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SOUVENIR OF CRANFORD

NEW JERSEY

FIRST EDITION

ILLUSTRATED

1894

PUBLISHED

BY

FRANK T. LENT

CRANFORD - N.J.



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RESIDENCE G. A. MORRISON, ESQ.

GEOGRAPHICALLY Cranford, New Jersey, is situated southwesterly from New York City, about seventeen miles distant, and on the southern slope of the Orange Mountains. It is almost directly south of Summit and Short Hills, and about five miles distant from either of these places. Elizabeth is directly east five miles away, Plainfield directly west seven miles away, and Rahway to the south about five miles off. The Rahway River, an extremely picturesque little stream, winds its way gracefully around through the village and is spanned by seven or eight bridges. Cranford is in Union County, New Jersey, the county renowned for its magnificent macadamized and Telford roads. The Central Railroad of New Jersey runs directly through the town, and is the principal connecting link between it and the metropolis of New York. The Lehigh Valley Railroad runs through the southern part of the township, but is yet little used by the commuters and business men. The population of the town is about twenty-five hundred.

PROFESSOR GEORGE H. COOK, late State geologist, once said that the red soil and red shale districts of New Jersey were its healthiest sections. Geologically, therefore, Nature has done all that could be done for the health of Cranford in this matter. But while Nature has given Cranford the foundation of a good, healthy soil, that gift is really nothing in com-



RESIDENCE PETER DUMONT, ESQ.

parison to the magnanimous kindness which she has displayed in developing the village surroundings into the most picturesque to be found around any of the hundreds of towns suburban to New York. The country is slightly rolling, is well grown with shade trees, and well carpeted with a luxuriant growth of wild flowers.



RESIDENCE GEO. W. NIX, ESQ.

A COUNTRY home is perhaps the most satisfactory for a residence one can possibly acquire. There is more substance and solidity to be found in suburban life—to say nothing of better and more air, more light, more room, and more quiet comfort—than in the narrow residence of the city, with its minimum of light, its impure atmosphere, and ceaseless noise. Taking all these matters into consideration, and then adding the fact that a city house in a good neighborhood costs several times as much as a country house equally well located, it is easy to see why our country, and especially our suburban, towns are rapidly building up. To business men of large cities the daily travel to and fro is disagreeable—at least until the habit is formed. It takes about a month to get used to this. In large cities the transit is so slow that one can go twenty miles away from town on a good railway quite as quickly as three or four miles are traversed by street railway, so that no time is lost and the cost of travel to and from near by towns is but little different. When one thinks of the health secured, of the additional charms of a country house, of country life, and of the money saved, it is really no wonder that people are turning their attention to suburban residences.

There is now a steady and increasing flow of people from the larger cities to the neighboring country, independent of the fashion of city people of spending a few months or weeks at their country places. These are the reasons why country towns are growing, and Cranford, with its natural charms, its healthfulness, its nearness to New York, and its many improvements, is one of the foremost to attract attention and secure its share of the many sensible people who are seeking a first-class village in which to locate.

THE town is built on high ground lying one hundred or more feet above tide water, which elevation is sufficient to raise it above the banks of malarial fog which gather and cling with a sickly grip to the lower lands of New Jersey. The Orange Mountains, a few miles to the north, act as a sheltering wall against the north and northwest winds, and the steady southwest wind which prevails in summer renders the atmosphere delightfully cool. No one ever thinks of lying awake nights because of excessive heat.



RESIDENCE HENRICH IMHORST, ESQ.

CRANFORD possesses to-day more improvements than any of the suburban towns of the same size: Its capital water supply; its fire department; its electric lighted streets; the abundance of good country roads; the fact of its being out of debt; and the class of buildings now built and being built both for business and residence purposes. The amount of building for the year 1892 reached more than the good round sum of \$200,000, and this sum was equaled, even though times were hard, during the year 1893. In 1894 the investment in building ought to reach \$250,000. Arriving at the station the first building which attracts attention is the large brick business block where the greater part of Cranford's business is done. The event which marked the era of 1892 was the building of this Opera House Block, which building affords ample accommodation for eight shopkeepers, the post office, a dozen and a half fine business offices, one of the private schools, a barber's shop, a magnificent suite of lodge rooms, and lastly, that which everyone in Cranford is very

proud of, namely, its Opera House or Music Hall, in which the majority of the larger entertainments take place. The Opera House Block was built at a cost of some fifty odd thousand dollars. It is a thoroughly equipped building, being heated throughout by steam, lighted by electricity, well arranged, well ventilated, and well kept.

MR. JAMES RODGERS, who two years ago, at the head of a syndicate of New York gentlemen, purchased the property directly opposite the station and built the Opera House Block, a sketch of a part of which is shown on the cover, has recently purchased the large and beautiful tract, "Roosevelt Manor," comprising some two hundred of the best building lots on the high ground of Cranford, and is prepared to build on these lots or sell them. This offers a splendid opportunity for investment and building.

THE Opera House is managed by Edward Beadle, who every fortnight or so secures a good company to produce a play.



RESIDENCE JAMES RODGERS, ESQ., CLAREMONT PLACE.

