

In 1880.

## BEACONSFIELD TERRACES.

*By John Waterman.*

THE City of Boston is famous throughout America for its pre-eminent social advantages—it is also famous for having the most delightful and most accessible suburbs of any city in the world. There is no comparison possible between New York and Boston in this particular—the only comparison which really suggests itself is London where the problem of rapid transit has been solved to such an extent that people go home fifty miles every evening to dinner. Of all Boston suburbs, Brookline is not only the most get-at-able, but perhaps the most beautiful; it is celebrated for its charming homes, with their survivals of the old New England airiness and roominess. And here in Brookline may be witnessed

one of the most interesting experiments—if what is already such a pronounced success can be called an experiment—in Domestic Economy in this age of conflicting social theories. This is the group of well-to-do families, which, owing to the untiring energies and enterprise of Mr. Eugene R. Knapp, has been settled in what are known as the Beaconsfield Terraces of Brookline.

Twelve years ago, Brookline was divided into a comparatively few large estates belonging to old Boston families, upon which many of the fine residences of Boston merchants are now built. At that time there stood on the high road to Boston, within four miles of the State House, an old homestead which had not changed hands for twenty years. The



In 1890.



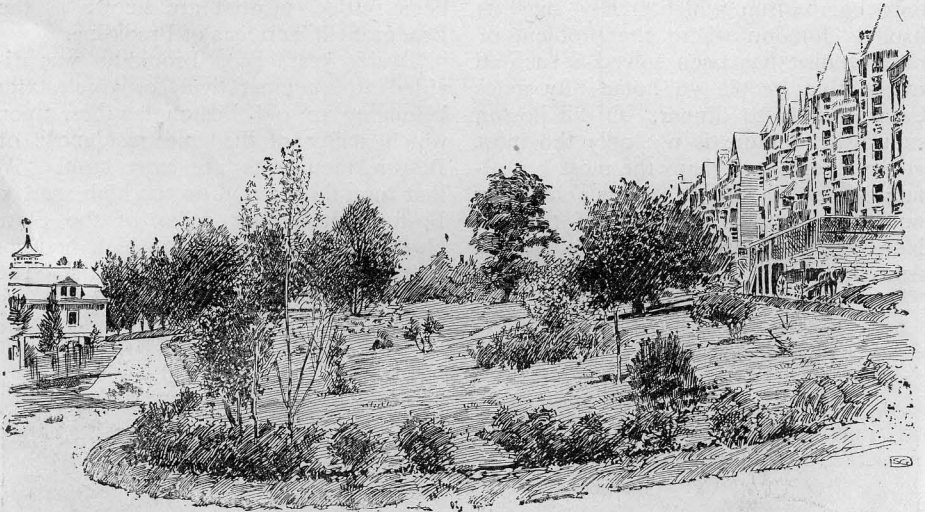
Eugene R. Knapp.

estate was known as the William Estate and consisted of seven and one-half acres of land, most of which was devoted to an apple orchard lying along Beacon Street at the corner of what is now Tappan and Beacon Streets. Mr. Knapp bought the place in 1880. He was then

road, ill kept and always in poor condition, filled with deep mud holes, and very badly graded. Brookline was then quite in the country and there were very few Boston people who had settled there. The West end of Beacon Street, now crowded with brilliant equipages, was then almost entirely in the possession of farmers driving their products to market. No one then would have believed it possible that such a growth as the Beaconsfield Terraces could take place within ten years.

A little over four years ago, however, Brookline was opened up for Bostonians in search of homes outside of the city. Beacon Street which had been fifty feet wide was made 180 feet, and the electric cars brought Brookline within one half hour's ride of the business heart of the city, and all the theatres and amusements.

The emigration of people of means in a westerly direction was foreseen by Mr. Knapp, but he did not then hope for such a rapid development as has taken place. In the large centres of population in Europe he had seen the same class of citizens whom he wished to interest, living in the suburban towns and outskirts of the large cities, sur-

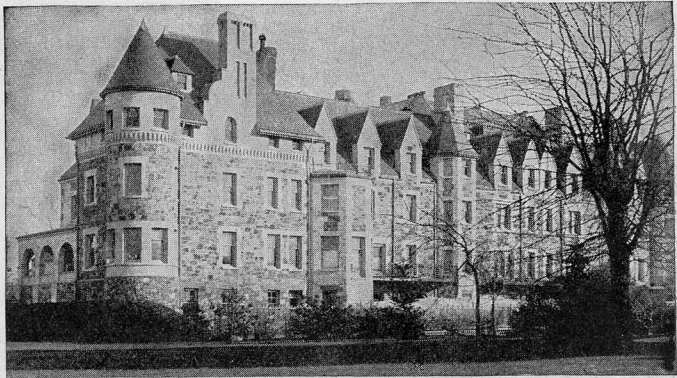


The Park.

