SOME NOTES ON GERMAN GARDEN VILLAGES

The Garden City movement in Germany has been frankly borrowed from England. Professor Berlepsch-Valendas, one of the greatest continental upholders of garden villages, says that he first brought his ideas about garden city matters from England some ten years ago, since when he has visited England every summer for the purpose of studying our examples. But having borrowed the idea, the Germans have adapted it to suit their special conditions, which naturally differ very materially from ours, not only as regards climate, but also as to land value, economy of living, and artistic ideals.

With regard to the financial aspect, seeing that their arrangements have been derived from ours, but altered to suit their own requirements, it can hardly be of great interest to us to examine their differences. The chief point to bear in mind in looking at German garden villages is that owing to the high price of land in Germany much less open space is left to the individual houses.

Again, it is useless to illustrate the plans of the individual dwellings with the idea of obtaining any new or useful ideas for English houses—we have, perhaps, advanced as far as possible in the economical and sanitary planning of small houses. There is no likelihood of our adopting the German practice of living in flats, to which they are so addicted that even in country villages they frequently build two-storey semi-detached flats, forming four dwellings in the block.

But if we are not likely to learn much from their financial problems or their house planning, there are two other aspects which contain possible suggestions—the street planning of the villages, and their general architectural appearance.

In these two aspects a curious contrast is found with English work; in general, their plans may be said to be more intentionally irregular and asymmetrical than ours, but in their architectural effect they aim at a greater degree of coherence and restfulness. Perhaps the fact that the houses are closer together than ours helps this continuity of effect, which is well illustrated in the Ulm example (Plate 71) and the Krupp example (Plate 75). In the German work there is a greater use made of mansard roofs and hips, and their gables rarely extend from the eaves to the ridge, as with us. The unbroken lines of ridge thus produced (the chimneys being frequently kept just clear of the ridge) and the great depth of the roofs (frequently to our eyes an extravagant waste of space) must be responsible for much of their appearance.

VIEW FROM THE ZIEGEL GASSE

PLAN

ULM THE RÖMERSTRASSE COLONY

GENERAL VIEW

GMINDERSDORF

The many models which were exhibited recently at the Vienna and Berlin exhibitions enabled this tendency in German work to be clearly seen. Perhaps, in fact, the practice of having models of these villages made has led to the greater attention given to the finished effect. We are rather apt in our garden suburbs to adopt some plan which suggests a symmetrical and formal arrangement, as may be seen in many of the examples shown in our last issue, and then to defeat the object of the plan by building the most irregular and unevenly-spaced cottages. Port Sunlight and Earswick may be said to be the only two English examples where both plan and buildings are entirely picturesque, and at Port Sunlight the latest piece of planning is an attempt to re-model the central area on formal lines. Some of the late work at Hampstead shows an attempt to combine formal architecture with a formal plan. The German method, however, seems to be to take an intentionally-crooked road, as exemplified at Hellerau (Plate 73), and then to make up for its irregularity by lining it with simple and quietly designed houses.

Whatever may be their intention, the general effect of many of their villages is very successful, and we submit that in this direction they contain suggestions which we in turn might borrow from Germany.

Ulm

The municipal land-purchase policy of Ulm is well known; by dint of careful buying and selling during the past 20 years the city is left in possession of over 800 acres in its immediate surroundings, and a balance in hand of some £50,000 on the transactions. This has enabled the town to build cottages in a manner more closely resembling the English than anywhere else in Germany. The group of workmen's dwellings on the Römerstrasse to the south-west of the old town, built in 1907, consists of 48 houses in blocks of two, three, and four; the latter, as may be seen on the plan, are of the back-to-back type, which we do not favour in this country. There are no flats; all the cottages include large wood-storage space in the roof and basements containing washhouse, etc. The houses are sold on an instalment system, and in order to prevent speculation they can be repurchased by the town in 100 years under certain conditions. The architect for the whole group is Herr W. Holch, the city architect, and the appearance of the whole and of the individual cottages is most satisfactory.

Gmindersdorf

This is a model workmen's village belonging to the firm of cotton spinners Ulrich Gminder, Ltd., of Reutlingen, and founded in 1903. The village is about half completed, and when finished will be divided up as

follows : 40 per cent. ground space in streets, squares, &c., 17 per cent. covered with buildings, and 43 per cent. laid out as private gardens. There are 48 buildings at present existing, but as nearly all of these are arranged in flats there are 151 dwellings. Many of the dwellings are exceedingly small, consisting of a small scullery, kitchen, one living-room, and one bedroom ; besides this each dwelling has a small roofroom or cellar.