THE churches are of denomination as follows: Presbyterian, Episcopal, Methodist, and Catholic. The Presbyterian people are about to move into their new church, which will offer ample accommodation to that growing congregation. The Presbyterian Church was organized in 1851, and the original church edifice was a little frame building with a seating capacity of one hundred. In 1868 it was removed to the rear of the site now occupied and used as a chapel. About a year ago the present edifice, as shown by the cut, was begun. In it will be seating accommodation for six hundred, arranged in the style of an amphitheater. The cost of the present church will be about twenty-five thousand dollars. The Rev. G. F. Greene was installed in 1885. A year ago, when the present building was begun, there was not a penny of indebtedness against the church. It is confidently expected that in the near future the church will again be entirely free from debt. A number of memorial windows ornament the new building; among those honored being Josiah Crane, one of the founders of the church, J. S. Williams, W. D. Wood, Henry H. Cowan, the Rev. A. A. MacConnell, and Mrs. Phoebe Rindell.

THE first service of Trinity Church was held in 1871 at the residence of Mrs. Mills, and for nearly two years thereafter Sunday services were held at private residences and at the schoolhouse whenever a clergyman could be procured to officiate. The church was organized in 1873, and subscriptions made to erect a church building. The foundation was laid, the building erected and inclosed the same year; then work stopped for lack of funds, and the building stood unfinished for about two years. In 1875 bonds were issued to the amount of five thousand dollars, and with the money thus obtained the church was completed—the chancel window, Trinity window, all the pews, and a portion of the chancel furniture having been procured from a disbanded church in Westfield. The first



THE NEW PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

service held in the church was in February, 1876, Dr. Langford, then rector of St. John's, Elizabeth, officiating. The church was consecrated on the 16th of October, 1881, by the Right Rev. John Scarborough. The Revs. E. M. Reilly, J. H. Young, W. C. Roberts, William Heaks, Floyd E. West, and John Edgecumbe have been rectors of this parish—the latter being the present rector.

THE Methodist Church, like many others, began with a Sunday School. In April, 1861, a Methodist Episcopal Sunday School was organized, and in 1862 the corner stone of the chapel was laid, and the chapel was dedicated in 1863. Until 1868 this organization was cared for by the pastors of the Westfield M. E. Church. The first pastor was the Rev. R. P. Christopher. In 1869 the corner stone of the church was laid on the Walnut Avenue site. In 1870 the chapel was moved on this lot, and in 1871 the church was dedicated. Among the pastors have been:



TRINITY CHURCH

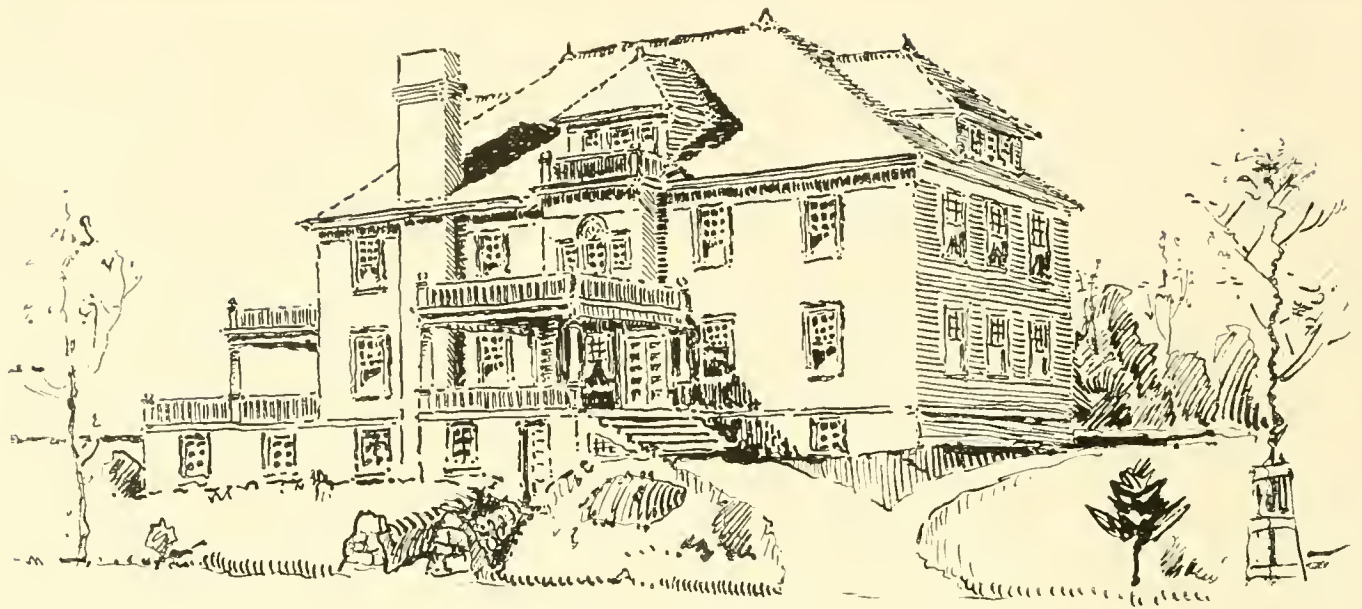
Revs. R. P. Christopher, J. L. Harris, James Marshall, E. S. Jamieson, E. F. Biscope, A. F. Campbell, C. S. Benson, F. S. Cookman, M. F. Compton, S. P. Lacy, C. F. Sitterly, W. B. Judd, and F. C. Mooney. The membership of the church at present numbers 114, including probationers. In connection with the church there is a Woman's Home Missionary Society; the Queen Esther Circle of young ladies, organized for both home and foreign work; an Epworth League and a Junior League.

