

this way we begin to inquire what are these elements that make it worth while and sooner or later—and I fear with many of us it is a little later—the value of beauty comes in, beauty either created or enjoyed.

In all the books I have read, and that isn't so many, and all the speeches I have heard, and that isn't a few, the rural people are always spoken of as living in the country. "Rural people" to my way of thinking includes a lot of folks who are not "dirt farmers," as country people like to designate the real farmer. The point I want to make if I can is that there are probably several millions of folks living in the city who are in reality "rural people." They are people who have lived a part and oftentimes a large part of their lives on the farm. They remember the farm scene, the farm work, the farm folks, and thousands of them would go back to the farm if they could. They will always be in their hearts and in their minds "rural people," and when we are looking about for the forces we can count on to help us build up an appreciation of country life and to join us in efforts to enrich country life by an infusion of the rural arts, I think we should include in our list all those wherever we find them who are genuinely concerned about rural life and invite them all to help advance our program.

I have referred to the evidence at the Madison meeting of the hunger of country people for more of the arts, for more beauty in the daily life of the farm. Farming must be regarded not merely as an occupation with an economic end but as a mode of life. That this feeling prevails in many of the rural sections of America there is not the least doubt, and there are increasing evidences everywhere of the bringing into country life and county work of the help, the inspiration, and the power of beauty. But it is with many of our people a long, slow process with some old deep-seated prejudices to overcome. It will, I think, help us to understand our problems better and to make the future more secure for the arts if we examine briefly some of the reasons that have stood in the way of the wide acceptance they are destined finally to receive.

I think of three ways in which the arts have been hindered in their development in rural life, or for that matter, in American life generally.

First, we have actually, a good many of us,

been opposed outright to beauty. Some day in looking back this will be hard to understand of America, but it is true beyond any doubt. A great many of our people, especially in the early days of the republic, were opposed to beauty; they feared it and denied it. With many there was a religious fervor against it. Among some people the idea still holds that the enjoyment of beauty, as I would call it, but as they might say, the indulgence in beauty, is apt to undermine the morals and weaken the character. That view, I know, is now changing rapidly. Some of the older churches have long known and our newer ones are finding out that the enjoyment of beauty either through the making of beautiful things or the contemplation of them, is a vital force in the lives of many to whom the church if it opposed this resource could not appeal. But the old-time opposition, the antipathy for beauty, has left its mark which will be a long time in disappearing.

The second force which has affected art adversely and has slowed up the march of beauty in American life has been not opposition but indifference to it, especially and unexpectedly noticeable among many of our business leaders. The great outstanding example was, but is no longer, Mr. Henry Ford. Some of us are old enough to remember the model T Ford, which was designed to and really did "take you there and bring you back." Mr. Ford not only thought that this was enough for his car to do, but developed a philosophy to fit the case, and while the practical little flivver was leading everything else in sales, Mr. Ford came out with statements denouncing art and giving beauty the go-by. This continued for some time, in fact until a rival car through some mysterious reason outsold the Ford. When Mr. Ford found that the mysterious reason was the appearance of the other car, he got out another model at a cost of many millions of dollars, and not only pleased countless people who appreciated the artistic, as well as the "take you there and get you back" qualities, but he made many of us happy who, like myself, don't have cars at all, but who read the advertisements about them, by making the beauty of the car its chief advertising headline.

Similar attitudes of indifference to appearance obtained for a long time with many of our merchants, notably in the chain stores. Then some-