

THE LOCUSTS



Mr. W. B. Dinsmore

Home at Staatsburg N. Y.

OF the many grants of land by British sovereigns to the settlers who made the early history of this country few of the vast estates remain intact. One by one through marital and business difficulties or the extinction of the family, great properties have been divided and subdivided to make summer homes for persons of wealth. A half dozen estates of millionaires adjoin to-day where the entire property was once the proud possession of the individual.

This is in evidence particularly along the Hudson River. Here you will find stone walls running crookedly through handsomely modelled forests, the trees of which bend to the winds that oftentimes play over the Shawagunk hills and the Catskills, to first ripple the waters of the river and steal with more force to the densely wooded heights of the shore line.

The trees and shrubbery are the pride of their owners. They have been transplanted, nurtured and encouraged for more than two centuries. Their great branches spread to distances, gnarled and rugged, to be sure, but presenting such evidence of strength and health that they are inspiring.

There are many beautiful estates along the Hudson carefully trained by landscape gardeners, but it is doubtful if more natural beauty can be found anywhere than may be seen among the nooks and dells or from the broad verandas of the Locusts, the home of W. B. Dinsmore, at Staatsburg, N. Y. It is one estate that has not been divided since the original grant.

Of the many properties which extend from New York to Albany there are few which escape from the unsightly railroad that winds along the shore. At the Lo-

view the serenity and grandeur of nature. The trees have not changed, the gardens bloom in their same brilliancy, the broad and even lawns are as trim as they were during the visits paid by General Grant.

The first W. B. Dinsmore was the president of the Adams Express Company. It was founded by Alvin Adams, the rugged and stout hearted business giant of decades past. Mr. Dinsmore's son, the present W. B. Dinsmore, who, with his brother, Mr. Clarence G. Dinsmore, owns this estate, married the beautiful daughter of Mr. Adams. They have three children—W. B. Dinsmore, Jr.; Mrs. Robert Huntington and Miss Madeleine Dinsmore, the only unmarried member of the family.

Mr. Clarence G. Dinsmore spends most of his time in Europe. His wife was Miss Kate Jerome, daughter of Thomas Jerome and cousin of Lady Randolph Churchill. W. B. Dinsmore has long since refused to divorce himself from the comforts of the Locusts. He spends only a few weeks a year in his office in lower Broadway, for, as he puts it—

Joys of Country Life.

"What's the use of going to New York? You stand a chance almost any minute of being blown up in a subway blast or mutilated by a trolley car. Look at that view, will you?"

And so he has settled down to the life of a country gentleman, the joy and delight of his grandchildren, the happy master of a small pack of hounds, the adviser of a well trained gardener and—perfectly content.

There are just 1,000 acres in the Locusts. The estate was given this name from the number of these trees upon it. Trumpet vines almost hide the gnarled trunks and

Dinsmore's favorite stories. Cut down the walnuts indeed!

Colony of Squirrels.

The old walnuts are really majestic and harbor a colony of gray squirrels that have become so tame and imprudent that they go to the house for many of their meals, especially during the winter months.

In another part of the estate, at the bottom of a slope, is a miniature ravine. Here in wild seclusion grow ferns and mosses. A tumbling brook dances among the trees, a pretty, gurgling thing during the summer, but which can assume the strength of a small torrent when the warm winds of spring melt the snow and ice upon the hill tops. Rustle bridges and old fashioned settees mutely explain that here is at hand most peaceful repose.

There is vast attention paid to the culture of sheep and cattle at the Locusts. You know the "hothouse lambs" bred at this farm are world famed quite as much as the Southdown mutton which finds its way to the market.

It is Mr. Dinsmore's delight to watch the sheep upon his miniature range. There are hillocks of sand and hillocks of dirt, covered sparsely with grasses and then again luxuriant with greens. The sheep come to improve their condition is done. It is so with the cattle, but they are not known as well as these "hothouse lambs" which epicures have declared have no equal in the country.