The main road leading from the works to the Market Place is an excellent example of the German intentional picturesque. For practical purposes the road might have been made straight ; it would then have entered the Market Place in the middle. But instead it is faintly curved, so that in walking up it the eye is led along a row of clipped trees to a fountain which is to stand in front of the village hall ; the houses are most carefully placed so as to lead the eye towards this point. This may be an affectation of natural picturesqueness, but it illustrates the great pains taken for the position of each building in relation to its neighbours. Charming, too, is the inn, with its courtyard surrounded by clipped trees.

Professor Theodor Fischer, of Munich, is the architect for the whole village.

Hellerau

Hellerau is a garden suburb rather than a village, and it is a limited liability company. It is situated to the north of Dresden in the fine upland sandy pine forest which encloses the north side of the town ; the electric tramway which is being built will take 20 minutes to go from the centre of the town to the suburb. The area of the property is some 400 acres, but as building was only begun in 1909 not much building has yet been completed ; the effect can therefore only be judged by the model which was exhibited in Berlin in June, and also in London in October.

The suburb has been planned by Professor Riemerschmid, of Munich, but the houses will be built by various architects.

Unfortunately, the promoters do not wish to publish any further details until the suburb is further advanced, so that it is impossible to give more particulars ; but it appears that some of the larger buildings will be blocks of flats, and that there will be a considerable number of shops.

It will be interesting to see if this suburb preserves the quietness of architectural design indicated in the model or whether the great variety of architects employed will produce a corresponding variety of styles and materials.

PLAN OF GMINDERSDORF

MODEL OF HELLERAU

Abb. 36. Gartenstadt-Zentrum. Ansicht der bearbeiteten Teilfläche.
Marktplatz mit Hallengängen, Amtsgebäude, Post usw.

ISOMETRIC VIEW OF CENTRAL SETTLEMENT

PLAN OF BOTH SETTLEMENTS

MUNICH-PERLACH

The Munich-Perlach Settlements

The two contiguous settlements of München-Perlach have been designed by Professor Berlepsch-Valendas to form garden suburbs to the south of Munich. They are situated in the Perlach forest, a municipal property in the valley of the Isar. It is proposed to connect them by a loop line with two of the south-going railway lines; this loop will skirt their southern sides. The two villages already planned out are called the West and Central Settlements, and they are separated by strips of the forest which are to be left standing. Eventually an eastern settlement may be added. An existing tram route forms the boundary of the Western Settlement. Only a small portion of each settlement has been planned in detail; the rest is blocked out for the main streets only. They are typical examples of German planning; in the Western Settlement the houses are in groups surrounding three sides of courts, in the Central in rows. The predilection of the German design for this irregular planning is all the more marked in this instance, seeing that the forest is already cut up by drives into a perfectly regular gridiron; but these have by no means been allowed to influence the plan of the villages, though they are connected up to the streets as indicated on the eastern side of the Central Settlement in dotted lines.

The houses shown in the perspective must, of course, be considered rather as diagrams than designs; they consist of single family houses (two-storey houses) and two-family houses (flats arranged in three storeys). In the Western Settlement many of the buildings are four storeys high; this concentration in the dwellings allows a greater amount of unoccupied ground space. The two settlements when complete will house over 30,000 persons.

The Margarete-Krupp Foundation

This is a gift of the late Frau Margarete Krupp to the town of Essen. The building area will be about 120 acres with a similar area of unbuilt-on park girdle surrounding it. The model here illustrated shows about a twentieth of the whole village, and consists of the first instalment to be completed this year. One million marks were invested to pay for continuous building until the whole village is completed, which will take about 20 years, and it will then house from 12,000 to 15,000 persons. The object of the village is to provide houses for all "the less-wealthy classes," and it is not to be confined to employés in the Krupp works.

The fact that it is a definite "foundation" accounts for the rather pretentious entrance with obelisks and pavilions facing the bridge which

crosses the Rhenish Railway. The architect is Herr George Metzendorf, of Essen-Ruhr.

Dresden Slaughter House Colonie and Hospital Buch, Berlin

The models for the above were also exhibited at the Berlin Exhibition, and are interesting in the same connection as examples of general lay-out and architectural treatment.

The Dresden Slaughter-house Colony, which is partly completed, is situated on an island in an angle of the Elbe some distance to the west of the town ; but it is an important object in the middle distance looking westward from the centre of the city, and the general appearance and grouping has been influenced by this consideration.

The architect is the city architect, Herr Hans Erlwein.

PATRICK ABERCROMBIE.

MODEL, VIEW FROM THE WEST

MODEL, VIEW FROM BRIDGE

ESSEN Margaret Krupp Foundation.

SLAUGHTERHOUSE COLONY, DRESDEN (over)
HOSPITAL BUCH, BERLIN (under)

MODELS OF GERMAN GROUPS OF BUILDINGS