

IT'S QUIET IN THE COUNTRY

I LIKE the country. I was very pleased when I heard we were going to live in the country because I thought "Now I shall be able to do all the things I've always wanted to do but never had time to." I shall lie under the trees, I thought, and watch the cows. I shan't even read. For the first time in my life I shall have time to discover myself. Of course I didn't know why this self-discovery business is important, because after all there mightn't be anything to discover. But if you've spent your whole life in a big city dashing round doing



"One of the delights of country life ... is that you can wear what you like"

things and seeing people, you rather welcome the opportunity of discovering whether there is anything to discover. Then if there isn't you can always go back to seeing people and enjoying things.

Of course it's rather difficult to get accommodation in a small town with a camp next door to it. We were really rather lucky to get a share house (own bedroom and sitting-room, share kitchen and bathroom) only three miles from the town and three miles from the camp. And it was a genuine farm with cows to stare at and be stared at by, and hay to make. Weeks stretched ahead of me, their emptiness waiting to be filled by—emptiness. I was at one with W. H. Davies.

ULCERS Eating Legs Away HEALED By VAREX

Genuine Varex has permanently healed thousands of cases where Varicose Ulcers were eating the leg away. Worst cases have yielded to Varex even when other treatment has failed.

Four to six dressings—one a week—are usually sufficient. No resting necessary. Housewives, cooks, carpenters, axemen and others, have kept right on working, while Varex healed painlessly. Wonderful testimonials to be seen. Write for free booklet, to Ernest Healey, Pharmaceutical Chemist, Varex, Ltd., Box 1558, N.L., Wellington.

IT is unfortunate that housekeeping takes time, and that the first week should be spent settling in. Then I started a fresh week, to be occupied in doing absolutely nothing. It was also unfortunate that I had forgotten to give the grocer my order on the one morning a week that he called. It was a very hot day and I decided that the least I could do was to combine getting the stores with browning my legs and thus partially solving the stocking problem.

I changed into shorts and shirt. One of the delights of country life, I have always maintained, is that you can wear what you like. My landlady stopped me as I was going out the gate. "But I'm only going up to the village," I protested. We talked at cross-purposes for some time. When I say "village" I mean the one-street township, and when she says "village" she means the butcher's shop at the top of our road. Being a member of the "when in Rome" school and by nature spineless I returned to the house and changed.

I SUPPOSE it's one of the nice things about the country that people are so sociable. Whenever people ask my landlady out to afternoon tea they always ask her to bring me too. They think I must be lonely. And when I staggered in after my six-mile tramp to the village and Mrs. Collins (my landlady) told me that she had promised Mrs. Jenkins to take me down to afternoon tea I was too weak to protest.

Mrs. Jenkins was very nice, and of course very sociable. She asked me how I liked Camptown. They always ask me how I like Camptown. I said I liked it very much, thank you. I always say I like it very much, thank you. And then they say it must be very quiet after Auckland. And then it's my turn next, so I say I like it quiet. But in spite of the ineptitude of my conversation I am a social success and so one of the other ladies at the gathering is bound to ask Mrs. Collins to come to afternoon tea at her place at the same time next week, and of course to bring me with her. I murmur appreciative thank-yous.

IT wouldn't be so bad if Mrs. Collins would let me go as I am. But she always puts on her best silk and expects me to do the same. When I first told her that I just didn't have a best silk and that I hadn't had one since I went to Sunday School, she obviously didn't believe me. And in the end I found myself dashing into the village and buying one just like Mrs. Collins's but even more subdued, and then producing it from my trunk as if it had been there all along. And of course there are stockings. When the subject first came up I said quite firmly, "I will not wear stockings to go out to afternoon tea. I never wear stockings to go out to afternoon tea in Auckland." Mrs. Collins shook her head and clucked disapprovingly as if she thought Auckland was at one with

Sodom and Gomorrah. So I changed my tactics. "I make it a principle," I said, "never to wear stockings unless I am going to a levee at Government House." Mrs. Collins was impressed, but seemed to think I should extend the principle. I compromised by wearing a pair with ladders. But, though in Sodom and Gomorrah such a course would have resulted in social ostracism, in Camptown I reaped six more invitations to afternoon tea.