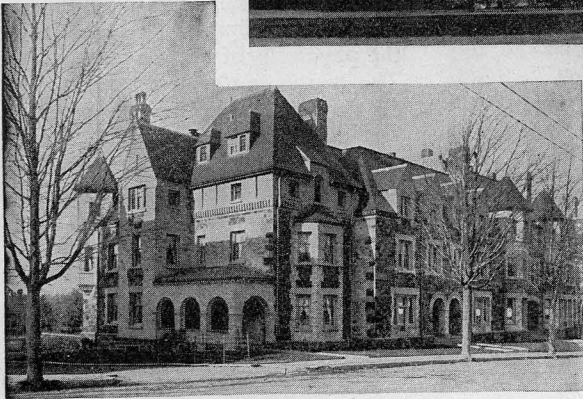
in search of a pleasant home for his family in a locality accessible for a business man. Beacon Street was then a fifty foot

rounded with all the comforts and modern conveniences of city homes at a much greater distance from the heart of

FRANCES TERRACE.



[REAR.]



[FRONT.]

scheme, and he decided to build one of these Terraces, as an experiment. He was assured that when the economy and advantages of this scheme of living without loss of privacy and seclusion become known, the enterprise would be a success.

Confident that intelligent well-to-do people would appreciate an opportunity of

the city than is Brookline from Boston. The dubious sanitary advantages of made land, upon which there was a great deal of building going on in another part of the city led Mr. Knapp to realize the desirability of his property in Brookline. It is all solid earth and is 160 feet above tide water, with a gradual ascent from Boston. The nipping East winds, the bane of every Bostonian, are cut off by Corey Hill, and the air at all times is exceptional. The admirable situation of the land, its nearness to the business and social centres of Boston, and the command at every point, convinced Mr. Knapp of the

living in thoroughly-built houses which would not need the constant repairing most houses in this country require, Mr. Knapp built his houses on the old English plan of solid foundations, solid walls, well-seasoned timbers, and roofs made to



Richter Terrace.

beautiful views it keep out rain as well as look ornamental. The Beaconsfield Terraces are built of solid masonry, with foundations





In the Conservatory.

five feet thick lessening to two feet at the eaves of the roofs. The timbering, firing, and studding are of extra fine quality, and much heavier than generally used in this country. The terraces have been pronounced by building and insurance experts to be the best and most perfectly equipped buildings ever built in America.

When he built the first of the Beaconsfield Terraces, there was considerable prophesy of failure at the time, for it was predicted that the class of people

who could become tenants or purchasers of such luxurious homes would not care to live in a terrace, and in going into the country would want to own more land as well as their homes. It certainly looked dubious in the beginning, but the curiosity and interest excited by the first terrace, consisting of eight houses (no two of which were alike in their interior arrangement) though from the exterior they had the appearance of one large building, immediately dissipated all doubt as to the popularity of the new departure. The houses in the first terrace were all disposed of before the structure was completed. This was certainly a new departure in architectural design. The houses were built of cream-colored brick and of gray stone and the design was independent of all the classic forms. It was

rather a combination of the English and German mediæval castles' architecture, modified to insure all the modern conveniences in the interior arrangement of the rooms.

The construction of the second terrace was begun without delay. It consisted of seven houses situated on Beacon Street, at the corner of Dean Road, and was built of stone and Perth Amboy buff-



The Terrace Drag.

brown brick, and as a whole resembled the French chateau style. The first and second terraces were named respectively Frances and Richter. The next was the Fillmore Terrace, built of stone and gray brick in the same substantial manner as the others, but it commanded a more extended view of the West. The bricks were similar in color to nun's veiling, and were made especially to suit the stonework. Other purchases of land were now made, making in all some fourteen acres available, and the construction of two more terraces of similar dimensions was pushed ahead with the uttermost expedition, so that there are now thirty-six houses all of which are nearly completed, and which have been nearly all sold in thirty-six months, on the average of one a month.

