
Chapter 19

RURAL AND URBAN AMERICA

INTRODUCTION

Those who labor in the earth are the chosen people of God, if He ever had a chosen people, whose breasts He has made His peculiar deposit for substantial and genuine virtue.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

In the United States there is more space where nobody is than where anybody is. This is what makes America what it is.

GERTRUDE STEIN

[Rural contentment is] the contentment of the quiet dead, who are scornful of the living for their restless walking. It is negation canonized as the one positive virtue. It is the prohibition of happiness. It is slavery self-sought and self-defended. It is dullness made God.

SINCLAIR LEWIS, *Main Street*

THE MOST IMPORTANT CHANGE in American life since the establishment of the republic has been the transformation from a predominantly rural-agricultural society to a predominantly urban-industrial one. "The United States was born in the country and moved to the city," historian Richard Hofstadter has written. While in 1790 only 5 percent of the American people lived in cities and towns, by 1960, 66 percent lived in urban areas. This physical change of location has been accompanied by a revolutionary transformation in our way of life: urban style and values have become the pattern for most of us in city and country alike.

What is important about this transformation is not only that it occurred but also what Americans have thought about it — not only the fact but also the meaning and value they have attributed to it. Underlying such evaluations have been the basic images of rural and urban life in the American mind. The contrast and often militant opposition that have been set up between the images of the city and the country produced an argument that has continued well into the twentieth century.

When the first settlers came to America, they expected and usually found a natural, open, and unsullied environment — a land

in which men could live and work close to nature and be relatively free and independent. Rural life had not only social and economic advantages but also a basic human value. Man, it was believed, was more truly himself in this "real," natural setting close to land, trees, and wildlife, under the sun and the stars — in contrast with the dwellers in the crowded warrens of large European cities. Moreover, as agriculture was the main occupation of mankind, land ownership was the principal means of acquiring wealth and social status.

However, many sponsors of early colonial ventures believed that cities and towns were necessary to serve the ends of civilization, social order, and religion — as well as commerce. William Penn, for example, in 1681 planned "a great town," deliberately arranged for commercial and residential purposes, and hopefully destined to be "a city of brotherly love" — Philadelphia. A little more than a century later the government of the new republic decided on a site and plan for its permanent capital as an appropriate center of national life — Washington, D.C.

In the meantime, on the wild Western frontier, such great cities of the future as St. Louis, Pittsburgh, and Cincinnati had been founded. "The towns were the spearheads of the frontier," says Richard C. Wade, the historian of the urban frontier, and often preceded, rather than followed, other types of settlement. Most of the major cities of the trans-Appalachian region were established before 1800 — "a wedge of urbanism had been driven into the backwoods," in Wade's words — and by 1815 many frontier towns had become thriving commercial and manufacturing centers with essentially urban institutions and culture.

Towns and cities, then, were an important part of American life when the nation began, their influence not to be measured solely by the 20-1 ratio of rural to urban dwellers. Both city and country existed in colonial America and in the early United

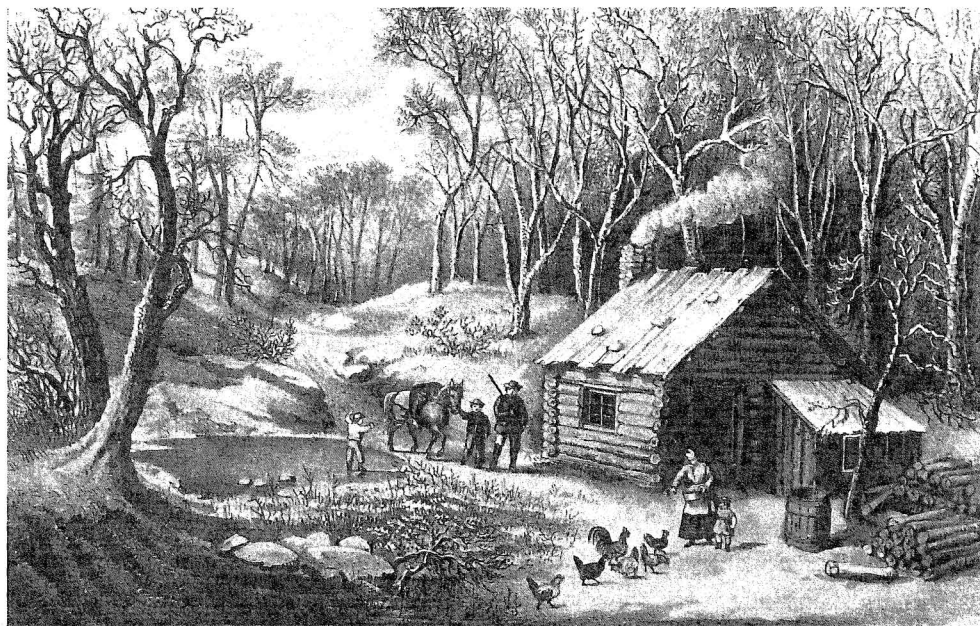
States, as they have in other places and other times. However, whether the nation was to be, or should be, urban or rural, industrial or agrarian, had not yet been decided.

1. THE FARMER'S AGE AND THE AGRICULTURAL REVOLUTION

THOMAS JEFFERSON WAS CERTAIN which path the new republic should follow. He insisted in 1782 that in order to foster and preserve republican virtue the country must have an entirely agrarian economy. He contrasted the sound, wholesome tillers of the soil — "the chosen people of God" — with the morally corrupt "mobs of great cities," who in his view constituted a canker on the body politic. American government, he prophesied in 1787, would be virtuous as long as it remained agricultural; once the open lands were gone and the people collected in great cities, they would become corrupt, like the European city dwellers.

Some spokesmen for an agrarian society also presented an economic argument: namely, that agriculture would add more to the national wealth than would manufactures, because of the "free" contribution of the soil to the product. But there is no doubt that for Jefferson it was the moral and political virtues allegedly produced by agriculture — independence and self-reliance — that constituted the core of the argument. His "moral agrarianism" served as a model for defenders of the agricultural way of life for generations and was still being echoed in the twentieth century.

In his time, however, there was no heated criticism of the city or of the country by embattled partisans of either, a fact that prompted historians Morton and Lucia White to call this "the irenic age" of the urban-rural dialogue in America. Jefferson himself was an urbane and civilized man, who appreciated the culture of the great cities of his time and even devised a street-grid plan to solve urban problems. St. John



Museum of the City of New York, Harry T. Peters Collection

"A Home in the Wilderness"; lithograph by Currier and Ives, 1870

de Crèvecoeur, the self-styled "American Farmer," admired and enjoyed New York City. Benjamin Franklin, perhaps the most typically urban of the great early Americans, indulged in no depreciations of the rural way of life.

Alexander Hamilton, Jefferson's foremost intellectual and political opponent, nowhere directly denied Jefferson's claims for the superior value of the agricultural life. He conceded that it was in the national interest to cultivate the vast stretches of unimproved land and concurred in the idea that the desire to own land is inherent in human nature. After all, he was addressing a nation of farmers. But he asserted that agriculture and manufactures had a common economic interest, that the prosperity of each sector was intimately linked with that of the other, and that domestic manufactures would provide an assured purchasing power for the products of the soil. Moreover, fostering domestic manufactures would serve the ends of national power and security.

At the time Jefferson and Hamilton were carrying on their argument, the cities of America were for the most part commercial,

not industrial, centers, and this continued to be the case up until the Civil War. Indeed, the first cotton mills in New England were set up in rural regions, presenting an idyllic contrast to the manufacturing centers of Old England. The expansion of cities in the 1800-1860 period — New York's population increased from 60,000 to 1,080,000, Philadelphia's from 70,000 to 565,000 — and the increase of city dwellers in the population from 6 to 20 percent was based mainly on commerce.

