

L OWELL maintained that he "loved to enter pleasure by a postern." But nobody is so constituted that he likes to enter a pleasure-resort by the back door through a preliminary kitchen-midden in the back yard. Yet this is what every American has to do whenever he betakes himself to such a resort. For that matter, it is what every commuter has to do every time he takes the evening train for home. The eye of little employment having the daintier sense, according to Shakespeare, and afflictions inducing callosities, according to Sir Thomas Browne, this is by no means so grievous to the commuter as to the guest to whom he has sung the beauties of his suburban paradise, and who has to go through a purgatory of a "business quarter"

A "Resort"  
Requirement

to reach the same. The paradise, when it is reached, may really come up to the brag, but the sensibilities of the visitor have been too much rasped to enable him to appreciate it.

Entering almost any American town, big or little, is in fact entering by an unkempt "postern." The railroad itself seems to have an unerring instinct for the slum, which it customarily creates. You cannot make the "yard" of an important station attractive, though you may make it highly impressive in its repulsiveness. But with regard to the suburbs and the resorts, it is not the railroads which are most to blame. In fact, some of the most enlightened of them, quite comprehending that beauty is an asset for them in attracting settlers and commuters, take successful pains with the looks of their stations and of the immediate surroundings thereof. And, as everybody knows, it is in suburban work that our architecture is apt to show to the very best advantage. The improvement within a generation has been immense in the substitution of unpretending and homely picturesqueness in suburban cottages for cheap and tawdry display. But "the movement" has not in the least affected the suburban shopkeeper. The citizen of any of the great cities will have no difficulty in naming half a dozen of its suburbs

which would be highly attractive if their commercial building were advanced to as high a plane as their residential building. And yet it is the benighted tradesmen whose own interest in the attractiveness of the place of their business is most immediate and acute who do their utmost to spoil it. Let the visitor to almost any suburb, or the nocturnal and Sabatarian sojourner therein, fancy what the place might be if the "business street" were as good in its kind as the habitations in theirs. Let him, if travelled, try to imagine substituted for the business street such a village street as he may recall many of on the other side of the Atlantic, the modest, low-browed though still abundantly lighted shop-fronts, to which the tin cornice and other like abominations are unknown. Cease, Hope, cease that flattering tale!

Or, indeed, why should Hope cease? Why should she not rather insist that she is "talking business," as in sober fact she is. It is true that there is no cisatlantic object lesson to which she can point with unmingled pride. There have been some modest and fragmentary beginnings in that direction. There are such in Newport. The present point of viewer, or pointer of view, came with great pleasure the other day upon one in Princeton, N. J. One may hope that such things may exert an evangelizing influence upon the surrounding tradesmen whose faith has hitherto been unshaken in the monumental pretensions of the sheet-metal suburban commercial architecture. But, indeed, why should not the promoters of the suburb or resort take this matter into their own hands, as they so often can, when it is in effect a "proprietary" suburb or resort? Especially the resort, for the resort distinctly lives on the attractiveness which such an awful vestibule to it as the business quarter of Bar Harbor and the business quarters of so many of the coast resorts farther to the Southward do so much to destroy. So soon as this matter is recognized as a matter of business, it will be put on a better footing. And it clearly is a matter of business.

## · THE FIELD OF ART ·

### THE VALUE OF ART EFFORT

AMONG the pleasurable results of any cultivated art may be counted the problems it opens for discussion and the field it offers wherein the human mind may disport itself.

All high culture serves as a refuge from the ills of daily life. If, then, in this world there be a retreat from its banalities and cares would it not be well to discover it?

Not long ago I was brought into the living-room of a shrewd man of affairs—it was hung round with Monets—dazzling, sparkling, sunny, misty Monets. My host offered me a cigar, lighted one himself and sat down. The owner of these treasures then proceeded to dilate on the painter and his methods with an appreciation that was real. Never before had I been so convinced that art was a power outside the esoteric class with which I had too habitually associated it in my mind. Here was the artistic work of one of the boldest innovators in landscape art; of one who would have appealed only, I had supposed, to those who could follow with unblinking eyes his eagle glances into the blinding mysteries of light; without sentiment, as conventionally accepted—but stirring sentiment, as Nature does, by the blazing splendor of its truth. Still, whoever in the presence of the volume-weighted tide has been impressed by its fateful, slow but overwhelming approach—whoever on clear, sunny days has seen this sea dash joyously on wind-swept rocks, catching color from the sky, the clouds, the very reflection of itself upon itself, and has felt in any of these phases of the natural world the emotion that is named sentiment, to them Monet could supply it also; and he may not narrowly be charged with the lack of a quality which is his in a large measure. This emotion, this sentiment, had touched my friend through Monet's art. This man of affairs seemed to draw wells of refreshment from the living sources of a full, strong artistic temperament. Now, it is this refreshment of the human spirit that it is the province of art to supply. It is not alone for the pleasure of the eye that art exists, but for the exaltation of the

human mind. For is there not a joy in noting what effect Nature has had on the interpreter, and how he has chosen to explain her beauty to the world? Think what it is to trace the mental processes of a mind like that of Monet, to mark his wonderful selection, to become conscious of what he has chosen to *omit* that he may the more forcibly impress! To be capable of this is to enter into some of the pleasures that all good art affords—into some of its intellectual and imaginative enjoyments. It would be well if the public could be more fully convinced that by experimenting in impressionism, that, in vividly striking the eye in order to touch more potently the mind, Monet and others have been an influence for good. But we would also add that they have given rise to much effort which seems an abuse of their methods. It must be conceded, however, that Monet himself, who works from conviction, has done much for modern painting. We will endeavor, in a measure, to explain why this is so. I am not lauding this painter to the exclusion of other successful workers possessed of this new faculty of “seeing”—I am merely citing him as a disciple of “light,” and as one of the most brilliant accessions to the ranks of those who have given to art a new and clarified manner of using pigment to express those aspects of Nature which until recent years, have not been attained by means of color. And this reminds us that when phases of Nature are thus realized they touch the imagination, and in time become recognized as representing the natural aspect of the world by those who regarded its normal shape and color as something quite other than it is. To then go back and study what has passed for its natural appearance in the dark-brown transcripts of the early landscapists, and indeed of those of comparatively recent date, is to feel that scales have fallen from the eyes, and that these earlier painters themselves saw, “as in a glass darkly,” while we now see “face to face.” For it is undeniably true that the practice of painting in late years has stimulated the mere faculty of using the eyesight. A new and finer vision has been