ST. MICHAEL'S Roman Catholic Church is situated on Elizabeth and Bloomingdale avenues. It was established in 1872. Services on Sunday at 11 A. M. The present pastor is the Rev. J. P. Smith.

THERE is also the Baptist Church of the colored people which, like the people, is very thrifty and prosperous. Pastor Wallace officiates.



THE METHODIST CHURCH.



THE CRANFORD COUNTRY CLUB.

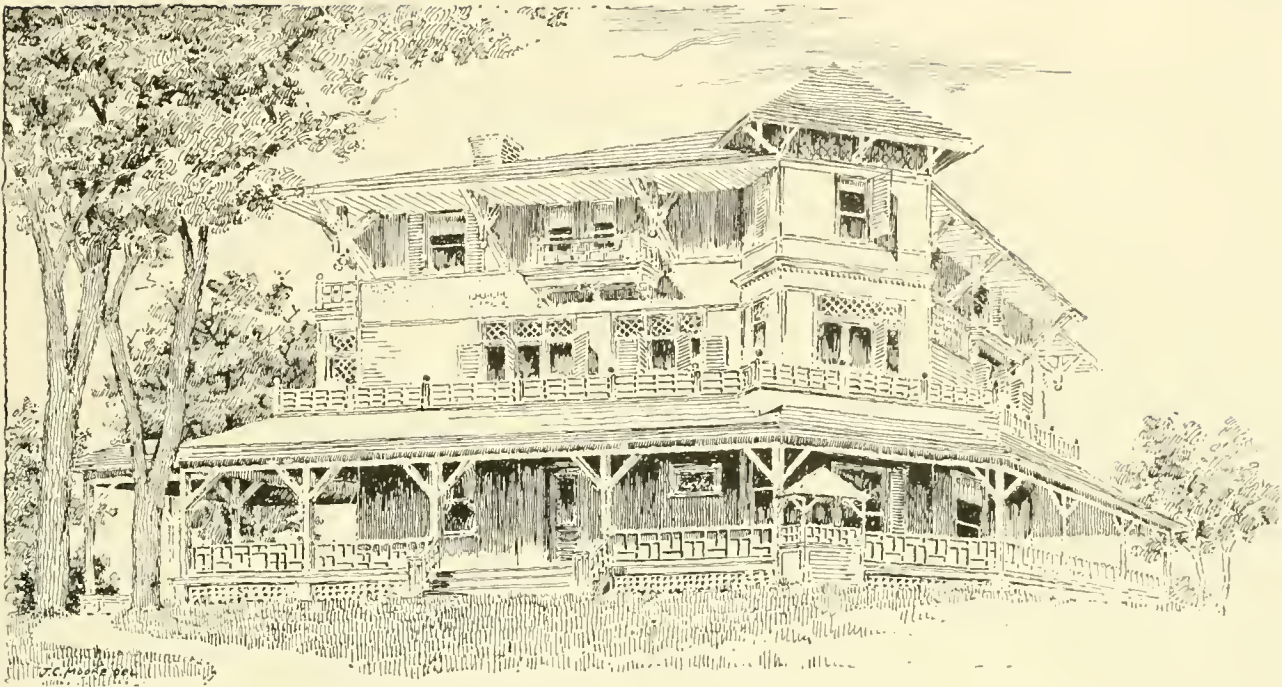
IN social advantages the town is well developed; there is a well-managed Country Club, with a pretty colonial clubhouse on the banks of the river; there are all kinds of societies connected with the churches, as well as those which are independent; and there is a Dramatic Club of no mean ability. The Wednesday Morning Club (a book and literary association) is a very admirably directed institution. Then there are tennis, bicycling, baseball, bowling, an athletic and other clubs devoted to amateur sport, including a boating association. A thrifty Royal Arcanum council and other lodges occupy the lodge rooms in the Opera House Block, and a bright and enterprising musical society—the Alcaeus—furnishes delightful entertainments of an operatic and musical nature.

ONE of the special charms of country life is to be within reach of a well-managed country club, where friends can be met and friends be made. Such social organizations as these have been the making of some of our most successful country places. Every year it is getting to be more fashionable to live in a thriving country town. Now the town to pick out must be one of easy access to the metropolis, one of unquestioned healthfulness, and one that is wide-awake. Cranford can offer all these, and in its delightful Country Club, with the bowling, billiards, dances, games, dramatics, baseball, tennis, bicycling, boating,

etc., etc., can afford a very important and additional charm. There is no one thing in the village that is more attractive to the newcomer than the pretty clubhouse up upon the bank of the river, and the warm welcome given by the members, who are always delighted to greet strangers. The club numbers a hundred members, and an especially nice feature is that the ladies—wives and daughters of the members—are always welcome. It is not necessary to break up home life when you go to the Country Club—you can take it with you.