Manufacturing played an important early role in the economies of Philadelphia, Cincinnati, and Pittsburgh, as well as in the small "mill towns" like Newark and Lowell. But the big industrial cities arose after the Civil War, and Chicago's growth from 30,000 persons in 1850 to nearly 2 million by 1900 was based largely on its superior river and rail transport facilities, not the industrial power that later characterized it.

The South provided the outstanding exception to the growth of cities during the early national period. Only Baltimore developed a population and commercial importance comparable to that of the large

Northeastern cities, and Baltimore was not a typical Southern city. Except for New Orleans, the South's sole metropolis before the Civil War, no major commercial city developed in the South proper — in Virginia and the states south of it — and the region was left behind the rest of the country in commerce and urban development.

The reason was that the economy of the South was entirely agrarian, with the centers of power on the large plantations instead of in the cities and towns. Historian Daniel J. Boorstin has pointed out that whereas in the West the new cities preceded and set the tone for the countryside, in the South the country settlement preceded the establishment of cities and shaped their attitude and tone. A "city" like Williamsburg was really a planters' town, and Natchez, as Joseph Ingraham saw it in 1835, was merely a center for the society of the surrounding countryside. Hence the South became dependent on the Northern cities for its commercial and financial facilities.

During the remarkable pre-Civil War spate of urbanization, in which railroads began to cross the country, connecting the cities and farm areas, and machinery began to take over the work on the land, agrarian depreciation of city life and ways intensified. The Jeffersonian warning against corruption was still heard, although often more in reference to personal morals than to civic virtue. One correspondent in the *Prairie Farmer* in 1850 lamented the glittering lures of the cities, which, in his view, were leading the fine young men of the country, who came there in droves, to become "the victims of dissipation, of reckless speculation, and of ultimate crime." Country dwellers, in contrast, said another correspondent, "are taking lessons from nature to benefit them in the world and through eternity" and are "cultivating such noble and refined sentiments as are induced from rural employments."

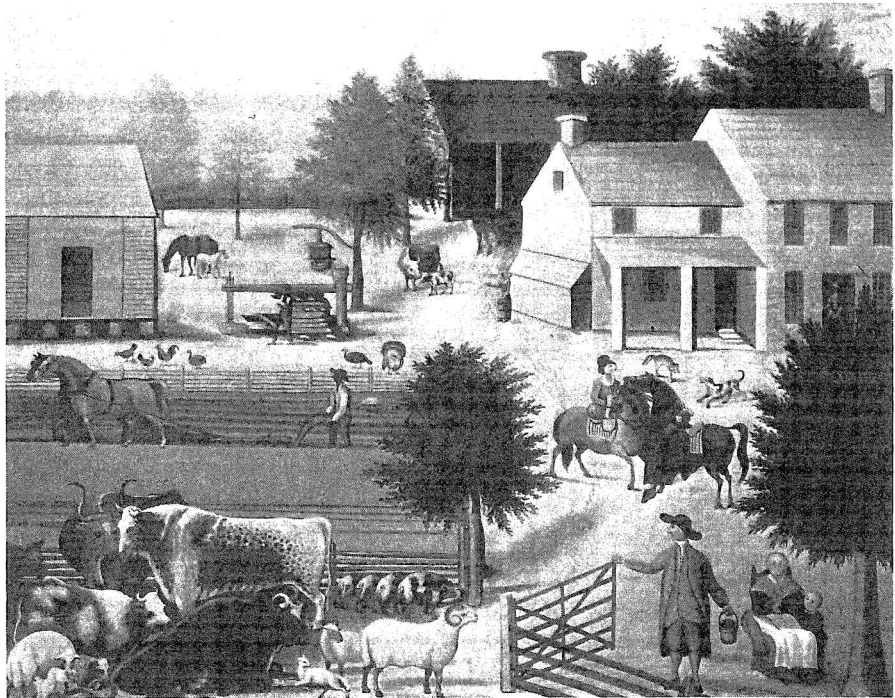
Ralph Waldo Emerson, in his panegyric

on "Farming" (1858), saw the farmer as a veritable Adam, the man closest to nature and to God. The farmer's was the primary, truly creative occupation, said Emerson: "All trade rests at last on his primitive activity." The farmer's character was shaped by his intercourse with nature, so that he attained a natural dignity, plainness, prudence, and patience. "It is from him that the health and power, moral and intellectual, of the cities came," Emerson declared. "The city is always recruited from the country."

A. J. Downing, in his *Rural Essays* of 1848, appealed to farmers to feel proud of their role as "the great industrial class in this country." Besides providing food and raw materials for all other classes, they also were, he said, "the great nursery of all the professions and the industrial arts of the country," whose practitioners must from time to time return "to be regenerated in the primitive life and occupation of the race." He bade the cultivators of the soil — "this great bulwark of the country's safety and prosperity" — not be influenced by the disdainful views of "those who live in cities and look upon country life as 'something for dull wits.'"

Many persons, however, even those on the farms, were beginning to express skepticism about the traditional eulogies of rural life and virtues. Another writer for the *Prairie Farmer*, "A Practical Farmer," complained in 1840 about the romantic images of country life being spread by poets, politicians, and others. These imaginative blurbs, he said, never mentioned the deprivations, discomforts, and miseries of the tiller of the soil. And, correspondingly, they never mentioned the comparative ease and pleasure of city life, the social amenities, the cultural opportunities, and the relatively higher return for labor.

John Greenleaf Whittier's poem "Among the Hills," published in 1869, provided vivid corroboration of this adverse view. Looking at New England rural life "across the



Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Collection, Williamsburg

"Residence of David Twining as it was in 1797"; painted by Edward Hicks c. 1845

lapse of half a century," Whittier saw joyless drudgery, insensitiveness to the beauties of nature, squalid and ugly dwellings, weeds growing in the garden instead of flowers, all in all, a life without art or culture or even true piety. New England's farms, he wrote, were peopled by

Shrill, querulous women, sour and sullen
men,
Untidy, loveless, old before their time,
With scarce a human interest save their
own

Monotonous round of small economies,
Or the poor scandal of the neighborhood;
Blind to the beauty everywhere revealed,
Treading the May-flowers with regardless
feet. . . .

Rich in broad woodlands and in half-
tilled fields
And yet so pinched and bare and com-
fortless.

A few voices strongly affirmed the values of urban life. Another New Englander, Theodore Parker, pointed with pride to the culture and relative prosperity of Boston in

the year 1850 — picturing it as unrivaled in the Old World for "intelligence, activity, morality, order, comfort, and general welfare." Parker admitted Boston's faults, the terrible poverty side by side with bloated wealth, vice and crime, hypocrisy in the pulpit and sophistry in the press. Yet he found them overbalanced by the obvious "increase of material wealth . . . the neatness of the streets, the industry of the inhabitants, their activity of mind, the orderliness of the people, the signs of comfort," the charities and the schools.

In 1859 Parker continued to praise the role of cities in civilization as a whole. "The union of men in large masses," he declared, "is indispensable to the development and rapid growth of the higher faculties of man. Cities have always been the fireplaces of civilizations, whence light and heat radiate into the dark, cold world."

There is no doubt that the era from 1815 to 1860 in the United States was "The Farmer's Age"; Downing mustered evidence in 1848 to show that the value of products of the soil was twice that of all other products combined. Nevertheless, im-

portant transformations were going on in the farmers' way of life because of the technological revolution of the nineteenth century that affected not only manufacturing but also agriculture and transportation, and because of the accompanying changes in systems of agricultural marketing and finance.