You can imagine the master of this estate galloping over the hills in the early hours of the morning. Once you lose sight

steel engraving "The Old Lovers." As you enter Mrs. Dinsmore's garden and see the old time dial upon the marble shaft you can readily imagine the heart interest contained in the story of the engraving. The aged man, his face upon his hands, which rest upon the head of his cane, looks across the garden to the woman. She is searching the past. How eloquent and expressive of the great something in those lives—ambitions, hopes, longings, fulfilled or otherwise!

A great hall runs through the house. While erected for a summer house, the designer must have figured that it was far too comfortable to neglect in winter. The ceilings are high, very high, just as in Colonial homes.

Rare Venetian Furniture.

The furniture is of the Venetian type. Collected in 1864. A great deal of this was ordered and purchased before the craze for antiques had begun. There is an exquisitely carved buffet in the hall and opposite a cabinet of oak which must have been wrought half a century ago. The staircase is of dark oak, at the bottom of which rests a clock of unique pattern. It is in the form of a maiden, who sustains a rod in such rhythm that you feel sorry her engagement is indefinite. Its base is of onyx.

There are plenty of treasures in this hall, difficult to enumerate. The drawing room and the music room display exceedingly good taste, the high ceilings and the long curtains over the great windows impressing one with the size and beauty of the house. The library is filled with a choice collection of works. There is the card room, Mr. Dinsmore's den, the billiard



custs it is a quarter of a mile inland and its dust and noise are quite forgotten.

Spot in Which to Dream

The Locusts is a spot in which to dream. General U. S. Grant, when President of the United States, sat in an easy chair upon the broad veranda which overlooks the river. It was his first visit. He took in a deep breath, allowed his far-seeing eyes to run to the blue line of the Catskills and then down the river, where the green hills vie with one another for a conspicuous place in the sky line. The day was full of balm. There was peace and contentment in the soft rustle of locusts and the songs of silvery toned birds. General Grant was silent for several moments. Then he spoke—

"Mr. Dinsmore, you should be satisfied."

It was a simple acknowledgment, and expressive, from a great man.

There is to-day, as there was twenty-five years ago, the same opportunity to

the uneven branches. And when these vines are in flower you can imagine how pretty they look.

The tract was a grant originally to the Livingstons and remained in that family for a great many years. It passed into the hands of the Emmets and down to the Dinsmores. It was in 1874 that the mansion was occupied. It had been built the preceding year.

While intended merely for a summer home, it was well built, the walls being of brick and the outer covering of framework, and very artistic. The vines and the shrubbery with which the house is in many parts covered, give a pretty and effective conceit to the architecture.

The entrance is from the Post road. The stone walls which follow the road along the estate will endure for all time. Each stone is several feet wide and of considerable depth. There is not a small stone in the wall. This is a departure



BLACK WALNUT TREE HAS LIVED CENTURIES!

of the barns and dwellings of the farm hands you can imagine yourself in Dakota or Montana, and Mr. Dinsmore takes great pleasure in following this fancy.

It is the same with the hothouses where the choice flowers are grown. Orchids were always the favorite of Mr. Dinsmore's father. He secured numerous varieties. The culture of these has been going on for a great many years, but in no way have the violets, American Beauty roses, briar roses, carnations, hyacinths and a score of other varieties been neglected.

Greenhouses cover a pretty good share of the estate, the gardeners taking great pains in planning and executing the beautiful centre pieces for the lawns. One new greenhouse now building will about equal anything along the Hudson River.

Climb a small incline and you will come upon the old type of English garden. It is Mrs. Dinsmore's pride. She planned it herself. The idea was taken from the

Ostrich Farms in America.

The introduction of the ostrich into America is quite a recent event. Edwin Cawston, the proprietor of three large ostrich farms in America, left Natal, Africa, some twelve years ago with a cargo of fifty odd birds bound for California. Eight died on the ocean. The rest, save one, are all now deceased, but have laid the foundation for that vast army of ostriches that will one day supply the American milliner with American leather tips. The annual trade at the present time amounts to \$2,000,000. The Cawston ranch has for some years supplied zoological gardens and menageries.

California has the largest ostrich stock farms in America. Not very much success has so far attended the hatching of the American ostrich by incubators. Lately, however, out of a setting of ten at the South Pasadena farm, eight healthy chicks resulted. Experiments are constantly being carried forward in this direction, although so far it has been found by the local ostrich farmer that nature, assisted by man, has proved to be the best conservator of ostrich life.

