

THE GLORIES OF MILLBROOK

ITS MAGNIFICENT SCENERY AND SUMPTUOUS INN.

A BEAUTIFUL SPOT IN THE HEART OF DUTCHESS COUNTY—THE MILLBROOK INN AND ITS SURROUNDINGS.

MILLBROOK, N. Y., July 27.—There is an ancient Indian legend that when the mighty waters swept over the face of the earth and were tossed into the torrent-holding clouds by the winds of that dread time, the Great Spirit put forth his hand and said, "Be still; yet be beautiful still;" and lo! the waters became as the earth and the foam became daisies; the stretch of the green waters was turf-covered, the waves became mountains and the hollows valleys, and the firmament hung fair and glorious, entranced at the splendors of the landscape, whose western horizon was bounded by the Catskills and whose east stretched away in undulating billows to the radiance of the morning sun. In the evening, when the great planet rested a while upon the topping peak of the Catskills, the Indians bent to the magnificence, for in all that glory they said, Manitou dwelt—the Manitou whose children they were. And though centuries have faded and lie forgotten, and the child of the soil has followed his Manitou to his resting place, the same splendors are here, the same glorious landscape, the same unparalleled grandeur of cloud scenes, the ever-repeated sunsets which inspired adoration and still command awe. In the heart of Dutchess County there lies this town, peaceful in its valley like a child in its cradle, but surrounded with all the splendors which await upon the nurturing of a Prince.

Away back, when the eighteenth century was in its teens, nine men, partners they were called, came from Long Island and acquired by grant thousands of acres in this region. Most of the partners were Quakers—all were Englishmen—and as they wandered about seeking habitations they decided that the hillslopes of this place were fruitful, yet not alone productive of rich harvests, but were fair in the eyes of the Lord. So upon the crest of a hill, not more than a mile and a half from Millbrook as it now lies, they erected a schoolhouse, which was also a meeting house, and then spread their farms all about. These Thorndale remains, handed down from generation to generation, always one son of the family being content to remain a lord of the soil, always remained in the Thorne family, until now the domain is known far and wide as the home of some of the purest Jersey cattle in the State. The old meeting house was subjected to all sorts of changes, until, nearly three decades ago, the old building was razed and from its timbers a part of Sandanona was built, than which there are few more beautiful country houses in this land, with its views, its interior, and its home life. Then, with the slowness of lasting progress, wealthy men came from the metropolis and chose sites from the innumerable ones on the hill tops and slopes and erected beautiful homes. George Hunter Brown of the famous banking house chose for his home a lofty hill to the west of Millbrook and laid out a park of nearly three hundred acres about its gem, "The Crest," wide-stretching in massive splendor, the like of which is seldom seen on this side of the Atlantic, with broad verandas and overhanging balconies, with its great terraces, its Norwegian pines and cedars, and its view of the Catskills, whose summits seem to swim like thunder-heads upon the mountain-bounded horizon. Then, more recently, H. J. Davison of 2 Wall-street, New-York, visited Millbrook and became charmed, as all do who set their feet upon our soil, and soon, upon an elevation of nearly eleven hundred feet above tidewater, began to show the peaked roofs and the tapering turrets of Altamont, which in five years will be one of the most beautiful homes in America.