During the pre-Civil War era, farming became commercialized. Instead of being self-sufficient, most farmers produced a cash crop for the urban and overseas market, and they became dependent on manufacturing industries for agricultural machinery and many articles of domestic consumption. The yeoman farmer was more and more a figment of romantic legend, and therefore all the more dearly prized in literature and campaign oratory. The Northern farmer, unlike the Southern plantation owner, had a hard time finding and keeping the workers necessary to cultivate increasingly larger holdings and to get his crops to market. He therefore resorted to the laborsaving devices provided by modern technology, advancing from wooden to cast-iron to steel plows and from the simple one-man walking plow to riding, gang, and steam plows.

In 1856, according to the economic historian Paul W. Gates, John Deere's sixty-five employees produced 13,400 plows, of which 2,100 were breaker plows for the heavy prairie soil. Machinery was particularly important on the wide-open plains of the West and was also used for sowing and reaping grain. The advance from the relatively primitive sickle or scythe to the reaper occurred during this era, and Cyrus McCormick and other manufacturers competed vigorously for the market for this and other laborsaving machines. By 1860 the manufacture of farm machinery and other items used on the farm had become one of the most important industries in the United States.

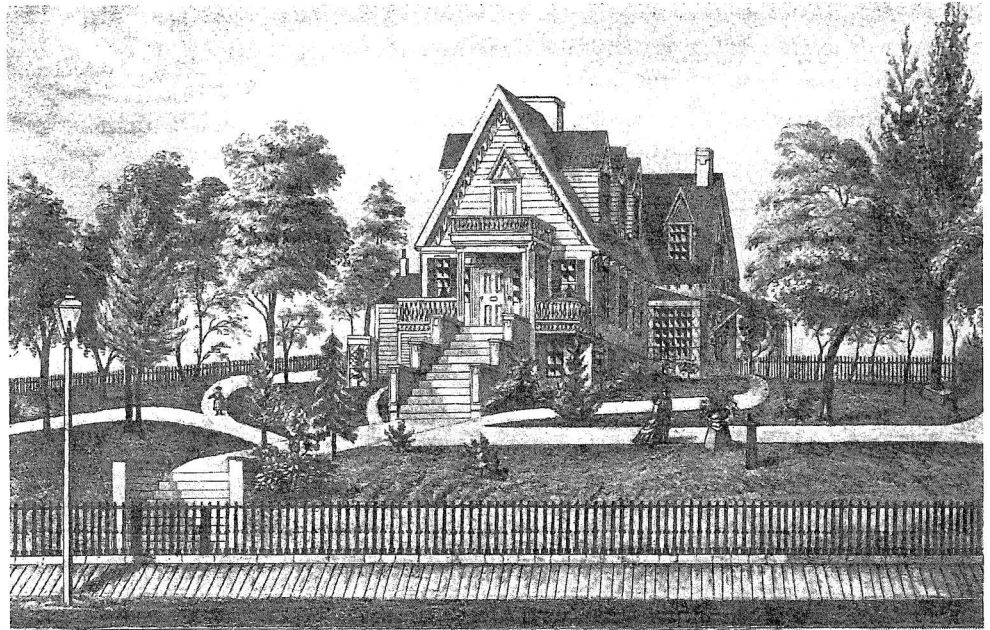
The increase in productivity brought about by farm machinery, however, raised

new problems that were to plague the farmer for generations to come. It emphasized the tendency toward the wasteful use of land that was already marked in colonial days (it was noted by many European visitors). It made farming a big-money proposition, requiring more than just a piece of land and the willingness to work it. It made the farmer dependent on bank financing and various types of speculation, inducing him to go into debt and to overcultivate his land.

The American farmer had become an interdependent part of the economy, both national and international, with its increasingly predominant urban, industrial, and capitalistic factors, though he was usually unable or unwilling to recognize this fact. During the 1840s, 1850s, and 1860s, and for a long time to come, he was split in his dual role of businessman and tiller of the soil. He was, remarked historian Richard Hofstadter, "a single man running a personal enterprise in a world of impersonal forces," where business had already gone beyond the stage of individual competition to corporate enterprise.

The South once more was an exception — this time to the technological revolution going on elsewhere. Important staple crops such as cotton, rice, sugar, and tobacco were produced almost entirely by slave labor, without machinery or horses, and very profitably to the landowners. However, technical improvements were constantly made in the processing of crops after they were raised, for example, steam-powered cotton gins and rice threshers, and sugar-extraction machinery.

The Southern plantation was the prime example of making money through production for the world market. "Commercial agriculture before the Civil War reached its fullest development in the rice, cotton, and sugar planting areas of the Deep South," Gates observed. In the case of the largest Southern landowners, farming was a big business. Joseph Ingraham, visiting Missis-



Library of Congress

"Ellendale," residence of Alfred Creigh, LL.D., Washington County, Pennsylvania

Mississippi plantations in 1835, commented that the planters' main interest was in making money: "Cotton and Negroes are the constant theme." The planters invariably wore out the soil and moved on to new land in their zeal to get rich, he declared, and they constituted the wealthiest class in the United States. One such planter, Stephen Duncan, of Natchez, made nearly \$170,000 clear profit from his 8 plantations and 1,000 slaves in 1850.

Accompanying the industrial revolution in manufacturing and agriculture was a "transportation revolution," which also played an essential role in the commercialization of American agriculture. Turnpikes, steamboats, canals, and railroads steadily expanded the markets for farm produce. Farmers became less and less dependent on nearby areas and towns and could produce for places and people they had never seen, no longer worrying about neighborhood needs and desires but concentrating on what brought the best price in the central markets, national and international.

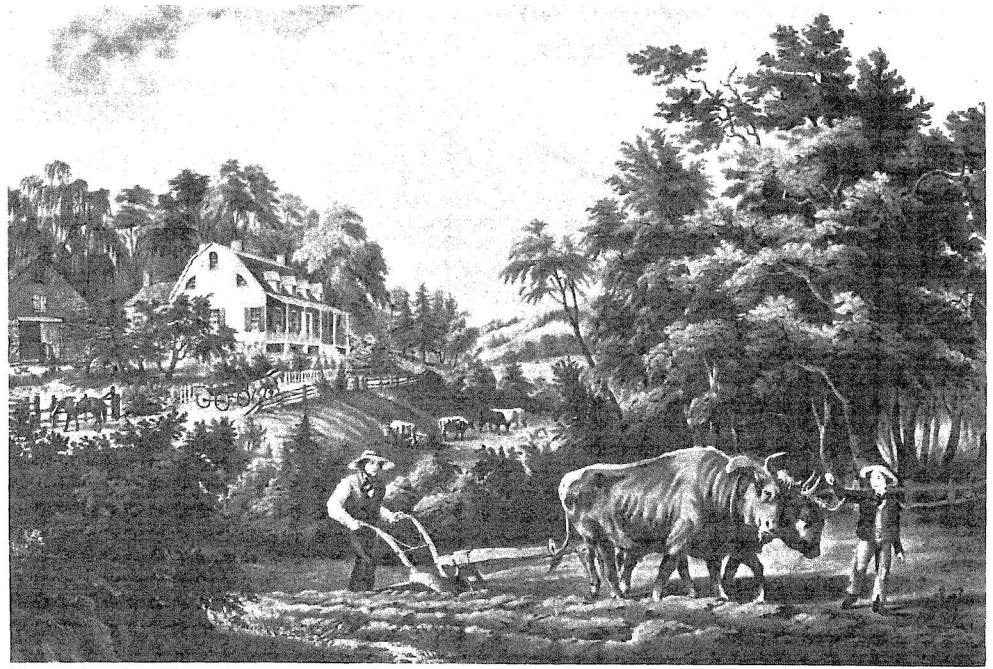
The restrictions of distance were, to a degree, transcended even for perishables.

