

every 27 cents that he spends for bread, he pays one cent for carrying the wheat and flour 2,000 miles. A pound of tea is sold in New York at retail for, say, 75 cents, but that tea has paid less than one cent for carriage by rail 3,000 miles from the Pacific port to New York. On every pound of beef that is consumed in New York less than half a cent is paid for carrying it from Chicago.

These are good facts to keep in mind. They give a little notion of the value of the service of the railroads to modern society, and they give some notion of the very close margin of profit at which that service is done. In fact, the average dividend on all the stock of the railroads of the United States amounts to only about one and six tenths per cent. More than 70 per cent of the railroad stock of the United States pays no dividends whatever to its owners.

There is another important aspect of this matter of the cost of transportation; the railroad rates have fallen much faster than the prices of commodities. In 25 years the average freight charge of the United States has declined more than 60 per cent. This is the average for all classes of freight for the whole country; but on the great trunk lines, over which the bulk of the staple commodities is moved, the average rate is less than eight mills per ton per mile, and the fall in 25 years has been more than 60 per cent.

In that quarter century the rate on

wheat from Chicago to the sea has declined 74 per cent, while the price of wheat fell only 56 per cent. The price of corn fell 26 per cent, and the rail charge fell 50 per cent. The price of pork fell 27 per cent and the rail charge fell 50 per cent. These figures are not taken from the books of the railroad companies, but from the statistics published by the government and by the New York Produce Exchange. It must be borne in mind, however, that the comparisons are comparisons of average prices for a number of years. They do not take into view the recent advance in the price of wheat, which was due to exceptional conditions.

The figures here given are only examples of the general course of things. The same changes have been going on in the history of iron and of all iron products, of clothing, of shoes, and of all kinds of merchandise, until the buyer and the seller compete on almost even terms in all the markets of the Union. The farmer in New Jersey gets his wagon from South Bend, Indiana, and the price he receives for his celery is fixed in Kalamazoo, Michigan. Thus the railroads have thrown the whole continent open to competition from one shore to the other, and the day of artificially high prices has gone forever, and the day of wide markets has come instead.

People often speak of railroads as monopolies. As a matter of fact, monopolies have no other foe so deadly as the railroads.

NIGHT AT THE STATION.

THE sharp electrics make the moonlight seem
 Scarce more than starlight. Far into the night
 Two gleaming lines of steel stretch ghostly white,
 Then lose themselves as doth a desert stream;
 The wind is busy with its tuneful theme
 Whereof the low sweet burden is "delight,"
 And while I dwell thereon all sound and sight—
 The crowd, the clamor—fade into a dream.

For down the wind thy spirit sends its cry:
 "I come! I come!"—and like one in a spell
 I stand until, from out the sense eclipse,
 I start to mark the thundering train draw nigh;
 Then I behold thy face beloved so well,
 And know again the heaven of thy lips!

Clinton Scollard.

THE HOME OF WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

BY THEODORE DREISER.

HOW THE FAMOUS AMERICAN POET AND JOURNALIST MADE HIS HOME IN THE LITTLE LONG ISLAND TOWN OF ROSLYN, WHERE HE SPENT THE LAST THIRTY FIVE YEARS OF HIS LIFE, AND WHERE HE LIES BURIED.

AT the head of one of the many bays that indent the northern shore of Long Island, at a point where the inflowing waters from the Sound narrow to a mere creek, whose wavelets wash the doorsteps of pleasant cottages, lies the village of Roslyn. It is an old settlement, and years ago it had more hopes and pretensions than it has today; but it has faltered and lagged in the race of modern progress, and in 1899 it is no more than an unimportant market town, a quiet, peaceful home dwelling community, charming in its rural qualities. A few oystermen "farm" the shallow waters of the bay, a host of clam diggers wait upon the tides in order to turn the wet sand, and fishermen put out into the Sound; but as for commerce, there is none. Such life as the village possesses is mainly due to those who come to it from the great metropolis, which lies within an hour's journey.

The beauty of the region is of the simple order which soothes rather than excites admiration. On the long arm of the sea known as Hempstead Bay, whose fingers of silvery water extend so placidly inland, many little craft sail or ride at anchor. On either hand rise low hills, festooned with the greenery of summer, their grass covered sides dotted with cottages. In the distance, on clear days, the ships of the Sound are seen to pass—some trailing long clouds of smoke, others spreading glorious white sails, like seagulls flying low to drink. Birds fill the thickets with multitudinous carolings; insects and flowers glorify the heights and hollows with sound and color, and over all a blue sky arches, making the summer day one of cheering and drowsy charm.

Into this region, some fifty six years ago, at the earliest period of his fortune, when the New York *Evening Post* began to repay him for his long devotion to its

interests, came William Cullen Bryant. Through all his career as poet, lawyer, and editor he had never lost his love of rural life, nor the aptitudes that had characterized his young days in Hampshire County, Massachusetts. Almost fifty years of age, he had distinguished himself in the world of letters and the more mixed realm of politics and journalism. He had the love and respect of many of the famous men of his time, and the admiration of all who read English literature. And at Roslyn he decided to dwell for the remainder of his days, a total, as it proved, of thirty five years.

Years before, so far back as 1825, he had left the region of Plainfield and Great Barrington in Massachusetts, where he had spent the first three decades of his life, and journeyed to New York. He had been a student at Williams College, a contributor of boyish satire to local papers, a student of law at Cummington, and a practitioner at the bar in Plainfield and afterward in Great Barrington. He had also been town clerk of Great Barrington, where the record of his marriage to Frances Fairchild, January 11, 1821, is still to be seen, entered by himself in the capacity of clerk. All these facts, of course, are well known. It is also well known that he found the law unprofitable, and that he betook himself to New York and journalism in the hope of bettering his fortunes.

Once in the city his hopes were destined to suffer severe modification, for the profits of journalism proved small. There was for him nothing but a faithful knuckling down to small taskwork in various literary ways—associating now with one paper and now with another. During this period he wrote for a once lively annual, the *Talisman*, and did other fugitive work, most of which has been lost. He occupied a room in Chambers Street, a