the season of social gaiety which will intervene between Christmas and Lent. The importance of this inclination towards domicile can hardly be overestimated.

For the present, however, deserted farms must look to a short visitation in the most inviting portion of the year. Since the advertisement and discussion of them, inquiries in regard to them have been numerous. The Hon. N. J. Batchelder, Commissioner of Immigration for New Hampshire, reports that in his State about 350 farms have recently been sold to people who have bought them for summer homes. Where hill farms commanding fine views can be bought for a few hundreds or a thousand dollars, many a family of moderate means might secure such a resort. Clergymen, teachers, men of various professions, as well as prosperous mechanics and moderate tradespeople, can find desirable sites, the buildings of which may be put in attractive condition with moderate outlay.

By such steps as are here pointed out our summer migration gives every year increasing promise of solving one of the grave social problems of the age. The decadence of the rural districts, the flow of population towards the great centers, and the consequent decline of rural industries and values, are disastrous features of our latest civilization. Were the process to go forward as rapidly in the future as it has done in the last three or four decades, some of our country districts must soon present a pitiable exhibit. Schools must degenerate for want of support, church privileges must be retrenched, rusticity must progress towards barbarism. Arrest of the drift of population towards the commercial centers is the cure for this evil. Whatever gives remunerative occu-

pation to craftsmen and other laborers becomes the first means to such an arrest. So long as wage-workers can find well-paid labor near home, the temptation to seek the city is lessened, while the retention of the laborers in their native places prevents an over-supply in the city and helps to maintain prices there. We have seen how the summer migration affects this. It further tends to restore to the country as permanent elements some portion of what is at first only a transient class. The attractions of country life will hold children to places purchased by their parents as temporary homes, and in general the stimulus given to life on the farms will lessen the present prevailing disposition of farmers' sons to forsake the scenes of their childhood and to try fortune abroad.

A few other results of the migratory movement are worthy of notice. As a direct consequence of it road-making has begun to attract increased attention. Riding and driving are chief amusements of summer visitors, and, other things being equal, the region that offers the finest roads will draw visitors. Rural enterprise of this kind is to be desired because of many points of economy involved in it. The irrational waste of our present system of road-making does not confine itself to the road-bed alone. With it is to be counted the wear and tear of vehicles and beasts of burden, as well as the consumption of unnecessary time, which in a country where labor is dear becomes in the aggregate an enormous item. The effect of roads upon land values appears when we consider that a region which can be reached only by ways nearly impassable easily becomes deserted.

The culture of fish, especially in our inland waters, is already matter for legislation, and has assumed importance as a source of food supply to our increasing millions. Few who are not acquainted with the operations of our rural sections are aware what a factor the summer visitor becomes in this branch of industry. In my drives last summer I heard complaint from the hotel interest over the discouragement arising from recent legislation in one State limiting the trout season to the spring and earlier summer months, so that inducements to anglers are taken away just at the time when they are wishing to leave the city. The income from sportsmen is not inconsiderable. As soon as they are open the northern streams draw eager fishermen from foreign parts. The increase of such patronage, and the revenue derived from it, necessitate the stocking of streams, and justify private protection of the haunts of fish

with a view to the sale of privileges. The sums of money that a party of fishermen will, in the course of two or three days, pay to farmers for permission to catch, or to try to catch, trout in protected streams, cause no small amount of banter among members of the party, and bring many a broad smile to the faces of the recipients of such revenues, who but a moment before were "making the air blue" with maledictions on poachers who, regardless of placards against "shooting, trapping, and fishing," quietly slip bait or fly under the green banks of a brook. Pisciculture, thus stimulated by the summer migrant, is extending over our national domain.

A prospective rather than at present realized result of the summer migration is the encouragement of domestic handicrafts. The revival of such crafts in the rural districts of England has been attempted with remarkable success.¹ Work in this direction might well be undertaken for the reinvigoration of our rural life. The drift of young men and women towards the mills of manufacturing centers not only depopulates the regions from which they come but robs the home of its chief attraction to those who stay behind, and deprives the wanderers of needed healthful influences. How to save the home life of those who earn bread is a weighty problem. The mills must principally furnish the world's markets, but fondness for the products of handcraft lingers among refined buyers. Machine-made articles may be woven with greater evenness, or turned with more perfect trueness, but they lack the human flavor which comes with the toil of deft hands, and they leave no room for the display of individual taste. That thousands upon thousands of precisely the same make are thrown on the world detracts from the sense of rareness. Articles of domestic make are more durable. The old-time all-wool flannel cloths that linger in many an ancient family are precious; and what a feeling of firmness and coolness is given to a summer bed by the ancient linen of the hand loom! Rag carpets of pretty dyes and rugs of quaint patterns yield pleasantly to the pressure of our feet. Such industries might multiply and become more varied as well as more artistic wherever they were encouraged, and the products would carry with them thoughts of homes among the hills or in the backwoods. Fabrics of peculiarly delicate texture might be spun and woven from the fleeces of fine-wooled sheep, and would have special value for the assurance which domestic manufacture usually gives of honest material and work.² The sum-

