

great bend of one of the numerous creeks, composed of many glistening white houses, with a dark back ground of orchards and fields, while here and there a great high roof building or a small and unportentious steeple gave one a suggestion as to the character of the inhabitants. You thread your way along the lane, across a bridge over the little creek and then into a lane more dusty than ever, and approach the place. The buildings apparently scatter out to give way to your approach, the village looks smaller and more scattered and appears dull and uninteresting. At last you are on the square, you saunter over to a two-story building that bears the sign "HOTEL," there you are offered a seat on the portico and casually take in the situation. All around the square are stores that display on their fronts in huge letters the name of the proprietor and his wares, casting your eyes under the awning in front you may catch a glimpse of the proprietor himself, dreamily leaning back in his chair, waiting for a customer, or else surrounded by a knot of men apparently engaged in animated conversation. If you were to ask any passing denizer of the nature of the conversation, he would invariably reply, "I guess it's politics or religion," and nine times out of ten he would be right. Maybe near by you would see a great farm wagon loaded with wheat, and the owner perched thereon surrounded by a number of buyers. A group of boys near by entertain your ears with cries of "venture dubs," "venture rounds," "kicks," "flat knucks," etc., which shows you that evidently marbles are "all the go."

In fact, the village or "town" as everybody calls it, plays no small part in the life of this country. The farmer comes here "to do his tradin'" or "to get some blacksmithing done," and then, on rainy days he comes down, gets his weekly papers, sits down under the awnings, argues politics or religion and discusses the topics of the day. He winds up with a discourse on the state of crops and a prediction as to when it will next rain, or maybe, he engaged in a game of checkers or chess; and so, while away the dull, gloomy day. The same scene is enacted on extremely hot days in summer, or cold days in winter. At night the store is the resort of