Dairy goods, fruits, and vegetables could now be distributed over a much wider area. Manufactured goods, including farm machinery as well as household goods, could be delivered in a comparatively short time from distant cities.

The easier access to markets made competition keener and proved costly to the less fertile and efficient Northeastern farms, driving many New England farmers off the soil. The new transportation also afforded an easy way to the big cities for young people and others dissatisfied with farm life. [For a different treatment of some of the matters discussed here, see Chs. 2: FRONTIER and 24: PROGRESS.]

2. THE URBAN ERA: THE CITY TAKES COMMAND

"IN THE GENERATION FOLLOWING the Civil War the city took supreme command," wrote historian Arthur M. Schlesinger, Sr. "Between 1860 and 1900 the urban population again quadrupled while the rural merely doubled." This period of rapid ur-



Museum of the City of New York, Harry T. Peters Collection

An American farm scene depicted in an 1853 lithograph by Currier

banization, or “the rise of the city,” as he called it, extended to about 1910 or 1915 — from the Civil War to World War I. Urban population increased from about 20 to more than 45 percent of the total in the period 1860-1910. There was not only an enormous increase in the number of persons living in cities — from about 6.2 million to 42 million in places with over 2,500 persons — but also a remarkable expansion of the “monster” cities such as New York, Philadelphia, and Chicago, which rivaled the great European cities in size and population. “The youngest of the nations has already more large cities than any except Great Britain and Germany,” declared Samuel L. Loomis in 1887.

The trend toward urbanization was a worldwide phenomenon. The great cities of Europe also grew quickly in this period, owing to industrialization and the migration of country folk to the city. But the unique circumstances of the United States made it especially open to the new social, technological, and economic developments. The basic factors of agricultural machinery, industrial technology, and railroad transporta-

tion of the previous period continued to foster the growth of an industrialized, urban nation and to draw the people from the country to the cities. The vast numbers of immigrants from Europe after 1880 also swelled the new city populations. About 10 million of the 42 million persons in U.S. cities in 1910 were foreign-born.

Moreover, the “internal immigration” from the settled “western” parts of the country to the “Western frontier”, in succeeding eras, though essentially an agrarian movement to new farmland, resulted in an increase of urbanization through the establishment of new cities in the “Wild West.” Hard on the heels of the trapper and the homesteader came the merchant, the banker, and other city types.

“The swift rise of cities is a feature of American history no less significant and dramatic than the swift march of the frontier,” wrote historian Margaret Green. “Frequently, it was the rise of new cities and their promoters’ efforts to make them grow greater that hastened the peopling of the country roundabout.” She cited names like Chicago, Detroit, Denver, Wichita, San

Francisco, and Seattle to support her paradoxical thesis. Chicago, the "prairie swamp" amphibian of Charles Francis Adams' day, "now wallowing in mud and now smothering in dust," which had only fifty inhabitants in 1830, grew to be one of the great cities of the world by making itself the communications center of the Mississippi Valley and then of the nation. The new railroad network, of which Chicago became the hub, brought in raw materials to be processed into finished products by the new industries, such as steel, that sprang up in the area. The railroads also brought in hogs, cattle, and other stock to the slaughterhouses and meat-packing plants that made Chicago the meat center of the country. If St. Louis and New Orleans exemplified the "river cities" that had characterized urban growth in the previous epoch, Chicago was the "railroad city" par excellence of the post-Civil War era.

It exemplified not only the new industrial age but also the new urbanism, with its unprecedented social problems and its flowering culture. As early as 1870 half of Chicago's 300,000 people were foreign-born, living in their national enclaves, in separation from and in conflict with one another, providing most of the industrial workers and most of the poor and unemployed. They brought a fervid European radicalism to mix with the native-born radicalism in the strikes, demonstrations, and protest movements that marked and sometimes marred the era. At the same time Chicago was becoming a cultural center, the home of a great university, of world-famed art and archeological museums, of symphony orchestras, operas, and the theater.

"Hog Butcher for the World . . . Stack-er of Wheat . . . and the Nation's Freight Handler," in poet Carl Sandburg's words, Chicago was the organizer of agricultural production, not merely a midway transit point. Whatever the individual farmer may have thought and felt, and whether or not he still enjoyed the celebrated virtues and

felicities of rural life, he had to adjust his work to the patterns laid down by city men and institutions — such as Chicago's Union Stockyards. The interdependence of city and country had become even greater than before, and now it was definitely the city that called the tune.

Warren H. Wilson, a pioneer in the new field of rural sociology, saw acutely what had happened as early as 1915, when he proclaimed "that city and country are dynamically one." The city, he said, had become "the center of country life," because it compelled the country to produce what the city wanted and to deliver the produce in ways prescribed by it.

The constructive organization and discipline of rural industry now came from the city; for example, the regulation of the milk trade, of the meat industry, of the speculation in wheat, of the standardization of fruit products, of the storage and shipment of refrigerated products, meat, or fruit. The farmer rose at four in the morning to milk his cows in order to satisfy city needs, not because he liked to or because he had always done it. The city made the country serve the needs of the whole community, to produce "ethically," to meet an "ethical market standard," and thus disciplined it to an industriousness that was not displayed in rural regions free of city domination, such as rural Arkansas in 1915.

Wilson used terms like "ganglia" or "nerve centers" of social control to indicate the organic role of the big cities in the larger community of city-and-country. This metaphor of the city as "an organ . . . the heart, the brain" of the wider community became a central concept for the interpretation of the role of the modern city.

Historian Oscar Handlin, looking back at this creative era in the growth of cities, balanced Wilson's emphasis on the new rural dependence with a stress on the modern city's inextricable links with the whole society around it, depriving it of the autonomy it had possessed in the old days before it



Library of Congress

"Ragpickers disposing of their gatherings"; by Paul Franzeny for "Harper's," 1868

"dominated" the country. The city that organized the country to produce according to impersonal norms also had to discipline itself and change its old easygoing ways of life in order to get its own work done on schedule and to get its own hordes of workers to and from their centralized workplaces on time.

The persons who were molded by the new social processes, especially the farmers, did not give in without a struggle. Agrarian movements like Populism were a protest against the new order of things: against the subordinate role and low status accorded the farmer; against agricultural depressions; against the inequitable practices of railroads, banks, and other parts of the metropolitan power structure; and against the tariff and other pro-industry legislation that city interests were able to push through Congress.

The agrarian revolt against the "vested interests of Wall Street" reasserted the precedence of the country over the city, which was now "presuming" to take the leading role. "Burn down your cities and leave our farms," proclaimed William Jennings Bryan in his famous "Cross of Gold" speech in 1896, "and your cities will spring up again as if by magic. But destroy our farms and the grass will grow in the streets of every

city in this country." The agrarian revolt possessed its most eloquent spokesman in Bryan, reached its apogee in his campaign for the presidency in 1896, and went down to defeat with him.

More sober means were devised in later eras to assure those farmers who remained on the land a more certain livelihood and juster economic treatment, and the bipartisan farm bloc in Congress and government-aided farm programs became a permanent aspect of American political life. But this entailed accepting the new urban-industrial scheme of things, fitting into it, and even affirming the new values as the traditional American way. Thus many of the descendants of the radical agrarians of the 1890s became staunch defenders of free enterprise and attacked government regulation in the 1930s and 1940s.

Some writers responded poignantly, with a keen sense of loss, to the departure of a farming class. Others regarded the change as a sound, hardheaded, positive response to the realities of American life in a new age.