¹ See article in CENTURY MAGAZINE, February, 1889, by Albert Fleming, "Revival of Hand Spinning and Weaving in Westmoreland," a most interesting paper, showing that such household crafts can be made pecuniarily profitable.

² Mr. Fleming in the article cited above adduces as samples of fine hand-work Indian muslin with 100 threads of warp and 110 of weft to the inch and Egyptian linen with 270 double threads in warp and 110 in weft to a single inch.

mer migration brings a market to the doors of country homes, the life of which, thus encouraged, would be preserved in its sanctity. The ready wit of our American women, once directed into these channels, would secure a speedy harvest of skill and good taste. The pecuniary and moral results of such industry might easily exceed sanguine expectations.

The decadence of country towns is forcing rural churches into ever narrower straits. Loss of population and decline of farm values render it more and more difficult to pay parish expenses; ministerial supply becomes irregular and of a lower order; church life declines. The summer migrant is not always helpful. He often imagines that a vacation is as needful from religious as from secular activity. Nevertheless, the major part of visitors observe Sunday, and many attend church. Frequently the city family becomes a valuable accession to the forces of the rural church, returning each year to greet and encourage the residents. Interest thus indulged feeds on activity and develops into attachment. Families which locate permanent summer homes become dependent on neighboring pastors and churches for spiritual privileges, and when people who have lived in luxury, and maintain what seems to a simpler habit an extravagant style, prove by their devotion to religion and humanity that they stand near to the whole Christian brotherhood, they easily meet with affectionate recognition from those of plainer ways, and the relation becomes of mutual benefit.

I do not know that an effect of summer migration on the country school is often observable. Exceptional instances exist, and cases may be numerous. The increasing disposition of families to prolong their stay in the country beyond the limits of the city-school vacation suggests that the time may not be far distant when those who control the village schools will adjust the terms and the studies so as to enable children from the city to continue work during a portion of their stay. The similarity of courses in all graded schools favors this transfer, and by painstaking a fair adjustment might be reached. This would take away from many city families a chief objection to prolonging their sojourn, and would result in a positive benefit to the inhabitants. Lacking some such arrangement, the migratory habit must soon lead to the establishment of private schools in some districts to accommodate temporary residents.

A noteworthy instance of aid to rural affairs has been furnished in Ashfield, Massachusetts, under the wise leadership of such men as Mr. George William Curtis, Professor Charles Eliot Norton, and Dr. G. Stanley Hall, who have taken a practical interest in the problem of the country town. I do not

know how far their counsels may have prevailed to secure the fine roads which help to render that region attractive, but their sense of the beautiful, their love of time-honored ways, and their quick sympathy with all country affairs, are doing much to make the place worthy of the increasing flow of visitors along the maple-embowered streets, and to awaken in the minds of the inhabitants appreciation of and loyalty to their heritage. As a special point around which to rally effort these men have laid hold of the village academy. An annual festival given in its favor brings distinguished speakers from abroad; the large public hall is crowded with visitors, neighboring farmers, and excursionists from distant towns. It is the great day of the year. The perpetuation of this academy, when many have become extinct, is a pleasing commentary on the effectiveness with which various enterprises might be supplemented and directed by summer residents. At the dinner, a few years since, the gift of a park by a visitor was announced, and at the same time it was made known that the decline of population, to which, in common with so many others, this farming community had been subject, had been arrested and a small gain secured.