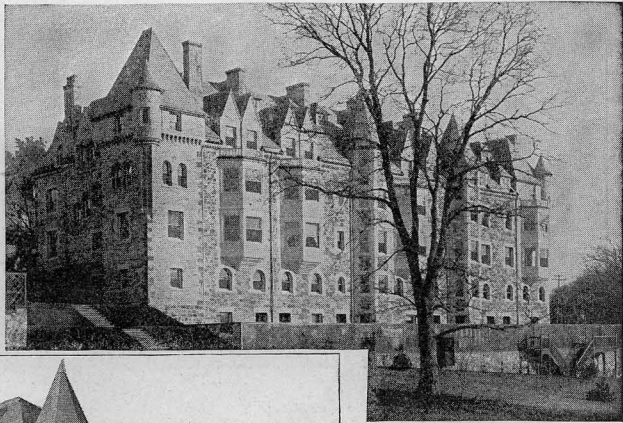
The interiors of these houses are all that the most elegant taste could desire. The ingenuity

of the architects has been taxed to give every room in each house an abundance of light and a beautiful view of the sur-



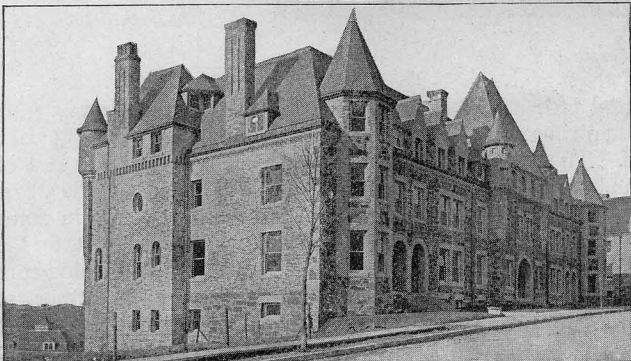
Gordon Terrace.

rounding country. The writer has enjoyed an opportunity of going over every one of



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MARGUERITE TERRACE.



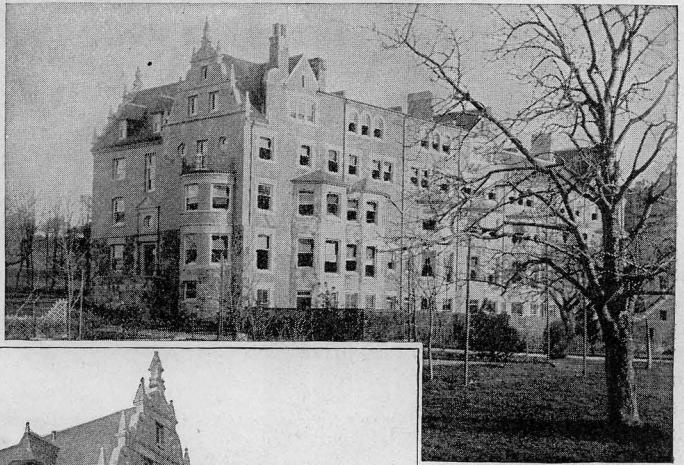
[FRONT.]

these beautiful dwellings, and from basement to garret has never found a dark, oppressive corner in any one of them. All the rooms are large, and what is unusual in even the most elegant modern houses, the shape of each one is pleasant and convenient. One of the first things that strikes the eye of the visitor in these terraces is the exquisite taste in which the rooms have been decorated, and the generous pro-

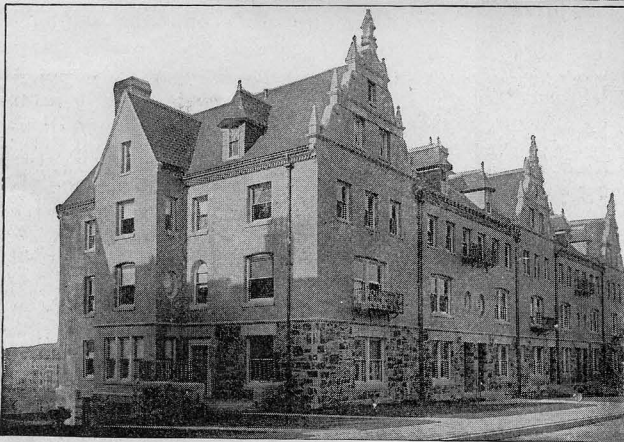
portions of all the rooms and fittings, to which is due the loftiness and airiness and simplicity of the hallways. The floors are all polished and laid out in a plain hardwood finish. The walls are panelled chair high and finished in the most exquisite designs. All the rooms are lighted by electricity and warmed by steam heat which is conducted into each house by an underground conduit from the boiler-house, which supplies all the

terracess. The houses are all papered, which is not usual in houses for sale, and the selection under the direct superintendence of the architect is all that the most refined nature could demand. All the mouldings and fixtures are in the same exquisite taste, and each moulding has an individuality, everything being made from the architect's original designs.