RESIDENCE JOHN W. BANKER, ESQ.

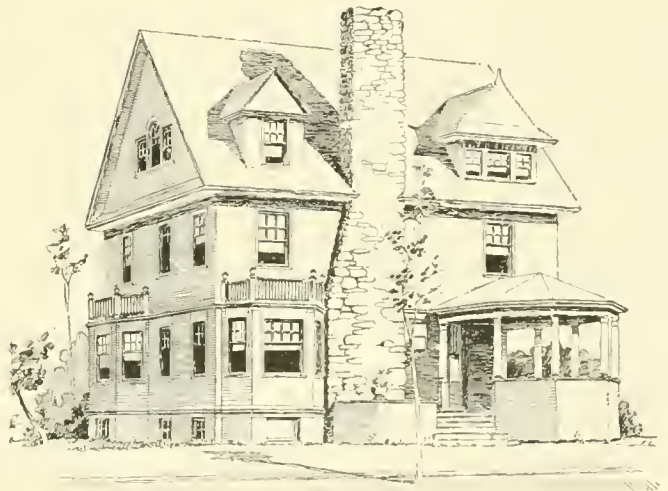


RESIDENCE MRS. M. R. BENNETT.

THE Cranford Dramatic Club began its existence in 1891, when "A Box of Monkeys" was played. This play was presented so successfully that the people of the new club felt much encouraged, and at once determined to attempt something more serious. The second effort, "Comrades," a well-developed and solid play, was presented, and scored a greater success than the first. "Our Regiment," given on January 19, 1893, was a much more difficult and higher class play than either of the others, and the local actors proved that they could handle it with success. Then in 1893 followed the farce "Rebecca and Rowena," which many people thought the greatest of all the work done by the club. The last play given was "Freezing a Mother-in-law," in which the club held up its reputation again. Everything done so far by the club has been the result of hard and faithful study; and has been accomplished without outside aid. The efforts of the amateurs have given many pleasant hours to their friends, and earned many hundreds of dollars for worthy and charitable objects.

THE Cranford Tennis Club (now merged into the Country Club) has produced some very clever players, and has organized several first-rate tournaments. There are a number of fine tennis courts in

private grounds. The Baseball Club was a great success last year and the year before, and this year a permanent baseball ground will be established. The Bicycle Club, with numerous club runs, road races, and society meetings, was extremely well patronized. On account of the miles of fine roads all around and about the town bicycling is not only a favorite amusement for both gentlemen and ladies, but the wheel is used largely for business purposes.



RESIDENCE R. E. COCHRAN, ESQ.



THE SOURCE OF THE RIVER.

THE first the writer ever heard of Cranford was back in 1880, when his artist friend Bruce-Crane told him that he was packing up his sketching apparatus and impedimenta preparatory to going to sketch in the neighborhood of Cranford, which he considered one of the most delightfully picturesque sections of country anywhere around or near New York City. The National Academy of Design, as well as other metropolitan art exhibitions, have contained many charming landscapes by such men as Bruce-Crane and Bolton Jones, the material for which was gathered in Union County.

NOWHERE near New York can a more equable and moderate climate be found. It is just far enough away and just high enough to be free from sea fogs and dampness, and yet not so far as not to be in range of the cooling sea breezes which each evening set in from the ocean. The intense heat of summer is averted by the fine trees and woods, and there is enough sharp winter to afford a few days' sleighing and several good old-fashioned snow storms.

THE Boating Association has had charge of the regattas on the river, and these, in years past, have been very successful entertainments, especially some of the canoe races. There is about a mile of good boating on the river. But the greatest work done by the association has been the organizing and carrying out of the Venetian carnivals, which occur usually on



THE RAILROAD BRIDGE.

a midsummer's night, and are without question very beautiful and charming. On these occasions the depths of the foliage and the trees along the winding river banks are decorated with myriads of lanterns of all shapes and colors, and the banks are ablaze with chemical fire and fireworks. The crowd throngs the banks and the bridges; the bands play their sweetest strains; and the procession of beautifully and fantastically decorated boats, peopled by Cranford's prettiest girls and their swains, glides in mysterious array the entire navigable length of the stream and back.

As many as ten thousand visitors have been present at a carnival, and it is impossible to be too enthusiastic over the beauty of this water pageant. The river, which is such a source of delight to boatmen in the summer, is in winter equally fascinating for the skaters. Some