E. V. Smalley painted a grim picture in 1893 of the isolation of life on prairie farms, with each family shut in its flimsy, ugly abode during bleak, hard winters and hot, dusty summers, and removed from the

ordinary human gregariousness that was common in European farm villages. F. J. Kingsbury, in 1895, emphasized the personal deterioration of country folk as compared with city dwellers: "Isolated rural life . . . always tends to barbarism. What very unattractive people most of our rural population are!"

In 1908 Hervey White observed that there were rural slums as well as urban ones, owing to somewhat similar causes — poor soil, housing, ventilation, drainage, and food — "poverty" in all senses of the word, including poor, tinny culture. "Like their city slummy cousins," White wrote, country children demanded constant change and amusement, and the cakewalk imported from Broadway had replaced the old folk dances and games. Not merely isolation, in this view, but participation in some of the more dubious aspects of modern urban culture contributed to the deterioration of rural life.

From those writers of fiction who had firsthand knowledge of rural life came a series of even more grimly evocative documents, such as E. W. Howe's *The Story of a Country Town*, first published in 1883; the stories of Hamlin Garland, collected in *Main-Traveled Roads* in 1891; and Mary Wilkins Freeman's story "The Revolt of Mother," published the year before. The latter tells of a prosperous farmer who houses his livestock in splendid new buildings, while his family remains in the hovel that was their original prairie home. [For another discussion of some of the points treated here, see Chs. 15: FREEDOM OF ENTERPRISE and 17: WORK AND WORKERS.]

3. THE METROPOLITAN ERA: THE URBANIZATION OF RURAL LIFE

THE PERIOD from about 1910 to 1960 witnessed the intensive development of the trends initiated in the earlier periods, culmi-

nating in the metropolitan, predominantly urbanized society of the mid-twentieth century. This trend is demonstrated not only by the fact that by 1960 more than two-thirds of America's people lived in cities, as compared with a minority in earlier eras, but also by the increasing number of metropolitan areas.

The metropolitan region consists of a core city, plus its surrounding suburbs, towns, and country districts, ignoring political lines (city, county, and state), and is constituted by its actual social, economic, and cultural functions in the area. In the U.S. census reports, the term "metropolitan area" refers to any city of over 50,000 plus the settled districts adjacent to it. By 1930 there were 133 of these areas, and by 1960, 212. About half of America's population lives in these "urban agglomerations," several of which contain a million or more persons. A United Nations list in 1965 showed the New York urban area with over 14 million inhabitants (making it by far the largest urban unit in the world), Los Angeles with about 6.5 million, and Chicago with nearly 6 million.

Such agglomerations required an intensification of the industrial, agricultural, and communications revolutions that had impelled urbanization in the earlier eras. The automobile and motor truck, improvements in interurban transportation, widespread electrical power, radio, television, and all the other appurtenances of the twentieth century, made this spreading-out of the "super-city" possible.

The trend to "urban sprawl" or "exurbia" has been described as a *centrifugal* migration outward from the city center to the suburbs, as contrasted with the previous *centripetal* migrations from the country districts to the city. Obviously, the distinction between city and country has become somewhat fuzzy, if not obsolete, and this has created a new situation with new social and political problems.

It should be noted, however, that the new situation was an outgrowth of a process that had been going on since 1860, especially in the settled northeastern part of the United States, but also in such vigorous "upstart" cities as Chicago. A writer on "Our Suburbs" in 1873 saw Chicago "spreading itself over a fair share of the state of Illinois," with the aid of horsecars, locomotives, and other forms of "rapid" transit. The felicitous combination of working in the thriving city and living amid the natural beauties and in the healthy air of the suburbs was advocated by serious essayists as well as real estate promoters in the latter part of the nineteenth century. In Philadelphia there was a remarkably regular shift of population from the center to the outskirts in the century from 1860 to 1960, and this was proportionately even greater from 1860 to 1910 than from 1910 to 1960.

Nevertheless, the pervasive and intense development of urban agglomeration over almost all areas was the central distinctive fact of the fifty-year development from 1910 to 1960 and marks the age. "The findings of the 1960 census," said historian Charles N. Glaab in 1963, "seemed to make it clear that the United States would soon be a nation in which distinctions between urban and rural would have little meaning, a nation in which social problems would be coterminous with urban problems."

One of the significant differences between the old and the new exurban movement was that not only were people and residential housing moving out to the suburbs but also manufacturing and other industries, and even retail shopping centers were shifting from the core to the open adjacent areas. Graham Taylor noted this tendency as early as 1915 in his articles on "Satellite Cities," which were created by the moving of large industrial plants to such then unlikely places as Flint, Michigan (automobiles),

Argo, Illinois (corn products), and Gary, Indiana (steel). The cities had become too crowded, expensive, and inconvenient for efficient operation; hence the traditional centripetal move of manufacturing toward the urban centers was reversed, and industries moved to outlying towns or created brand-new ones to house their plants.

The development of air transportation, plus the increasing use of automobiles, heightened the trend, until after World War II it became a commonplace for new plants to be set up 50 to 100 miles from the core city. But the creators of the new industrial towns, as Taylor pointed out, were more interested in spending money for housing and facilities for their industrial operations than for their workers (like the farmer who housed his cows and horses better than he did his family). The natural result was often miserably planned, ugly, and uncomfortable communities.

In the larger cities a new problem was created by the removal of industries, workers, and the more capable people, which often left the center of the city to blight and social decay. What the city had done to certain rural areas and small towns in the earlier eras was now being done to the cities by the exit of persons and industries to the suburbs. Some of the central problems of city life at mid-century stemmed from this constellation of circumstances.

One further consequence, helping to blot out the old urban-rural distinctions, was the nearly complete urbanization of rural life. Some of the same technological developments that made the countryside easier of access to city plants and people also made the city more accessible to farm dwellers — either physically as a place for shopping and amusement, or culturally through radio, television, and other media. The cultural deprivations and the social aridities of rural life, of which there have been so many expressions in American literature, were remedied to a great extent by the new develop-

ments. Such things as rural electrification, moreover, were as important for the farmer as for the new emigrant industries.

Nevertheless, the new metropolitan developments brought new stresses. The triumphantly predominant city was put on the defensive and responded with positive attempts at reform, renovation, and reconstruction, sometimes even copying in part the ideal models provided by its severest critics.

In the Progressive Era (1890-1914) the main efforts had been devoted to abolishing the political corruption and boss rule that had made American cities among the worst governed in the world. Lincoln Steffens' famous study of municipal government in 1904 was aptly entitled "The Shame of the Cities."

Reforms in city government were established through the efforts of outraged, respectable middle-class groups and also of socialists who saw a connection between political graft and big business. Gradually, through decades of reform, the mode and tone of municipal government was improved to a reasonably honest and efficient level in most American cities.

However, the basic problems of the new metropolitan era — extending roughly from World War I to the 1960s — were sociological, cultural, and physical, rather than political. Congestion, vice, and crime, polluted air, lack of grass and trees, and anonymity or depersonalization in a "community of strangers" had been problems in previous eras, but never to such an intense degree and affecting so many people.

The key term for the critiques and remedies, ideal and actual, offered during the metropolitan era was "planning." The word refers not merely to plotting the physical layout of a city — street-grids, zoning, and the like — but also to the effort to embody social, ethical, and aesthetic values in urban life.

These deep, broad, human, and humanis-

tic aspects were revealed in the thought and action of the great nineteenth-century forerunner of modern city planners, Frederick Law Olmsted. This architect and planner of Central Park pleaded in 1870 for public parks and promenades as a medicine for the sicknesses of modern city life — to purify the lungs, relax strained nerves and minds, and bring about the friendly human intercourse that is habitually denied by urban social patterns — to restore man's wholesome relation to nature and his fellows *within the cities*.

