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EDITORIAL

LIVING IN A SMALL CITY

● ● Many people ask us why we prefer living in a small city rather than in a large city. Our answer is that it is too lonesome living in a large city where folks live like sardines packed in a can and yet hardly know the names of the people living in the same big apartment house with them.

Those living in big cities have more certain comforts and access to more varied entertainment than those in small towns, but they have far less opportunity to make and keep friends and neighbors.

So give us an American country town, where no one is alone.

Where all are friends, where neighborliness and kindness prevail, where each is his brother's keeper, where no one is alone.

Where life is simple, where there is kindness and warmth and friendliness for all and from all.

Where homes are the abiding places of happy families and into which all are welcomed without distinction.

Where unselfishness prevails, and affection and thoughtfulness is evidenced each day and hour.

Where Banker Brown is the friend and associate of Drayman Stine, and lends a helping hand when Mrs. Stine or little Jimmy Stine is ill.

Where Merchant Smith pats crippled Jerry Murphy's tousled head and hands him a bit of candy or a cookie, which Jerry's widowed mother could not buy.

Where neighbors drop in hour by hour on feeble Grandma Goodman, carrying nourishing foods to tempt her failing appetite, so she may not feel alone.

Where every home is open to Sam Plover, the town barber, and his small son, Willie, while Mrs. Plover languishes in the hospital, that they may not feel alone.

Where there are no class distinctions, no social outcasts, no one without friends. Where no one is alone.

That is the American country town. As near a paradise as this earth can provide.

AND LIVING ON A FARM

● ● Then there are those Americans who would be happy no place else but on the farm, and we have no better argument in favor of life on a farm than that of O. E. Baker of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, who says:

You may wonder why in these hard times for agriculture we should wish our children to become farmers or farmers' wives. May I tell you?

1. The farmer and his family have more and better to eat than have most city people, and in times of depression they are more certain of a livelihood—if they have not mortgaged the farm.

THE (F)UTILITY MAN



About six million people went from the cities back to farms during the years 1930-34 seeking shelter and sustenance, and two million of these were still on farms when the census was taken January 1, 1935.

2. The farmer has better health than the city man and lives longer—four to five years longer—according to a recent study made by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company. If the farming people had equal medical facilities, the difference in duration of life would be still greater.

3. The farmer becomes a wealthier man than the majority of city men, judging from the per capita wealth of rural and urban states. This may not be true in the South. It is true in the North because of the millions of city people who have almost no property at all—except an automobile and some second-hand furniture.

4. The farmer is more likely to enjoy his work than are most city people. Most city work is monotonous—tending a machine in a factory, operating a typewriter, standing behind a counter in a retail store hour after hour. The farm boy or girl may dream of a professional career in the city, or of being a successful business man or woman, but it is certain that relatively few young people from the farms will realize this ambition. Most of the young men and women who go to the cities will continue to do the simple tasks of city life—if they find work at all.

5. The farmer is more likely to rear a family and promote the welfare of the Nation and the race. The family is becoming smaller and weaker in the cities. Only two-thirds to three-fourths enough children are now being born in our large cities to maintain their population permanently

without accessions from outside. The conditions of living and the philosophy of life in the cities tend toward the extinction of urban families. The rural philosophy of life, with its recognition of the family as the fundamental economic as well as social institution, tends toward survival. If there is one word that science teaches to be more important than any other it is the word "survive."

I cannot minimize the difficulties facing the farmers of the United States. The approach of a stationary and probably later declining population suggests a long period of low prices for farm products. The message I hope you can give to the boys and girls whom you talk with on your return home is that the prospect for becoming rich through farming is not bright, but the opportunity to serve their Nation and civilization is, in my opinion, greater than it has ever been. I would that they could see the rural people as the conservers of the traditions, the literature, the art, and, it may prove, of the science that has accumulated during the centuries. I would that they could see above them a cloud of witnesses, the farmers and farm women of the past, their ancestors for a thousand years, heroes and heroines many of them. If modern civilization is to preserve its strength, the young people must, I believe, see the beauty of the river of life; they must realize that the individual is only a link in our endless chain which reaches back through geologic ages. I would that they could see in front of them the opportunity to build not a transitory urban but a permanent rural civilization; a civilization not founded on selfishness as the motivating principle but on cooperation, in which the economic objective is to produce sufficient for everyone while conserving the natural resources, and in which the social objective is service and preservation of the strength of the people.