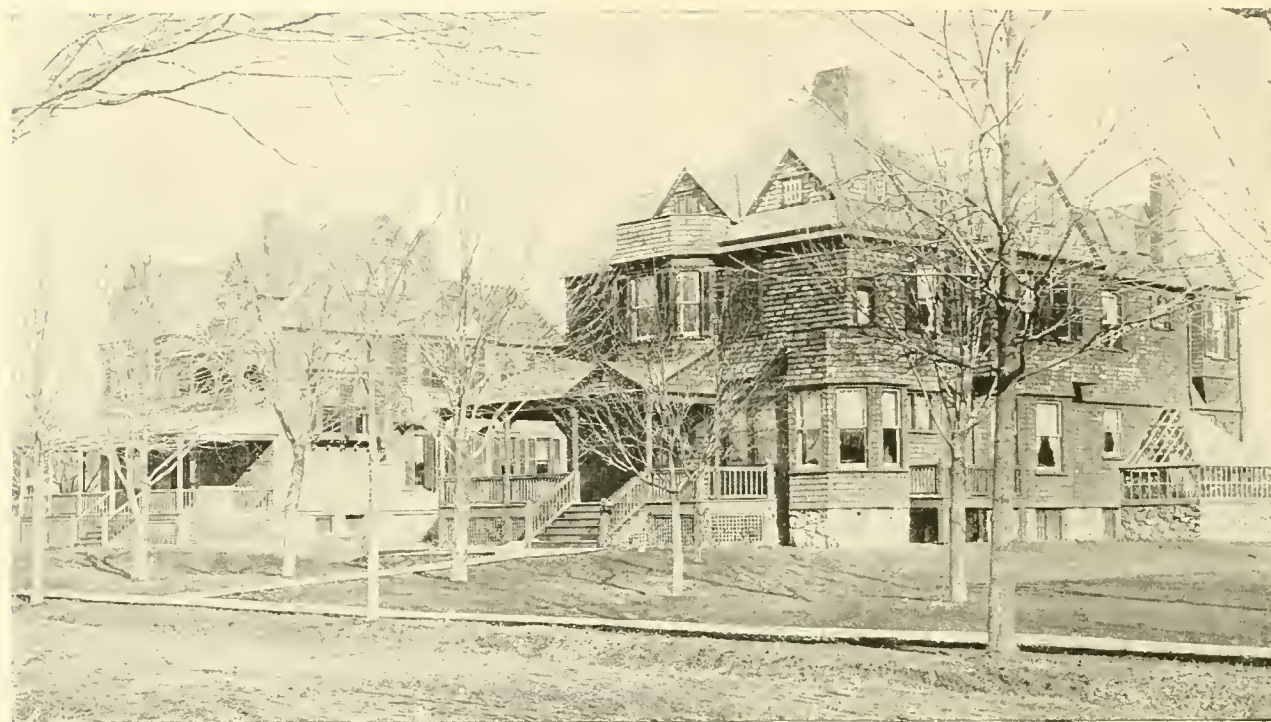


A QUIET NOOK.

winters there are as many as thirty days' good skating. One can find no prettier picture than that of a winter's evening when the skaters glide to and fro past the many fires and beacons which are lighted on the wooded banks.



DOWN THE RIVER.



TWO CRANFORD AVENUE RESIDENCES.

CRANFORD offers as many excellent qualifications and inducements in the line of improvements as any town within twenty miles of New York. It is supplied by the Union Water Company with an excellent quality of water for both fire and domestic purposes from the company's inexhaustible artesian wells at Netherwood. The streets and many of the residences are well lighted by electricity. The town has practically no debt, and is very admirably governed by a Township Committee. The drainage system is capital; there are good schools, several churches, a number of shops and markets, and twenty-seven trains every day to and back from New York at short intervals on the very excellently managed Central Railroad of New Jersey. A trolley line connecting Cranford with Elizabeth and Plainfield is now projected, and the Lehigh Railroad offers facilities for travel to New York to those who live on the south side.

THE people who make up this little town are largely city people from New York and Brooklyn, which accounts to a great extent for the brilliant social gatherings, etc. Cranford is not a town with an uncer-

tain future; its future and its success are already assured. It is not given up to booming by numerous real estate agents, and is remarkable for the steadiness of its prosperity and growth. For the past few years there have been about the same number of new houses built each year, and consequently the same number of newcomers arrive yearly. It is a rare thing to find houses standing empty in this town.

THE school advantages of the village are many and well regulated. The public school is under the control of the usual school board, superintendent, and his assisting teachers. There are several well-managed private schools, where music and the languages are taught, and during the winter season there are dancing, physical culture, and other schools. There is a free library, which circulates quite a large number of volumes and many magazines.

A BRIGHT newspaper, the *Cranford Chronicle*, devotes itself to the town news and general affairs in a fearless and independent manner. There are Cranford notes in the *Elizabeth Evening Journal*, and the New York papers are always on sale.

IN the Alcaeus Society Cranford possesses an amateur musical and operatic association of unusual merit. The society was organized about two years ago with some thirty members, its object being the rendering of vocal music, the giving of light operas, and the social enjoyment of its members. So great has been its success that at the beginning of last season it was found necessary to increase the limit of membership to fifty. In addition to this the present active membership there are about one hundred subscribing members. The society has presented, altogether, ten operas, including "Patience," "Pirates," "Mikado," "Iolanthe," and "Doctor of Alcantara," and with such phenomenal success that it has acquired a far-reaching reputation. The annual receptions of the Alcaeus Society, to which none but members and their friends can gain admission, are social events in the village each season. All of the entertainments of the society are given in the Opera House at Cranford, where it has its meeting and rehearsal rooms.

The society closed its season this spring with a very delightful concert which, like all of its entertainments, was well attended by the *élite* of the town as well as that of neighboring towns.

THE Wednesday Morning Club is made up of ladies, and by its literary efforts, the circulation of books and magazines, and the many lectures given under its auspices has made for itself a commendable and educating influence. The members number thirty odd, and all of the standard magazines are to be found in its circulation.