Thus, one by one, the region was dotted here and there with beautiful homes, and the coolness of the Summer, the bracing atmosphere of the Winter, making home life here as delightful in all seasons, brought friends of the fortunate residents by the score to partake in part of its enjoyments. Soon there came a time when there were not accommodations enough, and then arose the problem, What shall we do with our friends? It was for a time difficult of solution, but hospitality always finds a way. A little removed from the hamlet of Millbrook stood a long, low two-storied farmhouse, occupied in former times by John Lane and a brother, who, however, invented a very useful agricultural implement, became wealthy, and removed to the city. The house had pretensions to elegance in its little Doric portico and its pretty lawn. It was on a slight elevation, where from the south could be seen the Fishkill Mountains standing guard at the valley's foot; to the west the summit roofs of The Crest and the buff buildings of Thorndale Farm, while to the east stood Sandanona. The site was a perfect one, and, the property being purchased, the old building became a wing of a new and beautiful house. Queen Anne's time was again responsible for its pretty outlines, and the architect, James E. Ware, exerted himself to make it a worthy focus in the valley for the views from the country houses on the hilltops. Last September it was formally opened and from then until today persons once here have been kept by their inclinations. Or if by necessity they have been drawn away they have not rested content until they again came within the shadows of its tumbling roofs, its warmly-tinted walls, and its broad verandas. The house was named the Millbrook Inn, for it was for the entertainment of man and beast—for the friends and their followers of the people of Millbrook. Of course it was necessary to find some man who was capable of conducting such a place, and then began a task even more difficult than the one of merely building the shell of comfort, for he was to be the genius of entertainment. Who should be chosen, then, but J. D. Cronin, whose name is so well known in association with that of the New-York Driving Club and subsequently with that of the South Side Club of Long Island? He was just the man for the place and when he and his charming little wife took the management in their care, the attractions of The Inn became so great that the house remained full about all the time and even the owners of the great houses in the neighborhood could not keep away. The Inn was so pretty and there were such good things in its larder. The advantages of the house were increased—the Inn was exclusively devoted to its guests. The servants sleep in a pretty little building at the east, while within a few paces are other pretty structures, containing a billiard room, bowling alleys, stables with horses belonging to The Inn and accommodations for the animals belonging to the guests. There is an icehouse which, unlike most places of the sort, is not a blotch upon the landscape, a gas tank, where the illuminating agent is made from gasoline and conducted into the hotel by means of pipes. Then in the old building there are those important creature comforts of a country life—bath-rooms and neatly-arranged lavatories. The parlors of The Inn are tastefully furnished and open upon a broad veranda, rich with nooks of all sorts, where breezy currents may be found at all times and very apt to engender little flirtations irresistible in the impulse given by the picturesque surroundings. The dining room is about as cozy a one as may be found within the State. There are only eight tables, but they groan with good things at every meal sent in by the good-humored and decidedly-competent French chef who wears the supreme authority in the kitchen.

The station of the Newburg, Dutchess and Connecticut Railway is only five minutes away over a road which, though natural, is as hard as though it were macadamized. The Inn is perfectly independent so far as fresh vegetables are concerned, for Mr. Cronin sees that the farm which belongs to it and which runs in upon all sides brings forth the fruits of the earth in such quality and luxuriance as would satisfy even a Maryland epicure. So far as the social enjoyments are concerned, they are almost as limitless as the beauties of the place, for there are hops whenever the ladies feel disposed toward them, with all the beauties of illumination attendant upon them. Last Saturday night The Inn became the nucleus of a beautiful scene as even this Paradise can produce. The buildings were made the standards of festoons of Japanese lanterns and variously-colored lights. The noble avenue of great trees which leads to the *porte cochere* were as though the rendezvous of all the rifles and glowworms of Dutchess County and the sounds of the music which stole between the Venetian blinds and floated across the lawn would have been sufficient to have made St. Jerome eschew the desert and come into the land of milk and honey known as Millbrook. Of course, garden parties and the like are accumulators of mosquitoes, but let the reader pause amazed! There are no mosquitoes and no gnats at Millbrook. When the harvests are garnered and the leaves begin to turn, there is to be fox-hunting—and with a real fox, who will carry his brush defiantly and who will puzzle the hounds to the huntsman's and huntswomen's content. The hunt cannot fail to be beautiful as a spectacle, even to the persons who do not participate, for the hillsides are cleared farming lands for the stretch of two or three thousand acres, and the course may be seen almost without obstruction from the Inn's verandas.