This means that all next week and the week after is booked up. And that means that for no single day in next week or the week after will I be able to take a hunk of bread and cheese out into the fields and spend a whole day watching the cows and discovering myself. I shall have to be content with an odd hour in the morning, perhaps after I've finished wrestling with the range and coping with the califont.

But surely the end must come soon. Surely all the people who can ask us out to afternoon tea have already done so. Do they then start all over again?

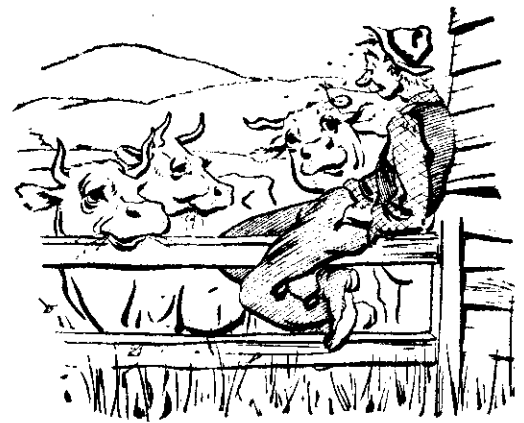
IT'S worse than that. Mrs. Collins informed me to-day that it is our turn next. I think back. Mrs. Jenkins—six kinds of cake, bread-and-butter, sandwiches. Mrs. Grant—seven kinds of cake, sandwiches, bread-and-butter. Mrs. Gudgeon—six kinds of cake, sandwiches, savoury biscuits, bread-and-butter. "If they come here," I tell Mrs. Collins, "they're going to get bread-and-butter and biscuits-and-cheese." But Mrs. Collins takes no notice of me. She is making a list on a piece of paper. It will probably be a very good afternoon tea, I reflect.



"Somebody told me I must join the Women's Institute"

so good that people will keep on coming back, week after week.

SOME of the people at our afternoon tea hadn't seen me before. They asked me how I liked Camptown. I said very much, thank you. They said I must find it very quiet after Auckland. I said I like it quiet, thank you. Then somebody told me I must join the Women's Institute. It meets on the first and third Friday. I said I'd like to very much, thank you.



"... A genuine farm with cows to stare at and be stared at by"

Then somebody also said I must join the Red Cross. It meets on the second and fourth Thursday. And the Dramatic Club. That's every Wednesday. I said thank you very much, I'd like to.

Mrs. Collins and I walked home. She said that she was sure the ladies concerned wouldn't mind if I called on them in the morning instead of the afternoon, and then I'd have time to fit everything in. Perhaps we could have some people round on Monday morning to our place.

She patted me on the shoulder and said she was sure I would like Camptown because the people were so sociable and there was so much to do—I wouldn't have time to feel lonely.

WHEN people heard I was going back to town suddenly they were rather surprised. But they said they quite understood that I must be lonely and that it must be very quiet for me in Camptown after the big city.

I'm looking forward to living in town again. There are so many things I've always wanted to do but never realised I'd had time for. I shall sit in an easy chair in the window of my flat and watch the people (but not the motor-cars) going by. I shan't even read. And for the first time in my life I shall have time to discover myself. Of course I don't know why this self-discovery business is important, because after all there mightn't be anything to discover. But if you've spent the last few weeks in the country dashing round doing things and seeing people you rather welcome the opportunity of discovering if there is anything to discover. Then if there isn't you can always go back to the country.

PUBLIC TRUST OFFICE

STATEMENT FOR DECEMBER, 1941

Estates of a value of £451,015 were reported and accepted for administration by the Public Trustee during the month of December, 1941. The total value of the estates and funds under administration by the Public Trustee on March 31, 1941, was £64,436,092, and the new business for the nine months ended December 31 was £4,382,389.

Grants of administration made by the Court in favour of the Public Trustee numbered 146 for the month.

During the month 968 new wills appointing the Public Trustee executor were prepared on behalf of testators and lodged for safe custody, and 432 existing wills were revised to provide for changes desired by testators. The total number of wills now held in the Public Trust Office on behalf of living persons is 110,485.