CRANFORD is governed, as a township, by a Town Committee of five elected by the residents. There is also a Board of Health, a School Board, a Road Board, etc., etc. The taxes are about as light as can be found in any suburban town where the assessor's valuation is equally low.

AN excellently managed Building and Loan Association is also to be found here, and from money loaned by it some thirty houses have been built. The expense of building in Cranford is very moderate, and every year a number of comfortable homes are erected at costs varying from three thousand dollars upward.

THERE is first-class express, telephone, and telegraph service, a good livery and boarding stable, and the town seems to be considered a very desirable location by all classes of good servants.



RESIDENCE FRANK T. LENT.



RESIDENCE JOSEPH PURCELL, ESQ.

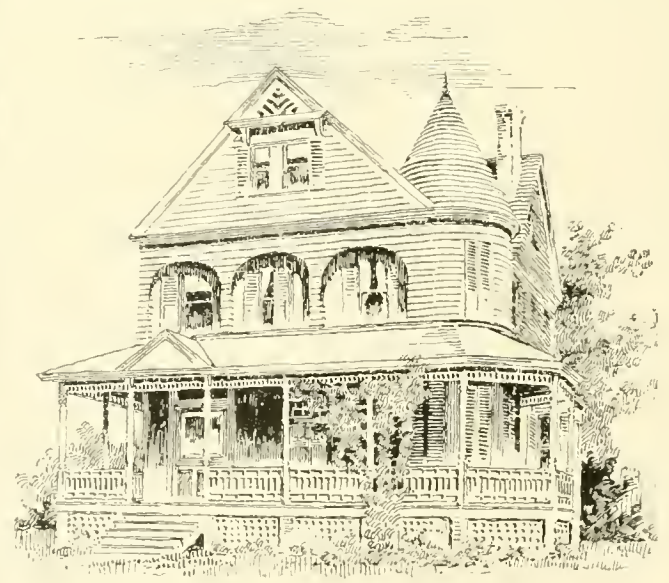
THE Cranford Hotel, a three-story brick structure with a frame annex, and the Central Hotel accommodate the main bulk of the transient guests in the town. Hampton Hall, up upon the bank of the river—a new colonial structure—accommodates quite a large number of guests and is a first-class family hostelry. There is also another large boarding house, known as the Fairleigh Villa, quite near the station, which offers the same class of hospitality.

There are also a number of private boarding-houses, so that the large number of transient guests are easily accommodated.

THERE are few tramps to be seen in Cranford. It is not in their line of migration evidently. There is no police force, nor any special use for any, for robberies and drunkenness are very seldom heard



HAMPTON HALL.



RESIDENCE J. H. CUTHBERT, ESQ.

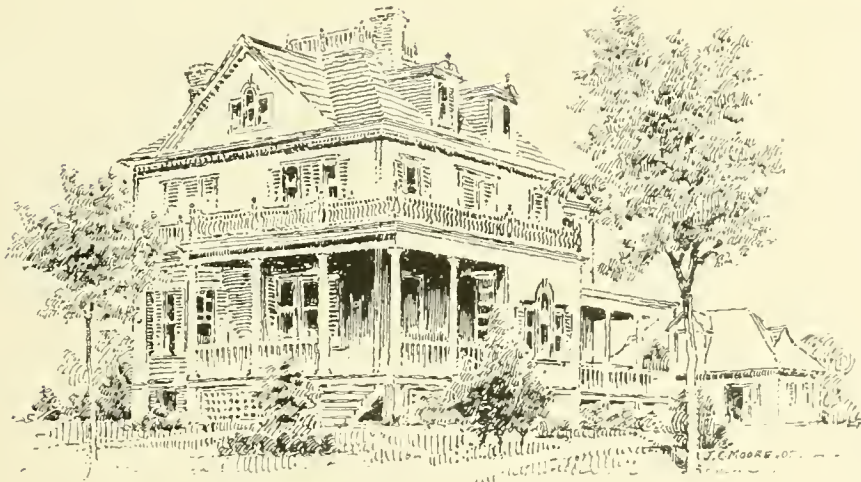
of. The fire department is of volunteer service and well regulated. Cranford has no factories; the neighboring town of Garwood offers accommodation for this class of business and its people.

THE Cranford Athletic Club was organized last year and is now a good, healthy organization, made up of young men who revel in the gymnasium and promise this year to be heard from in baseball and cycling. Next year, it is said, the club will put down bowling alleys and go in for that branch of winter sport.

It is also proposed to put down good tennis courts, and in the due course of time to develop all branches of athletic sports and games.



RESIDENCE GEO. G. ELY, ESQ.