Of course, The Inn is the central point of interest, as it is a public rendezvous, but it is only a single gem in the coronet of beautiful dwellings which crown the highlands. It is, however, the starting point for some of the most interesting drives about the boundaries of this State. The country about is rich with recollections of Revolutionary heroes. The name of Washington abounds. The village itself is within the township of Washington, and there are Washington Hollows and all sorts of additions to the memorable Catskills. Within a day's drive one can reach the Catskills of the Berkshire Hills. As though they had been carefully rolled, run to the northeast to Pittsfield, Mass.; to the southwest to Wappinger's Falls; to the north are Pine Plains, and the south contains Fishkill Landing and the beautiful little hamlets which lie between; east and west are turnpikes which extend from Poughkeepsie to Dover Plains and to

Sharon, Conn. There is not one of these drives, either, which has not its own peculiar beauties. Pine, elm, and birch woodlands border them; tiny streamlets, clear as crystal and as varied, and tumbling as mountain torrents, dart by one at short intervals. From each crest of the innumerable hills a new landscape confronts one with all the varied effects of clouds chasing clouds over the farm lands, and dipping first one valley in the shadow, then another. The great charm of the whole is the diversified character of the scenery, for here may be a bit as wild and as magnificent as may be found within the virgin forests of the Adirondaeks, while a few steps further on lies a farm basking peacefully in the sunlight, type of the most advanced cultivation and proof of man's art when added to nature's handiwork.

On the Dover Plains turnpike, east of The Inn, stands Sandanona, the home of Mr. and Mrs. J. D. Wing, widely known in New-York social life. It occupies an eminence nearly nine hundred feet above tidewater. Several years ago Mr. and Mrs. Wing's house was further south, in a depression. But they had it moved to its present site, nearly in the centre of their large farm, which slopes below them, showing bits of cultivated fields and woodland, which form a lovely setting to the house. The old house was not rebuilt, for it was filled with the most cherished memories; but how altered it was! Wings were added, broad verandas and graceful balconies surrounded it; the steep slope of the hillside was terraced, making a broad platform of turf below the veranda, confined by an iron railing and cornered with stone lookouts, where the electric lights of the Hotel Kaaterskill, fifty miles away, may be seen glittering at nightfall, and where the most gorgeous sunsets which can be imagined may be watched as they grow or fade into the twilight. The interior of this house is the abode of luxury in its most artistic environment. The aim of the architect was apparently to direct the eyes toward the glorious scenery which was without, for there are windows everywhere, as argus eyes gazing upon the dozing valleys and slumbering mountains. The beautiful entrance hall extends through the house, one end of it being occupied by three enormous plates of beveled glass, through which, as through a picture frame, the work of the Eternal Artist may be viewed. Mr. and Mrs. Wing are as hospitable as they are happy, for about them, among the groups of trees in the valley and in the turnpike, are beautiful little cottages where their chosen friends pass the Summer.

Still to the east one passes a massive wall, with a quaint old gateway upholding a great and finely-wrought iron lantern. By it stands a charming little lodge—the great house on the hill in miniature. A well-rolled drive, bordered with a velvety lawn, adjoins it as it ascends the hill whereon stands Altamont, the home of Mr. Davison. This superb residence is built after the most improved designs for the modern country house, and is another creation by Mr. Ware. This also is of the later eighteenth-century style of architecture, with its multitude of angles, its queer and unexpected corners, and its verandas and balconies and turrets. Surrounding it are flowers everywhere, which confine the house and the outbuildings alike, making it as nearly a great conservatory as a house of its architecture may be. From it the view is widely extended, for against the sky to the west rise the Catskills; thence lies the range of the Shawangunk Mountains, with the intervening hill slopes, which extend to the Hudson. To the southwest is the last tapering spur of the Berkshires, which close in the horizon to the east and the northeast. Storm King raises his stately crest in the same direction, while thirty miles away lies the dark bank of the Fishkill range, seeming black in the distance. The house was only begun in October, 1887, but Mr. Davison and his family have already occupied it two seasons and can scarce be driven away by King Frost and all his myrmidons. Continuing down the Dover Plains turnpike lies the pretty hamlet of Little Rest, with its awfully suggestive legend of the mighty man who once corralled an unsuspecting victim and worked him night and day for a week; then discharged him. The ensuing dialogue between the victim and a native gave the name to the place. The latter saw the former hastening away and asked him why his hurry. "Alas!" quoth the victim, "I hastened away from that place of little rest." But that was many, many years ago, and now it has earned another name, for in a beautiful old mansion, formerly the home of Judge Titus, for several terms Congressman from this district, lives Jacob B. Carpenter, surrounded by his great farm and all the pleasures of a gentleman farmer. A mammoth portico reminds one of the old Virginia houses, with their massive colonial architecture.