The boiler-house is situated on the



[REAR.]



[FRONT.]

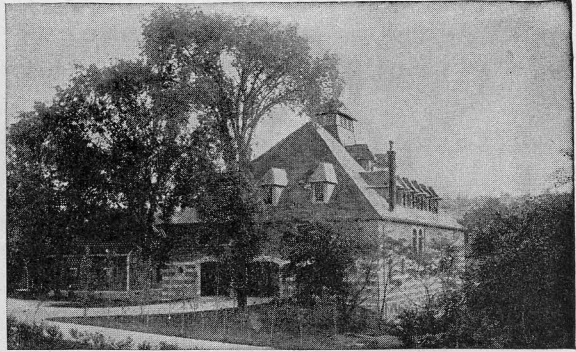
FILLMORE TERRACE

portions of all the rooms and fittings, to which is due the loftiness and airiness and simplicity of the hallways. The floors are all polished and laid out in a plain hardwood finish. The walls are panelled chair high and finished in the most exquisite designs. All the rooms are lighted by electricity and warmed by steam heat which is conducted into each house by an underground conduit from the boiler-house, which supplies all the

westerly side of the terraces, away from all the houses, in a hollow where its lack of architectural harmony with the rest of the buildings is not observed. The steam pipes are carried underground, in some instances over two thousand feet, to the different terraces, and the main pipe runs through the basement of each terrace, so that the occupants of each dwelling can regulate the temperature according to their individual liking. The temperature



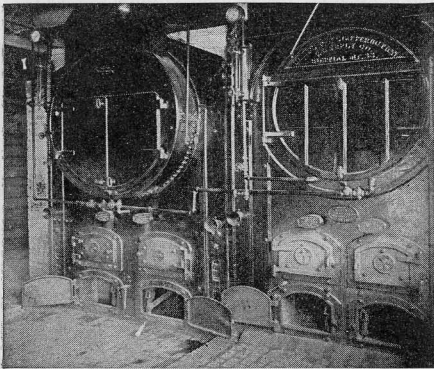
in each room can also be regulated, and the general supply to the house can be increased or decreased as desired by communicating by electric wire with the engineer at the boiler-house. This system is known as the indirect radiation. Each basement is provided with a radiator, or coil of pipe, which is enclosed in a galvanized iron box varying in size, and each radiator has a large air space which connects with a cold air box on the outside of the building and so furnishes a continual inflow of fresh air. This cold air circulating over and around the radiator is heated and distributed through the



The Club Stable.

during the day to play in, and for dancing and social gatherings by the adults in the evening.

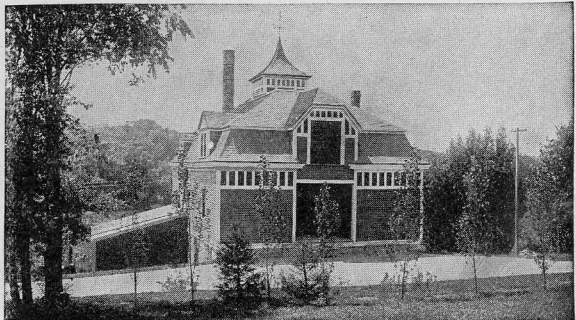
It is a low wooden building pleasantly situated nearly in the centre of the park, within two minutes walk of the houses. It is comfortably furnished and artistically finished in hard wood, and like the other buildings lighted by electricity. The large central room has a polished spring floor for dancing, and leading out of this on one side, is a regulation bowling alley, so arranged that if wanted for amateur theatricals it can be boarded over and converted into a stage with all the necessary equipments. The door connecting the bowling alley with the large room is a sliding one opening fully fifteen feet wide so that when the rooms are needed for theatricals the hall can be used as an auditorium, and a full and unobstructed view of the stage can be obtained. The seating capacity is



The Boilers.

house by regular furnace pipes. There are two boilers, each of two hundred and fifty horse power, so that in case of accident the house will not be without heat. The cost of heating varies from \$17 to \$35 per month when used, according to the size and exposure of the house; and this subscription includes the services of the engineer and the workmen of the machine-shop when needed for any incidental repairs.