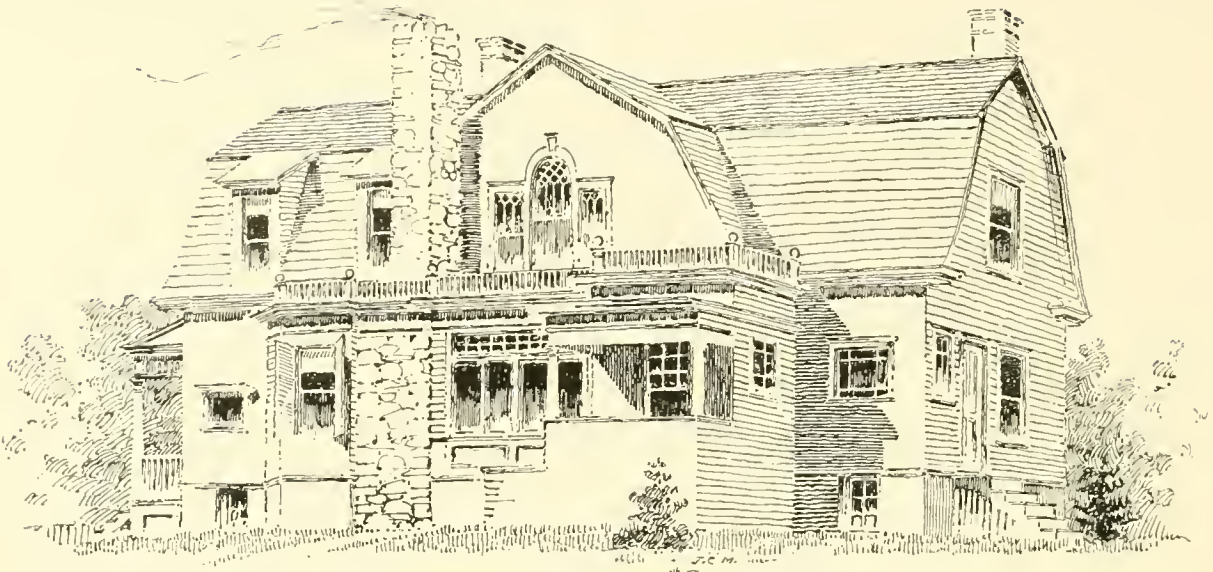
RESIDENCE HENRY M. JACKSON, ESQ.

THE Miller Block, a frame structure, adjoining the Opera House Block, accommodates some four or five shopkeepers; and there are now in contemplation for immediate erection several other business blocks, which will provide for Cranford an ample accommodation for all its business men. The other business blocks in the town are the Jahn Block (now building), with three stores and four flats; the Rath Block (now building), consisting of a store and four flats; and a half dozen similar edifices. There are also some other large projects for the erection of several magnificent residences and business blocks during this year.

NO one man deserves more credit for building up the town than George G. Ely, Esq., who is the owner of six of the best designed houses built for investment purposes. Others have built as many houses, but they are principally of the pattern house style.

PROMINENT among the pioneers of the town are the Bigelows, Alden B. and Wm. D. Twenty years ago these gentlemen came to Cranford and settled down to develop a town. For all these years these men have given every effort to this purpose, and to-day they own some of the most valuable property in the village. Over forty houses have been built by them—many of which have passed into the hands of other residents.

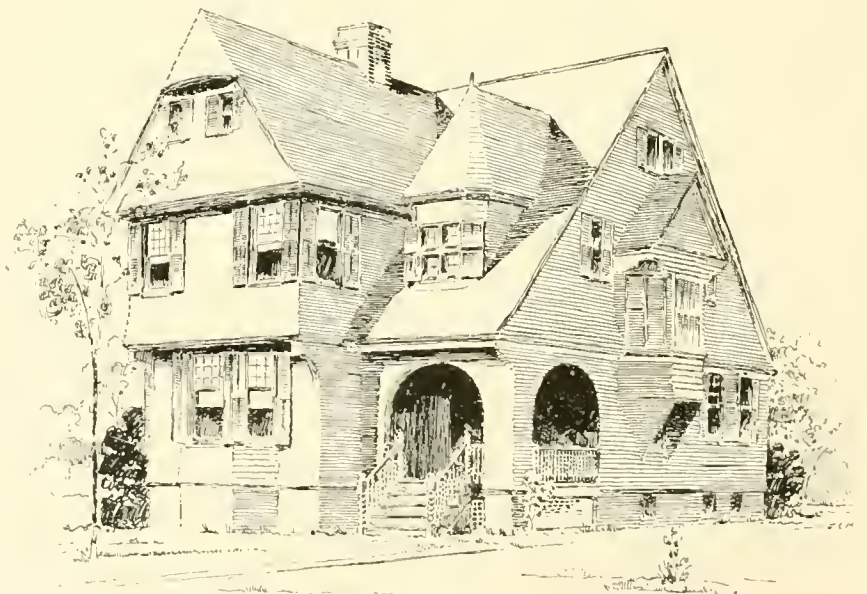
LARGE tracts of building lots have been opened up by Dr. MacConnell, Edward Beadle, Benedict & Moodey, Gray & Van Deventer, James Rodgers, and others here—each one having its one special inducement to hold forth to the home seeker. Messrs. Styles and Cash own a fine piece of property, as does also G. W. Thomas. Since January 1, 1894, the real estate investment has reached at least \$75,000.



RESIDENCE H. W. DESMOND, ESQ.

