

Downers Grove 37 Years Ago

The following is a continuation of an article which began last week taken from a book published in 1886, extolling the advantages of Downers Grove:

Beautiful Natural Groves. of forest trees. These groves are extensive in area, containing many hundreds of acres, and also containing a great variety of useful, beautiful and ornamental trees. Like the majestic elm that stands on the summit of the Allegheny mountains, whose picture, faithful to life, even to the veins of the leaves, adorns the curtain of the Academy of Music at Philadelphia, many of these are a study worthy the pencil of an artist. These groves are recognized as by far the most desirable picnic grounds contiguous to Chicago. In season numerous excursionists of hundreds of tired men, women and children find relaxation and "sweet repose" in roaming through the grand old woods, plucking wild flowers, and breathing the sweet, pure air of these delightful groves. Some of the owners of these woods are at present contemplating placing permanent improvements therein, adapted for the exclusive use of excursion and picnic parties. This will without doubt be done in the immediate future, when added thousands of tired and overworked people of the great "Garden City" will sit under the wide-spreading branches of these stately forest trees and refresh themselves with pure air, free from the odors of Bridgeport, the Chicago river, and the cold and chilly fogs of the lake front. Being 160 feet above the level of the lake, and the surface being rolling and undulating, the drainage is natural and perfect. There are no marshes or lowlands and consequently but little sickness and NO malaria.

The streets of the village are wide and clean, the most important of which are macadamized and gravelled, while the others are rendered cool, pleasant and even delightful by long rows of magnificent sugar maples. This is notably true of Maple Avenue, which indeed may truly be said to be "a thing of beauty and a joy forever."

Water so pure and cold as to render ice unnecessary for drinking purposes is found in abundance at a depth of from ten to thirty feet, and this being free from all sewage, there is no fear of bacteria or microbes, or other injurious contamination.

Mineral water of great medicinal power has recently been discovered, and the sick of the village, of whom there is a minimum, find very appreciable benefit from its use. A physician familiar with both believes it possesses about the same valuable properties as the famous Colfax water. Should a more critical analysis sustain the sanguine hopes now en-

tertained, steps will doubtless be taken to provide facilities for its use by the thousands of sufferers who are anxiously and earnestly "waiting for the stirring of the pool." Considering its high altitude of 160 feet above the lake, the cleanliness of the village, and the extensive groves, in connection with the reasonably supposed value of this water and the nearness to Chicago, it would seem that no place could be more suitable as a "Bethesda" for the sick, or as a resort for the pleasure seeker.

The markets of the vicinity, it is believed from experience and comparison, are better supplied with fresh country produce than those of towns nearer the city that have to depend upon the city markets for supplies. Fresh dairy butter, eggs, milk and other farm and garden products can be had at all times in abundance and at low prices, from the farmers and gardeners direct, or the stores. Vegetables of all kinds can be grown with but little labor or care, or can be bought at the stores or of vendors usually at what city people would pronounce very low rates. For this we have plenty of room, and garden spots may be rented or purchased at comparatively nominal sums. Pasture for horses and cattle is also plentiful, while chopped or ground feed is furnished by two mills. Some of our citizens have found the raising of celery, asparagus, berries and grapes for the Chicago markets quite profitable. Our home markets are supplied by these parties with the choicest and best fruits fresh from the vines. To those who have known only the stale "crushed strawberry" of commerce, our fresh and luscious clusters would be a revelation. Escaping almost entirely the effluvia of sewer gas, little is heard of the throat or lung troubles and malaria which are responsible for so large a per cent. of the mortality of the city. The Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad, one of the justly celebrated railroads of this country, supplies numerous daily trains to and from this delightful suburb, and makes it possible for residents to go in and out of the city almost at pleasure.

Phone 385

A. P. MEHREN
Electrician

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR PICNIC
Saturday, July 15th, was a great day in Christian Endeavor circles hereabouts, being the occasion of the annual "Q" division picnic. The affair was held in the woods at Lyonsville this time. It was planned to make the trip from Western Springs in hay racks, but on arrival there were met by a fleet of cars, mostly Fords. The afternoon was spent in general exuberance and unbridled hilarity, for we were clear away from cares and form, and our

customary dignity was not in order—nor yet in evidence. "In the eve a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of grub." We noticed that the girls were in the same predicament. However, so all present proceeded to devour the supplies laid in by the hosts. More monkeyshines and a few stunts ensued, and were followed by a marshmallow roast. (The fire was in such proportions that our faces roasted before the marshmallows did). Ralph Lemon, Associate Field Secretary of this state, was present, so the evening was fittingly closed by a simple service of Scripture, prayer and a song around the big bonfire.

(To be continued next week)

from 5:40 A. M. to 11:30 P. M. Quite a number of these trains start from and stop at this point, while others make no stop between Chicago and "The Grove." The latter is an item of great importance and convenience, especially in winter, as passengers escape the cold draughts and their consequences resulting from the opening of doors at each station. We have traveled much during our experience, and are glad of this opportunity of awarding a due meed of praise to the popular "Burlington Route" for the high order of its general and suburban service. For the cleanliness and elegance of its coaches, the courteous and attentive treatment of its employes, thorough discipline, equipment and accommodation for and general welfare of patrons, the C. B. & Q. certainly has no superior.

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