Baby ostriches are the size of the ordinary hen, and are treated with the greatest care. In the day they eat alfalfa; in the night they are kept in heated rooms and are fed with dainties from the kitchen; the consequence is—one of the marvels of ostrich life—they grow at the rate of twelve inches a month for the first six months.

The ostriches are docile to some extent and seldom quarrelsome. The instinct of the hen is to run away from danger; they are voiceless and timid. The young males will fight sometimes, but generally flee.

A plucking of the birds occurs every few months, when each individual ostrich is led into a corner, at the acute angle of which is provided a little gate. Here its plumage is shorn off, and a boy is mounted upon it and away it goes, striving to throw the youth, and after a few hundred yards invariably succeeds. The grotesque motions of the creature and the attitudes of the clinging boy amuse the attending crowd of visitors, and form with the plucking, one of the features of the celebration. This programme is usually carried out on holidays.

The young ostriches are not very beautiful. From their seventh month to the twelfth they are treated very much the same way as their parents. The food of an ostrich in California is alfalfa, corn, beets and vegetables of all kinds, which ever product is sold at the lowest price at the different seasons of the year. Ostriches are also fed largely on pressed grape skins.

Women Become Agriculturists.

A SHORT journey from London brings one to the Horticultural College, where women as well as men may learn not only the art of gardening, but nearly all that pertains to agriculture. The college, which was founded in 1869, is situated in the sunniest part of Kent, in the heart of the fruit growing district. It consists of a fine old mansion, part of it going back to the days of Elizabeth, standing in forty-three acres of land.

The ground consists of twelve acres of kitchen garden, two of flower garden, seven of fruit plantations and several fields. The buildings include glass houses, farm buildings, stables, workshops, apiary, dairy, poultry houses, lecture rooms, laboratories, &c. When the college was first started only men were taken, but two years ago women appeared on the scene and now they considerably outnumber the men.

In the flower garden, beside the college buildings, the processes of planting, potting, hoeing, watering and so on are in full operation. Close by are the students' own gardens. Here individual tastes have full scope. Some of the gardens are charming, while others are severely utilitarian in character. But all of them showed that their owners were in earnest, and were putting genuine work into them.

The glass houses form another notable feature at the college. One or two are devoted to tropical plants—and this section is about to be greatly enlarged—but the greater portion are devoted to tomatoes, cucumbers, peaches and the like. Two fine vineries yield a large crop.

Some of the women students have tried their hands at mowing in the hayfield, but it was found that the work of swinging the scythe was too much for them.

Dairy work occupies an important part in the curriculum, while the preserving of fruit and making of pickles are not forgotten. Attention is also paid to table decoration, as well as to packing fruit and flowers for the market. It should be pointed out that in every particular the men and women students pursue the same course of instruction. Men learn to make jelly and arrange flowers, while the women dig trenches, prepare forcing beds and master the intricacies of land surveying. In addition to the practical work in the gardens and on the farm a good share of the students' time is occupied with lectures and with laboratory research.

All students entering must be over sixteen years of age and possess satisfactory references. The inclusive fee of eighty pounds is charged, and the course extends over two years.

from the fences of the countryside. As you enter the grounds, which are open to the public excepting Saturday and Sunday, you are struck by the white, even roadway, the line of maples on either side showing the same order as the neatly cropped grass of the sward.

Along Floral Way

Under great trees the road winds, past pretty bowers and beds of flowers, at this season of the year bountiful in perfume and color. Clusters of palms spread their sharp petals almost to the road as you ride into an avenue lined with huge maples and ancient locusts. Here you can catch a glimpse of the shimmering glass of the greenhouses, and then you come out into better light to see the large beds of flowers of every hue and species. There are several centrepieces of ferns and greens, ornamented with some of the old fashioned flowers to which our great-grandmothers gave such care.

One thing that cannot fail to impress is the avenue leading to the mansion. This is the rear entrance. A few rods from the veranda, which encircles three-quarters of the house, are three enormous black wal-