In 1909 Daniel H. Burnham, the architect of the famous Chicago Plan — a model for city planners in the early twentieth century — stated its basic practical, social, and aesthetic aims as order, convenience, beauty, and dignity, as opposed to "formless growth." Its goal was "to bring order out of the chaos incident to rapid growth." Its general purpose was to provide city dwellers "with the best possible conditions of living." The means was a plan that regarded the city "as an organic whole" and hence arranged street plans and located public buildings so that each part fitted the general purpose.

Olmsted and Burnham boldly affirmed the role of cities as the centers of civilization. However, a new note was voiced in the 1920s by planners and critics who were so aghast at what they considered the cultural and social deprivations of the urban mode of life that they urged a partial withdrawal from the large cities or concentration on the planning of "regions" rather than of cities.

The original fountainhead of American "decentralism" or "regionalism" seems to have been the Garden City proposal made in 1898 by an English social reformer named Ebenezer Howard, "to restore the people to the land." This aim was to be attained by establishing planned rural communities that would combine the economic and social advantages of the city with the natural health and beauty of the country.



Library of Congress

"A sweltering night in New York — tenement-house sufferers"; by W. A. Rogers for "Harper's," 1883

Howard's ideas, together with those of the noted British biologist and city planner Sir Patrick Geddes, provided the stimulus for the great creative movement toward regional, or decentralized, planning in the United States in the 1920s, a movement that included illustrious urban critics and designers such as Lewis Mumford, Henry Wright, and Clarence Stein.

Mumford declared in 1922 that it was wrong "to think that the hope for civilization in America is bound up with the continuance of metropolitanism. . . . Our metropolitan civilization is not a success. It is a different kind of wilderness from that which we have deflowered — but the feral rather than the humane quality is dominant: it is still a wilderness."

In 1925 Mumford announced that "the hope of the city lies outside itself," in the larger region of which it was a part. The advantages of urban and rural life must be combined in "garden cities," he said, which would promote a fuller and more joyful life throughout the region, as against the joyless, one-sided life of twentieth-century cities. This would entail what he called an "industrial counterrevolution," the decentralization of industry to provide the empty countryside with an economic base as well

as people. Mumford urged that cities be reconstructed to foster "frequent direct meeting and face-to-face intercourse," which were frustrated by existing urban arrangements. In place of "the functionless, hypertrophied urban masses of the past," he suggested, there might be twenty smaller organic communities, with the same total population, in a planned regional environment.

It was sometimes difficult to tell whether the regionalizers and decentralizers were intent on reforming the city or doing away with it. Although Mumford spoke of "ruralizing the stony wastes of our cities," he usually expressed a fervent regard for the urbane values and the social needs served by city life. Benton McKaye, however, in his explanation of the "philosophy of regional planning" in 1928, seemed to stress a combination of wilderness and small town or village values rather than a synthesis of rural and urban life. What he was concerned with was "a rural environment," not an urban or suburban one.

Frank Lloyd Wright's "new community plan" for the ideal city in 1935 — "Broad-acres," which allotted each home an acre of land — actually aimed at the "elimination of cities and towns," in order to restore man "to his birthright — the ground itself," and the sun and air that go with it. Not only had the modern city become a mere machine, in his view, with an artificial, vicarious culture, but it fostered an "unnaturally gregarious life."

At mid-twentieth century many writers took up the defense of city life and ways against these criticisms. Joseph Hudnut, for example, spoke out in 1949 against the "poet's conspiracy against the city . . . that fantasy of feeling which projects a paramount virtue and health on the country way of life," and denigrates the city as unnatural and not made by God. He pointed to the "invisible city" of modes of life and thought and morality that had shaped men into human beings in the course of the cen-

turies and enabled them to live a civilized life together. Man could overcome the dehumanizing effect of modern technology, he maintained, and build a city that would serve "as outward frame and envelope of a communal life, being shaped once more by the commerce of a society that is civilized, polite, and urbane." Those last three words, he noted, all come from words that mean "city."

The most vigorous attack on city planners of all schools came from Jane Jacobs in 1961 in her widely read book, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. From Ebenezer Howard on down, said Mrs. Jacobs, all city planners had been "city destroyers" because they had not understood what cities are and the virtues inherent in what they regarded as defects. The diversity, crowds, streets, sidewalks, and other supposed drawbacks are essential and valuable aspects of city life, Mrs. Jacobs insisted. The remedy for city problems is not to be found in anti-septic housing developments, science-fiction city planning, or "some insipid, standardized, suburbanized shadow of nature." Cities are a part of nature, too, and a much healthier part than "the semisuburbanized and suburbanized messes" that blight the landscape. What we need, she declared, are cities that are really cities and country that is really country.

The urban historian R. Richard Wohl commented in 1955 on the strange phenomenon of anti-urban attitudes in a vigorously urban people. "It is one of the lasting ironies of American history," he wrote, "that a people so eager and energetic in the creation and expansion of their cities — a nation which has so zestfully rushed into an urban existence — should support an elaborate network of ideologies condemning city life. . . . What is bewildering is that this [agrarian] tradition should be supported and pampered, in this latter day, by city folk who guiltily charge themselves with a hard and inadequate life in the urban community." This was an archaic attitude, he insist-

ed, at a time when urban models and tastes pervaded and dominated the national culture and there was no longer a distinct line between town and country. [For treatment of some of these matters from another point of view, see Ch. 11: INDIVIDUALISM.]

4. THE AMERICAN FARMER IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

THE STORY OF RURAL AMERICA in the twentieth century can be told in terms of machines, finance, economic crises, and government aid. The gasoline engine contributed the new power factor to farm machinery that made it possible for fewer and fewer people to produce more and more food. Over 90 percent of the fieldwork on farms was being done by engine-powered machinery by 1960. The use of such machinery increased the tendency to larger and larger farms, particularly in the wheat- and corn-growing areas of the Middle West and Great Plains, because it made it possible to farm more land with the same or smaller labor force.

Buying more land as well as new machinery required financing, including mortgage loans, with the possibility of foreclosures in lean years. Hence, one of the first aids the farmers sought and obtained was government-sponsored, low-interest credit, beginning with the Federal Farm Loan Act of 1916. Research in scientific farming and agricultural education, promoted by the government, helped them produce more effectively. Consequently, the more enterprising farmers produced more crops on more land, and went further into debt, until the agricultural depression of the 1920s, when farm prices went down and markets diminished — at a time of industrial prosperity and high prices in the rest of the economy.

Farmers struggled to make a living and to hold their land, but many foreclosures occurred in the "prosperous" Twenties, long before the general depression of the Thir-



Library of Congress

"Gift for the Grangers"; 1873 Strobridge lithograph honoring the farmers' organization founded in 1867

ties, when foreclosures became general and a violent radical mood against these procedures prevailed in some rural areas. In the peak prosperity year of 1927 the average yearly income of the 6.3 million farmers was \$548, before deductions. Economist Fred Shannon estimated that in that year "most farmers would have made more money by giving away their land and working for wages at \$45 a month."

The Roosevelt New Deal administration, beginning in 1933, marked a breakthrough in the farmers' long attempt, going back to Populist days, to enlist the power of the national government in solving their problems. The New Deal's solution, as expressed in the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933 and later legislation, was to limit agricultural production in key commodities by mutual agreement among the farmers, who were then paid by the government for the acreage they took out of production. The aim was to maintain the prices of farm products at a level that would give farmers a purchasing power equal to that of the "golden era" of 1901-1914, and thus to heal the sickest part of the national economy, to care for the nation's soil, and to foster the wel-

fare of the valued yeoman class.