To the east of The Inn, on an elevation of nearly one thousand feet and in the centre of an exquisitely-kept and delightfully-laid-out park, stands "The Crest," which was built eighteen years ago by George Hunter Brown, and sold by him in recent years to Samuel Thorne of the old family of Thorndale Farm and President of the Newburg, Dutchess County and Connecticut Railway Company. "The Crest" is by far the most delightfully situated and splendidly-furnished dwelling in the vicinity. Its pretensions to prettiness are nothing, but it is massively built and its squares of strength give it an imposing appearance which is far more impressive than mere grace of outline. The interior, however, is that of the most elaborately furnished of town houses, the main hallway and grand stairway being models of dwelling-house architecture. The view from the great windows at the west end of this hall equals, if it does not surpass, that of "Sandanona." There has been added to the main building by Mr. Thorne a "family room," which is a superb apartment, fully fifty feet in height, circular in proportions, and nearly seventy feet in diameter. The woodwork is of cedar and mahogany. This great room is provided with furnishings of the utmost luxury. A little way from "The Crest" is Thorndale Farm. It is now the home of Mr. Thorne, the nephew of the owner of "The Crest," and is used by Mr. Thorne as the breeding place and dairy for a great herd of Jersey cattle; it includes a stock farm for trotters, and became famous because of the stallion Thorndale—who is now in his twenty-fourth year but who is as handsome and as vigorous as ever—and a sheep farm. It extends over many hundreds of acres and is the pride of Dutchess County. In the village stands the quaint and beautiful old ivy-grown home of Mrs. Maria Weed Alden, daughter of the great journalist Thurlow Weed. It is embowered in trees and its hospitality is county-wide. It is well merited and claimed, for hanging from a noble oak, itself half hidden with ivy, is a swinging wrought-iron sign surmounted with a lantern, upon which this legend appears:

OTRADA.
Who enters here
N'er comes too early
Nor stays too late.

Just now there is no hunting about Millbrook because of the State game laws, but with the beginning of August comes the privilege of shooting woodcock, with which the woods are filled. Of course, when one talks of hunting or fishing one's thoughts instinctively turn to the veteran woodsman, George Lester, who is almost as well known to New-York sportsmen as he is loved here. He is a character worth cultivating, for he is filled with the legends and the virtues of every brook and woodland within a radius of fifty miles. He doesn't spend all his time talking either, as some woodsmen do, but follows the scent for game with the indefatigability of a born hunter. There are two lakes within easy reaching distance, one are teamed with bass and pickerel—the other Upton's Lake, three miles to the southwest; the other Upton's Lake, about seven miles to the northwest. But there are trout streams by the score all through the hills from Fishkill Creek to the southwest to the Berkshires.

There are many new country houses which are promised for the near future. The most conspicuous of them, however, will be that of Capt. R. S. Hayes of New-York. It lies almost midway between The Inn and The Crest, and is on the saddle of two hills, with nearly unobstructed views to all points of the compass. The building promises to be equal to any of the surrounding country seats, and with the slope which the site affords, its lawn will be one of the most beautiful of the region. Persons who come here will find no difficulty in discovering their place for worship, for scattered through the village and along the hillsides are the picturesque Dutch Reformed church, built and presented to the town by George Hunter Brown, whose pastor is the Rev. Dr. Lyle; the Episcopal church, the Rev. Mr. Burgess; the Methodist church, the Rev. Mr. Heroy; the Roman Catholic church, Father Molloy. Then there is a pretty little Baptist church snuggled in the midst.