The church and school suggest the moral bearings of our summer migration. These are not all in right directions. The sight of numbers of apparent idlers or pleasure-seekers is not inspiring to those who are tied to toil, and we may well believe that discontent with the country, and a restless desire to taste the imagined ease of city, life have been aroused by the sight, and have lured many a young man or woman from what seemed the dull routine of home life to try fortune amid competitions of which no conception had been formed, and under a strain of exertion, not to say of temptation, greater than could be borne. Of these, while one wins the goal of desire many must lead a disappointing career, which will make the hillsides and the home seem a paradise unattainable. Especially must we deprecate the influence exerted on the youthful imagination by those displays of wealth which the larger summer resorts present, and which are not infrequent in retired districts reached by visitors. When our young women are taught to make a landau or a four-in-hand with flunkeys their ideal of destiny, and when young men imagine that the chief object of going into trade is to drive a dog-cart or to own a yacht, the process of demoralization is begun. Whatever removes from our people the conviction that life must be earnest if it will be worth living, that there is no easy road to success, and that it is better for a man to work out a noble character along a toilsome way than to live in the pursuit of

pleasure, is a disaster. We have to regret the introduction of the hedonistic philosophy anywhere, and the tendency of pleasure-seeking crowds is in this direction. The presence in a country district of a few careless, wealthy families who give their time to equipage, yachting, fox-hunting, four-in-hand driving, Sunday dinner-parties, and all sorts of in-door and out-of-door sports, introduces ideas of life out of harmony with the best development of manhood and womanhood. The contagion of display invades to some extent all classes, and in a more positive degree those thrifty homes where increasing means facilitate indulgence; and one sees rapidly spreading among the local inhabitants a standard of living that involves many who are unable to maintain it. Extravagance, with its evils, creeps through a society heretofore content with a rational simplicity. Greed of gain comes with fondness for display. Those who have hitherto been content with moderate profits begin to demand unreasonable prices, perhaps descend to trickery or downright dishonesty. A result only less unpleasant is realized when, for the hire which wealth gives, and in consideration of lighter toil, young men in whose veins runs some of the best blood of the old country town lay aside honored rural callings to don the coachman's or the footman's hat, coat, and boots.

On the other hand, we must not overlook the fact that relatively few of our summer migrants are very rich or are mere pleasure-seekers. Many of them belong to the learned class; many are teachers in colleges and schools; some are professional or amateur artists; some are collectors of natural objects. Such people bring culture into the rural districts, along with quiet ideas of life. Contact of these visitors with one another is valuable, and an influence towards appreciation of beauty and goodness is exerted over those who live permanently in the region. These influences go into many families and help to elevate and purify home life. On the whole, a great deal is being done in this way. Personal fellowship is the most natural, effective, and economical method of operation of intellectual, esthetic, and moral forces. In a broad way we may say that what is being accomplished is that most desirable thing—the mingling of city life with rural life for mutual action and reaction. The division of our population into a rustic and an urban class, with little in common, must involve the repetition on our soil of an Old World misfortune. The transfusion of the two is an end on many accounts desirable. City life is our dangerous life. Its excessive development and its isolation from rural life have

ever been a source of peril. Politically speaking, there is safety in having many points of attachment between city and country. The personal and local affections formed become a safeguard. Already we find no small diversity of interest springing up between commerce as represented by the city and agriculture as represented by the country. The more freely our manufacturers and merchants mingle with those who cultivate the soil, the better will be the understanding between them. Some of the greatest questions of our present political economy must be settled on our farms. Students might well make it an object to study them there.

The cultivation of rural tastes is a source of mental and spiritual health. The hills, the fields, the woods, the brooks, the open sky, are the natural heritage and instructors of men. In them meditative, as contrasted with active, life, now disproportionately stimulated, must always find a large share of its inspiration. Whether we speak of literature, science, art, or religion, we may fairly raise the question whether we do not lack, in all of them, that spirit of personal communion with being and the Being of beings which flourishes best under the direct power of rural nature. To what extent have originators and molders in all these departments caught their fundamental spirit and direction from life in the country?

In these days in which we are recognizing that during the last forty or more years the drift of business life and even of American legislation has set towards the undermining of home, we may thankfully receive the promise which our summer migration gives of an enlarged and improved country home life. It is a good thing to see the owners of country-seats watching for the first breaking away of winter and the return of the warm days of spring, with longings for the fields, and with thoughts of the many preparations to be made for the coming season. These people have learned that the first bird-songs are sweet, that opening buds have a charm, that it is cheering to watch the up-starting grass, and that the numerous expectancies of the country at this time of the year possess a peculiar fascination. They are drawn ever earlier away from the bustle of the town to the quiet of the country house. Rural life makes a larger share of their span of life; the flavor of the home amid the fields, different from that amid the crowds, is cultivated and loved. On a large scale this is going forward, and no one who is touched with sentiment or with concern for a healthy national spirit can fail to rejoice over the process.