Many Americans condemned these policies as unwarranted government interference in the economy and favoritism toward one group. The rebuttal of those defending the government policies was that the legislation did for the farmers exactly what the tariff laws did for manufacturers, and that it helped them to maintain prices through the use of methods similar to those used by industrialists.

In any case, the farmers, with the aid of government, had finally been able to become businessmen like everyone else, no longer having to sell in a buyers' market and buy in a sellers' market. At the same time, the farmer came more and more to see himself as a businessman, with business attitudes and status, rather than a horny-handed son of toil working the land for a living. Thus came the fruition of what Hofstadter has called the "hard" side of American agrarianism — "agricultural improvement, business methods, and pressure politics" — in contrast with the "soft" side, represented by the radical mood and ideas of Populism.

Yet most farmers were hardly in a class with captains of industry and golf-playing executives. The farmer's median gross income in 1940 was \$600, or \$1 per day net income, and often his family worked side by side with him in the fields without pay. "Farmers still deluded themselves into believing they were capitalists," Shannon said, "but most of them received mere wages for their efforts, and not even high wages."

In 1962 Joseph P. Lyford published a classic portrait of the farmer's position in an ailing Midwestern agricultural community — Vandalia, Illinois. "To stay afloat," he said, the farmer had "to become a mechanic, an expert on governmental policies, a soil scientist, and a bookkeeper." He had to buy or lease more land in order to make a profit when corn went down to \$1 or less per bushel, while the price of farm machinery rose steeply.

Despite government aid — which some farmers still regarded as shameful “hand-outs” — farming was still very much a gamble. In Vandalia a state agricultural expert remarked that the “farmers are about the only real entrepreneurs left in our society,” because they risk their work and their capital in an unpredictable market.

The typical farmer, despite the encroachment of absentee ownership, was still running a family enterprise, and farm families still valued the traditional rural felicities. “Where else,” a farmer asked Lyford, “can a kid grow up where he can have his own horse and cows and chickens and pigs, and get up early and go out on the tractor with his old man? Where he has a pond in his backyard full of blue gill and catfish he can catch any time he wants to bait a hook?”

The peculiar position of the typical U.S. farmer — a commercial producer of food and materials from his own family home and land — has been recognized in the details and aims of federal farm legislation. Farms and farm life have been declared to be a special national asset, to be fostered and maintained by government action. Modern machinery has made it more possible than ever for the traditional family farm to survive. Indeed it is by no means certain that beyond a certain point bigness makes for greater efficiency in farming.

A. Whitney Griswold declared in 1948 that “family farming as we now define it is not doomed by technology. Its economic case is not so hopeless that we cannot save it if we want to. The question is, do we want to?” This was still the question in 1962, when Lyford overheard “the talk in Vandalia,” and it continues to be the question. Is the traditional American family-style farm worth saving? And, if so, how should it be saved?

5. THE NEW URBAN SOUTH

THE SOUTH HAS PRESENTED a special case of

rural and urban development in the twentieth century. Historically, it was the most rural section of the nation, with few large cities. In the post-Civil War era there was a vast increase in the number of farms because of the splitting up of the large plantations into tracts farmed by tenants, and because of the emergence of a new class of owner-farmers. Sharecropping replaced slavery as the main source of agricultural labor on the large holdings and usually resulted in a system of debt-peonage for the laborers. Yet many poor whites, and some Negroes too, were able to climb up the ladder from sharecropper to tenant to farm-owner status.

Sidney Lanier, in 1880, pointed to the small farm, with diversified cultivation of market and subsistence crops, as the hope of the New South. In fact, small farmers did surprisingly well in previously poor sections of Georgia, North Carolina, and other upper South states. However, where one-crop cultivation and crop-lien financing (another form of debt-peonage) prevailed, the small farmers experienced severe economic strain. Consequently, they became the most vigorous supporters of Populist radicalism in the 1880s and 1890s. After 1890, more diversification, scientific knowledge, and mechanization improved but did not completely remedy the Southern agricultural condition.

In the 1930s President Franklin D. Roosevelt declared that the South was “the nation’s No. 1 economic problem.” In 1938 the National Emergency Council reported that the valuable soil of the Southeastern states had been badly damaged by erosion, that half of the farmers were tenants with no deep interest in preserving the soil, and that the farms of the region were on the average the smallest in the nation.

During the period between the Civil War and World War II, a new industrialism and a new urbanism emerged. The South made good use of its raw materials, waterpower, and cheap labor to draw away a portion of some industries from the North (e.g., ciga-

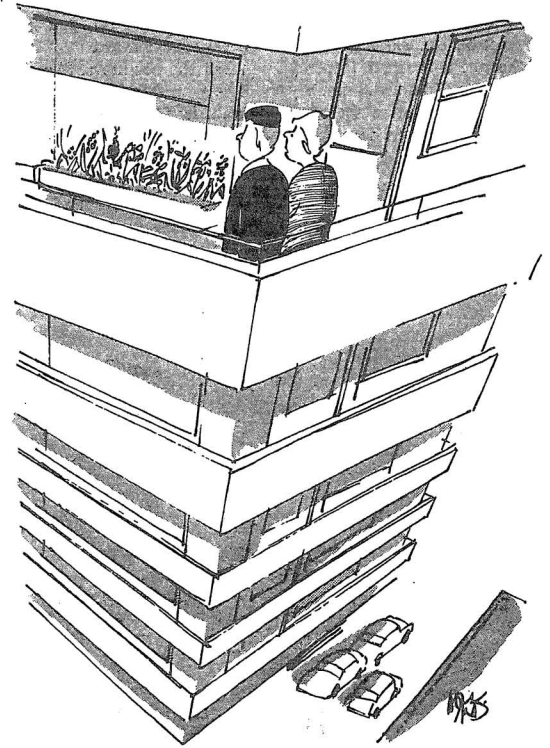
rettes). The Southern urban tendency was toward many small cities spread out along the rivers and throughout the countryside — the “milltowns” — instead of large cities, with the exception of such iron-and-steel centers as Birmingham. The milltowns had a markedly rural character, with whole families working in the factory together. With this went long hours, low wages, a low standard of living, and child labor, and also a lack of the small farmer’s independent cussedness, which led the fiery Southern Populist leader Ben Tillman to call such people the “damn factory class.”

Vast changes took place, however, in the character of urban life in the South during the twentieth century to match what was going on in the nation and the world at large. In 1920 only 7 of the country’s 50 largest cities were in the South; by 1940 the figure had doubled to 14. By 1950 these were over 1,200 “urban centers” in the South, as compared with 320 in 1900.

Old cities like New Orleans, Atlanta, and Louisville were among the new metropolises, but new ones like Houston (sixth largest city in the nation in 1965) and Dallas had emerged. Indeed, the great new urban frontier in the 1960s was in the burgeoning new cities and urban complexes of the Southwest.

A primarily agricultural economy was rapidly becoming industrialized and urbanized: whereas in 1920 half the Southern population lived on farms, in 1950 only about a quarter did so. Developments in farm machinery, including a perfected cotton picker, facilitated the rural exodus, and the notable fertility of the Southern farm families helped swell the population of the Southern, and also Northern, cities to which they migrated.

In the 1960s it seemed likely that the new metropolitan domination of Southern areas, together with the more equitable political power given to urban centers through the Supreme Court’s one-man-one-vote ruling, would bring about significant changes



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“Luckily, we’re built on good agricultural land”

in Southern society and politics. However, some of the old problems — aside from the omnipresent racial question — still remained, such as the pockets of destitution and misery in Appalachia.

Some new problems arose through rapid urbanization; for example, the excessively high crime rate in Southern cities, as compared with that in non-Southern cities. Rupert B. Vance and Nicholas J. Demerath, in a study of the urban South in 1955, saw this as “one more evidence perhaps of the breakdown of the traditional way of life and the failure as yet to develop, for numerous Southerners, a rewarding and socially acceptable substitute.”