The Casino connected with the terraces is a sort of club building, used by children



The Boiler-house.



A Hallway.

200. The billiard-room also connects with the large room, being screened off with a portière, and opening off this are the conservatories, where there is an abundance of flowers in blossom all the year round, which can be obtained in any quantity, upon application

to the head gardener, at stated rates. Everybody living in the terraces has free access to the Casino at any time, unless some one in particular has engaged it for some special entertainment. This is a matter which can be cordially arranged among the householders themselves.



One of the Chambers.



To show the increase in the value of this property, it may be noted that the whole estate in 1880 was assessed at

that if any one needs a coachman for any particular occasion he can have one at a stated price. There are also in the stables,



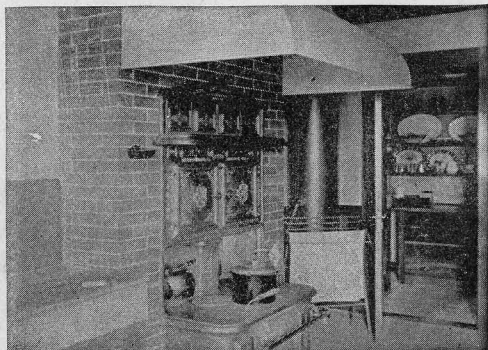
A Corner of a Parlor.

fifteen thousand dollars, and last year's taxes on it alone amounted to ten thousand dollars.

The stables have accommodations for two hundred and fifty horses, with a large carriage-room in the basement, and a harness-room and hay-loft overhead. The whole building is heated from the boiler-house, and everything is ordered with military precision and cleanliness. It is a large, handsome brick building situated on low land, one hundred and ten feet by sixty-eight, and is capable of being made twice as large. All of the house-owners, now established and to come, can be accommodated and guaranteed that their horses will have as good care and attention as if in their own private stables. Special attention is given to ventilation. Another convenience greatly appreciated is

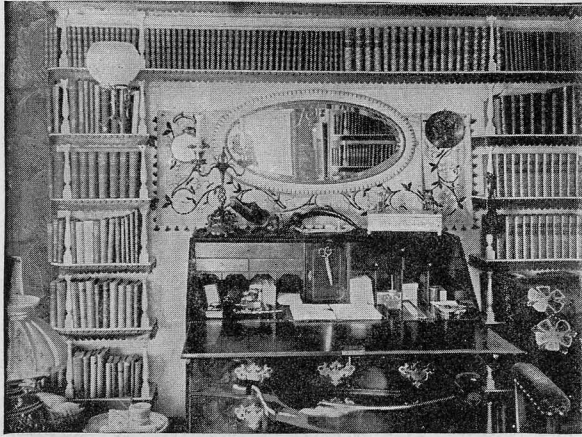
horses that can be had at any time by parties not owning any themselves, at a cost of about one-third less than that of an ordinary livery and baiting stables.

The stables are connected with each



One of the Kitchens.

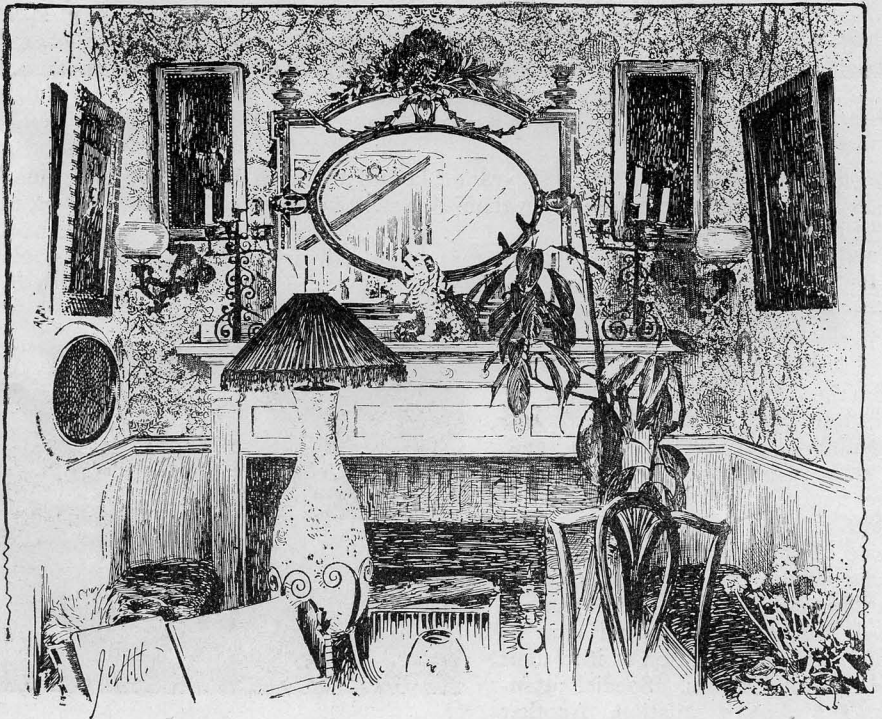
house by an electric bell, and a code of signals has been devised so that the occu-  
 attendance, and a night watchman is on duty in the stable and boiler-house, so that there is no delay in case of any unexpected emergency. The services of the stablemen are included with the board of the horse.