The facilities for reaching Millbrook are ample. The village is three hours from New-York, nine miles on an air line from Hyde Park, and fifteen miles from Poughkeepsie by an excellent turnpike. It may be reached by the Newburg, Dutchess and Connecticut Railway, which connects with the New-York Central at Dutchess Junction. Trains leave the Grand Central Station at 8 A. M. and 4 P. M. and arrive at Millbrook at 11 A. M. and 7 P. M. It may be also reached by the Harlem Road to Dover Plains, seven miles distant. It is the intention to keep The Inn open all seasons, for in Winter the sleighing through the adjoining country is particularly enjoyable. Last year a number of parties came up here from New-York to enjoy this healthful pastime. Summing up Millbrook and its surroundings, with all their manifold attractions of scenery and society, it is safe to declare it one of the most charming resorts within 100 miles of the metropolis, for it is a place where the weary may secure rest, the ill health, and the social as much pleasure, and in their own set too, as they may secure at home.

Among the many guests at The Inn now and who have been here since the season opened are the following:

From New-York.—E. C. Chase, Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Vail, with Miss Vail and Theodore E. Vail; Howard C. Phillips, W. B. Phillips, H. C. Phillips and Mrs. Phillips, Mr. J. B. Houston, Mrs. Houston, Miss Houston, Charles Taft, William Barnes, Mr. and Mrs. John Morgan Wing, L. Stewart Wing, Miss Mary A. Wells, J. M. Sterry, W. B. Blackwell, W. H. Livingston, D. Remsen Olney, Mrs. T. C. Wickes, Augustus Gaylord, Mrs. and Mrs. H. B. Gilbert, Mrs. W. V. Brokaw, Mrs. W. H. Harbut, Miss Maggie Harbut, Mr. and Mrs. R. S. Hayes, T. de Wit Thompson, Mr. and Mrs. C. F. Dieterich and Master Alfred E. Dieterich, Mr. and Mrs. William Thorne, Mr. and Mrs. A. E. Foster, Mr. and Mrs. P. Remsen and Miss Remsen, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Eastman, and family, Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Akin, Mr. and Mrs. James Kent, Mr. and Mrs. M. C. Wells, Mr. and Mrs. L. M. Idings, Noah Brooks, Mr. and Mrs. Francis T. Garrettson, Mr. and Mrs. W. P. O'Connor, Dr. R. B. Kinball, Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Taiter, Collector Joel B. Erhardt, Mrs. Erhardt and family, C. L. Rathborne and Mrs. Rathborne and the Misses Rathborne, Mrs. U. W. Ireland, Miss Schieffelin, Miss Lockwood, Miss Mary Dodge, Miss Lillian Dunham, Miss R. Dunham, Mr. and Mrs. H. C. Emmet, Augustus Howe, Dr. John G. Perry, Charles D.

Dickie, Jr.; George Wood, Dr. and Mrs. Paul F. Mundie, Miss Merritt, Mr. and Mrs. James A. Scrymser, Mr. and Mrs. Bayliss, Miss Maud Howland, Miss Edith Parrish, Miss Edith Minturn, Miss Fannie Bowdoin, Miss Potter, Miss Louisa Morgan, Miss Isabel Van Rensselaer, Mr. M. Howland, Jr.; P. Bowdoin, D. P. Kingsford, W. T. Blodgett, R. S. Minturn, R. B. Crosby, Jr.; Julian H. Kearn, Edward Livingston, Charles Dicksey, and Rudolph E. Schirmer.

Mrs. James C. Fisk and James L. Fisk of Boston, J. T. Tower of Poughkeepsie, Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Sherman of America Union, Miss Sherman of Dover, Horatio Nelson of Wassailo, Mrs. J. Curtis Patterson of Philadelphia and Mrs. H. N. Almy of the same city, Frederick R. Newbold of Poughkeepsie, Mr. and Mrs. W. B. Nelson of America, W. M. Betts and family of Poughkeepsie, Mrs. R. W. Edgar of New-Rochelle, Mr. and Mrs. Henry K. Sheldon and Miss Sheldon, A. M. White and Miss White, Mr. and Mrs. Alfred T. White and family and Miss Rockwell of Brooklyn; Stewart Cullin of Philadelphia, Mr. and Mrs. C. Adolphe Low and Miss Low of Sharon, Conn.