6. THE MEGALOPOLITAN ERA

THE YEAR 1965 saw the establishment of a new Cabinet post in the federal government — the Department of Housing and Urban Development — to do for a predominantly

urban population what the Department of Agriculture had been doing for farmers for two or three generations. Indeed, as Americans looked forward to the final third of the twentieth century, it seemed evident that their most pressing and massive social problems lay in the metropolitan areas. In view of the central role of these areas in all sectors of American life, both urban and what used to be called "rural," it also seemed clear that whatever action was taken to solve the problems of the city would affect, for better or for worse, the whole country.

Most students of urbanization agreed that the tendency to vast metropolitan agglomerations would continue through the remainder of the century. Not only would the metropolitan areas increase absolutely but they would constitute a larger and larger share of the total population. Metropolitan complexes of 20 to 50 million people were regarded as well within the realm of possibility. In 1965, 13 of the 225 metropolitan areas contained half of the population of the nation, and some of them coalesced to form super-metropolitan areas, like the Boston-to-Washington continuous urbanized region, which the French geographer Jean Gottman dubbed a "megapolis." To Gottman it signaled "the dawn of a new stage in human civilization." To others it signaled vast and perhaps insoluble problems.

The most vexing or most obvious problem was that of traffic congestion — how to keep the vast hordes of vehicles and persons moving into, through, and out of the city. Two factors were the main causes of the problem: the automobile and suburban sprawl. The greater part of the population growth of metropolitan areas in 1950-1960 took place in the suburbs, to which people moved while keeping their jobs in the cities. Exurbanites preferred to travel by private automobiles to their city work, shopping, and recreation. Freeways, expressways, and public parking garages seemed only to increase the congestion at the same time that they allocated more and more precious ur-

ban space to machines, not people.

"The city at present may exhibit the first occasion in history of a society suffering from an excess of local mobility," wrote Aaron Fleisher in 1960. Moreover, the vast numbers of cars polluted the air far more dangerously than in the old days when factory smoke was the main fouler of the city's atmosphere. Eye irritation, inflamed sinuses, nausea, and worse ailments became environmental diseases of dwellers or workers in cities.

Various solutions were suggested for the problem. One was to approach it from the side of transportation alone, keeping the present urban-suburban structure, but trying to reduce the flow of traffic by providing speedy, comfortable, and inexpensive public transportation to, through, and from the city. The San Francisco region's Bay Area Rapid Transit District, with its computer-controlled trains scheduled to start operation in 1968, was an example of this type of solution. Pneumatic tube trains that would rush passengers quickly between the metropolitan nodes of the Eastern seaboard "megapolis" were another solution. Over the vast land areas of the new metropolises, air transport, public or private, would be still another solution. Moving sidewalks might be used to transport the crowds that formerly rode on wheels. American cities might also consider the method adopted by Paris, beginning in 1966, of prohibiting private vehicular traffic on certain streets during specified hours and thereby forcing the use of public transportation.

Another way was to approach the problem from the side of urban and regional planning. One suggested solution for New York City — America's No. 1 metropolitan problem in the 1960s — was to establish nine new urban centers within a seventy-mile radius of Manhattan. This was a late-twentieth-century application of the nineteenth-century idea of satellite and garden cities, evoking consideration of the whole spectrum of urban planning and of the ends

and values sought in communal living.

Is it best to spread out the various economic, cultural, and social activities of urban life over a wide area? Or is it best — does it afford wider and more accessible choice — to have these activities concentrated in a central core, extending vertically rather than horizontally? Which way — core, spread, or mixed — would provide the most convenient and refreshing access to the surrounding countryside? Which arrangement would be healthiest, safest, and most aesthetic? These are the kinds of questions that planners of the city of the future will have to face in the last third of the twentieth century.

Any new plan will also have to encounter the problems of human community that the twentieth-century metropolitan areas pose. Urban society has always hindered personal identity, communication, and belonging, and now the new metropolitan developments tend to erase the neighborhood ties that in the old cities gave a sense of participation and common bond.

The expected upsurge in participative communication and activity in the new suburbs subsided after an early flowering, and suburbs, too, have become areas of social and political flaccidity and “anomie” (social and cultural emptiness). Juvenile delinquency and other types of “urban” crimes are prevalent in the suburbs, which contribute their share of slums and blighted areas as time goes on.

The crisis in personal identity, the lack of interpersonal dialogue, and the absence of community seem to extend throughout American life. And the remedy for this situation will now have to be found in a society that is irrevocably urbanized.

It seems likely that the trend toward the mechanization of agriculture and the depopulation of the countryside will continue. The new metropolitan areas have even greater drawing power than the old-style cities. Whereas 23 million Americans lived on farms in 1950, only 13 million lived on

them in 1964. Increasing mechanization threatens to change the human aspect of the countryside, for the day is approaching when all farm operations will be performed by machines, even the harvesting of delicate fruits and vegetables.

Agricultural technologists look forward to a time when all farming functions will be performed by computer-controlled machinery, with the “farmer” limited to mere overseeing and inspection, perhaps from a remote watchtower or television-equipped control room. This will mean a new kind of farm life, without backbreaking or muscle-developing toil, without long hours in the burning sun or cutting wind, without migratory workers, native or imported, to add to the color and folklore of American life.

Will there be a protest against this new development in the late twentieth century as there was in 1860 from the *Prairie Farmer* correspondent who lamented: “Wooden harvesters do not sing harvest songs; iron mowers do not drink from cold springs”?

What will happen in such a world to the long-cherished values supposedly realized in rural life alone? What about the value of hard physical labor and the joy of creative work on the land? What of the independence and self-reliance that Jefferson saw as uniquely bestowed by the farmer’s mode of life and as absolutely necessary for a successful democratic government? Can these values be realized in new forms in an urban environment? Or will they be succeeded by new values appropriate to a new age?

As for “the wilderness,” the ultimate locale of the natural way of life, not all Americans are willing to relegate it to the past. Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas spoke out elegantly in 1965 for “A Wilderness Bill of Rights,” to preserve the permanently precious and necessary values of the natural environment. Man needs both wilderness and civilization, he said, and he needs wilderness more than ever now to heal the ills of fatigue, crowding,

noise, and other irritants of contemporary civilization.

He called for a new conservation ethic and policy to counter the depredations of automobiles, highways, and bulldozers, which are rapidly annihilating what wilderness Americans have left, after 300 years spent in turning it into farms and towns and cities. Douglas pleaded for the rights of the minority who wish to enjoy "sanctuaries free of the noise and debris of civilization," as against the desire of the majority to push highways, billboards, and an automobile culture all over the American landscape. Moreover, he argued, the land, with its waters and plants and animals, is a common patrimony that the people are ethically bound to preserve, not only for themselves but also for future generations.

Perhaps in the vast new metropolitan domains envisioned by the city planners there will be room for Douglas' proposed local

"conservation parks," and Americans of the twenty-first century will be able to enjoy both the culture of cities and the age-old human communion with nature. Can man be fully human without either? Does he need to live both close to the earth, "our long home," and in civilization? For 5,000 years the answer to the question has been yes: man needed both and could have both. But new answers are possible in a new age. [For further discussion of some of the political problems touched on in the above, see Chs. 4: GOVERNMENT BY THE PEOPLE and 10: PLURALISM; for discussion of the special problems and characteristics of the urban poor, see Chs. 12: MINORITIES and 18: STANDARD OF LIVING; for a consideration of the influence of the city on American art, see Ch. 23: THE ARTS; and for a general treatment of the pressing problems posed by modern technology, see Ch. 24: PROGRESS.]