THE prospective home seeker usually wishes to rent a place and live in it for a few months or so before deciding definitely whether it will be suitable for a future home. With the large majority of country towns this would be a very wise plan to adopt, because before the lease ran out the tenant would probably be tired of it and sadly disappointed; but in Cranford any newcomer is perfectly safe to buy and build without making any such trial trip. If (and it has never occurred yet) the new resident should find himself disappointed and wish to leave he would have no trouble in selling out at an advance. By selecting a first-class town one has the advantage of the yearly rise in real estate; as the town gets larger and stronger so the value of property increases. This is not the case with a large percentage of villages. It is far more common to find values falling off as soon as the booming ceases. During the past three years there have been many periods where towns in the vicinity of Cranford seemed to have come to a standstill—periods when there was no building, no sale of real estate, and no improvement going on, yet Cranford has been steadily forging ahead.

THE Camera Club is made up of a score of amateur photographers who are very skillful in their business. The many picturesque spots of the surrounding country make this a very interesting and infatuating amusement. Several charming evening entertainments have been given by this club with the aid of the stereopticon, and in almost every home one finds a collection of beautiful photographs by some of the club members. Many of the cuts herein are from photographs by the club experts.



RESIDENCE T. W. SUTTON, ESQ.

THE careful manner in which the lawns, grounds, and gardens are handled goes a good way toward making the town attractive. Fences have, to a great extent, disappeared, and the grounds run into each other in park fashion. The attention given to trees, hedges, and flower beds is very commendable, as is also the case with equipages and horses, as the town is in the midst of many miles of good roads, and great interest is taken in driving. Of late one of the interesting moments in the daily routine of town affairs is the arrival of the New York-Philadelphia coach. Fresh horses are put on here on the coaches going either way, and the gay parties have a moment to look around and inspect the town.

THE fine roads which offer inducements to horsemen are also very alluring to wheelmen, and the town is at the west end of the well-known Elizabeth-Cranford ten-mile road-race track, where many of the bicycle flyers have made great records. As many as five hundred wheelmen per day from other towns have been counted as they passed through.



RESIDENCE GEORGE G. TILLER.

WHEN one is selecting a suburban location it is natural to inquire about the men who make up the town. What class of men are they? What are their vocations? A very satisfactory answer to these can be made as far as the men of Cranford are concerned. There are writers and authors; first-class doctors (both the practicing and preaching kinds); many college men; men of travel and men of leisure. Some of New York's brightest brokers, bankers, and business men may be found in the list of commuters of this town. The New York Stock and other exchanges are represented, the ocean steamship lines, banks, insurance companies, and hundreds of great business houses. If it was possible to make an accurate estimate of the worth and salaries of the men of Cranford, and compare it with similar estimates of the men of other towns, it would probably show that Cranford men were worth more and earned more than those of any similar town. These are the kind of people out of which to make a town; they are progressive, active, and alert for every possible advantage or improvement; and it is because of their vigilance and keen interest that Cranford is to-day so far ahead of her sister towns.

As for the better halves of these men one has only to look at the social life here to become satisfied that the ladies are of a superior class.



RESIDENCE E. C. ROBERTS, ESQ.



RESIDENCE A. H. PLUMMER, ESQ.

IF any suburban town is entitled to a great future Cranford is. The most conservative man could not hesitate to agree that the town will grow during the next year *at least* as much as it has during the past year, and that is all that is necessary to prove to anyone the future of the place. For if the increase in population, in money invested, and in new buildings continues in the same ratio as it has for the past year or two Cranford will be twice its present size in 1899. The last two years has shown a great improvement in the character, style, and cost of the houses and buildings which have been erected. Most of the buildings illustrated herein are recent, and they tell their own story. The past year has seen two excellent homes built here, one involving a cost of twenty and the other of thirty thousand dollars. These two investments show clearly that newcomers have confidence in the future of the town.

If the place has all that Nature can do for it together with all that bright, enterprising, and progressive residents have done, what more can be expected? Notwithstanding these paragraphs and sketches one must see the town for one's self in order to thoroughly appreciate what is really here and what delightful

homes are possible in this the queen village among other suburban places.

HALF of the new town of Garwood is within the boundaries of Cranford Township, and it is here that the great works of the "C. & C. Motor Co." and "The Hall Signal Co." are located. The Garwood Land and Improvement Co. is the projector of this town scheme and the success of the town is already assured. A year ago Garwood was an undeveloped wild. To-day it is full of the hum and whiz of a go-ahead town.



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A. M.—3.53, 5.53, 6.47, 7.16, 7.47, 8.17, 8.32, 9.04, 9.43, 10.43, 12.23 (NOON). P. M.—1.31, 2.45, 4.18, 5.07, 6.12, 7.19, 9.09, 9.43, 10.32, 11.44.

TRAINS ARRIVE FROM N. Y.

A. M.—1.52, 5.27, 6.52, 8.00, 9.23, 10.44, 12.23 (NOON). P. M.—1.52, 2.17, 3.11, 3.27, 4.16, 4.49, 5.19, 5.47, 5.53, 6.17, 6.47, 6.58, 7.15, 7.51, 8.52, 9.21, 10.10, 10.52, 12.22.

N. B.—Time-table June 20, 1894.

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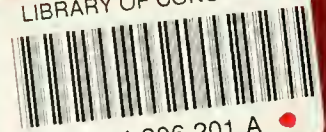
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