A Bit of one of the Libraries.

pants can have their horses brought to the door or taken away from it without any trouble. Stablemen are in constant

and their heirs forever. The yards and grass patches and side-walks are kept clear of snow and in per-



A Hallway.

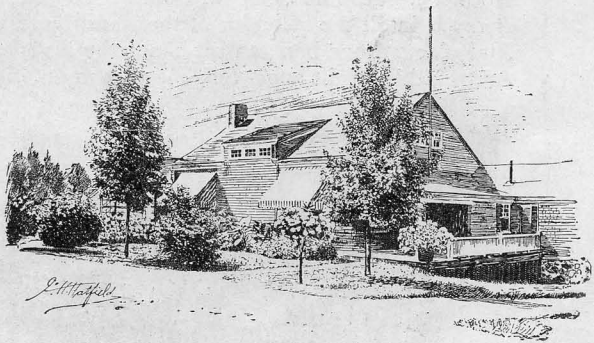


Interior of the Casino.

fect order all the year round, laid out with ornamental trees and flowers in their season at Mr. Knapp's expense. There is a large staff of gardeners, stablemen, chore-men, carpenters, engineers, firemen, and others employed about the offices of the terraces.

The whole tendency of modern development is in the direction of domestic economy, with the least possible machinery and the greatest possible centralization in the social body. The advantages accruing to those participating in such a scheme of living as has been outlined in this article are most obvious. Our higher civilization has made simple necessities of a thousand things which our grandfathers would have considered the most unheard of luxuries. It is the demand of all classes of society — the very poorest now enjoy conveniences, which would have been sybaritic two generations ago. The cost of such living as is enjoyed by

the people of the Beaconsfield Terraces, without any such scheme of centralization of authority and co-operative labor, etc., would probably exceed the means, or if not that the desires, of any individual family in the Terraces, the cost being but half what the same house would cost in Boston — as in many cases the land alone would cost more than the house and land



The Casino.

together. The residents enjoy the *sum-mum bonum* of material comforts, with almost complete relief from the worries



and cares of the average household. They have all the pleasures and benefits of a large country estate, without the care and trouble and expense of its maintenance. This is perhaps the main attraction of these terraces. The residents have time to attend to the business of happiness, which so many over-worked, over-strained heads of households have no leisure to dream of. It is this feature which, more perhaps than anything else, has made this experiment interesting and worthy of having attention directed to it.

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## THE PINES.

*By Zitella Cocks.*

FAR back in days of childhood stood a grove of stately pines ;  
 The fields spread green around them, and their shadowy outlines  
 Reached up into the sky so far that I believed it true,  
 That angels in their upstretched arms passed through the heavenly blue.

And when the night winds murmured in their branches, sweet and low,  
 I listened through the dark and said, "'Tis angels' harps I know —  
 Good angels who will give me all I want, if I am kind,"  
 For childhood's eyes look far out wide, but childhood's faith is blind.

And as the angel music filled my soul with visions bright,  
 I lay upon my pillow in a charm of rapt delight,  
 Where noble knights and maidens moved in an enchanted land  
 Of palaces and gardens fair and castles tall and grand.

"Sweet angels, grant me but two gifts, and I'll be good, — I pray  
 A palace for my home, and let my mother live away :  
 My mother dear, so beautiful that like to you she seems,  
 Oh, let her live forever !" thus I whispered in my dreams.

No palaces are mine, but near me woods and mountains stand,  
 Arrayed in all the splendor of the wondrous fairyland ;  
 And o'er a grove beneath the pines the birds sing all the day,  
 And Faith's bright angel tells me that my mother lives away.

