

GIVE THE BOYS A CHANCE

LEAVE A COUNTRY LIFE TO THOSE WHO LIKE IT.

But Aptitudes and Inclinations Ought to Be Consulted in Every Case—A Prominent Farmer Talks to the Gentlemen Who Are So Lash of Good Advice.

The following telegraphic announcement appeared in one of the city papers the other day:

KINGSTON, Jan. 3.—The farmers of the county will hold an institute here on Friday, to be addressed by Principal Grant, Hon. G. A. Kirkpatrick, W. Smith, M. P., John Dryden, M. P., and Prof. James. The one idea will be to discover how young men can be kept on the farm.

Now, is there not a little irony or inconsistency with the spirit of the age, and more especially with the educational teaching which is imparted from our literary platforms, now-a-days, for these gentlemen to lecture to the farmers' sons that they should not aspire to fill a place in a broader area than the farm furnished? To indulge in platitudes about the dignity of the hoe and plough, and quote the *ne ultra crepidam* of the Latin poets? Probably some of them were farmers' boys themselves, and, dissatisfied with their surroundings, shook off the dust of the stubbles and went to work more congenial to their ideas; and, having tasted the good things of life, occupied positions in the world of business and of men, and, Solomon-like, found some dust and ashes strewn along the pathway of fame, have just condescended to lend the *ecclat* of their respective presence to the agricultural institute, and give the young men some good advice to smother their latent ambition to seek other pursuits and stick to the farm.

These gentlemen may make nice, plausible speeches, but what is the good of it all? What youthful ardor to drive a sulky plough over the prairie fields of Manitoba will they restrain? or can they check the fever to prospect in the gulches of British Columbia?

Is it not a fact that the more boyhood and girlhood are studied, the more is it ascertained that each of either sex has an aptitude for some one thing more than another? This gigantic fostering of education, both by government and private munificence, in this age, is done just to develop these varying faculties. One girl has an aptness to teach; another is a marvel in culinary manipulations and clever in the intricacies of domestic economy; another could sing divinely, and still another can do something better than her sister. So with the boys on the farm. One lad has got the colt broken and trained. He takes kindly with the less intelligent steers, and the work and ways of the farm come easy to him. Another is the carpenter of the family: is handy with tools, and a rainy day finds him exercising his ingenuity in the workshop, and if the old homestead becomes crowded this fellow won't be the last to leave. A past age, with its poor schools under the "boarding around" system, scarce newspapers, no cheap paper-back literature penetrating by its cheapness into every remote settlement, slow and costly travelling—a quarter's schooling at the age of sixteen to finish off with—a stern parental frown at the idea of discontentment, have yielded to the potent influence of steam and invention. As well try to resurrect it as try to talk the boys into all being farmers.

Within the last 25 years many farmer's sons have become St. John merchants. This exodus, fortunately for the province, has only been a local one. Their work has been changed, and they have filled their chosen line of life better than had they been repressed and kept in a pursuit uncongenial to their inclinations. On the other hand, there are several young men, merchants' sons, born in the city, in fact some verging on middle life, who have chosen farming instead of the counting house, and are making good farmers, progressive, prudently experimental and not given to too much guidance by the quartering of the moon.

What light the experimental farm at Nappan for the maritime provinces is going to shed on the business of the farmer remains to be seen. Agricultural experiments take years to show results, and we must not be hasty in fault finding about unnecessary expense until we see what we shall see. But in the meantime the country is not standing still. The railroads projected and building will want men to handle them. The telegraph with its Briarian arm keeps pace with the railroads. The telephone is competing with the telegraph. Business of every kind is pushing. The commercial traveller has become its greatest factor in disposing of its wares, and as surely as these are all facts the farm will contribute its quota of men and boys, as it has all along, to do the work.

No, gentlemen, this confining the youth of our farms to the farm is about played out. Those who want to carve their fortunes in the world would far better go. Don't grumble about it. There is room for all. Canada is not ready for the small farms of Belgium with their skilled labor and high culture. The magnificent distances between our cities and towns have yet to be dotted over with centres of other industry—and the farmer's boys have got to do it. However, we can all take in something practical and if the agricultural orators can show us wherein we can turn over a new leaf in farm management in this year of grace, let us profit by it.

A BALD-HEADED PRECEPT

And the Way It Made Life Miserable For "Bildad."

"Never go anywhere nor associate with anybody where you can't take your sister." That was the memorial words Adam said to Cain, and Cain, movin' as he did in a restricted circle of society, hung on to the advice, and when he went and settled down domestic like in the land of Nod, under the Free Grants Act, took his sister with him in preference to anybody else's sister. Cain was a dootiful young man except when his bile was riz.

Next time it come to the surface was when Noah was buildin' his ark. The neighbors remonstrated with Noah, and his creditors had six bills of sale on the ark and a chattel mortgage on the animals, but Noah was bound to go aboard. One old neighbor says to Noah, says he: "Never go anywheres, Noah, where you cant take your sister," but Noah didn't mind that but just cast away the gang plank and left his sister behind, and forty days later swung agin the wharf at Arrowroot in time to ketch the limited express karavan for Canaan.

And so it hez been ever since. That bald-headed old proverb keeps cavortin' around this blessed globe like a pesky gaffly, and every once in a while some man who ought to know better gets up on the house-top, loads up his logic gun with one ounce of sense and ten pounds of bunkum, wads her down with this mangy old precept and lets fly into the sufferin' multitude. It makes me weary.

There was a time when I used to think there was 'somethin' in this proverb. I wore it pasted in the linin' of my hat durin' the day and hung it over the head of my virtuous couch by nights, and I may say in confidence that I whittled it onto the handle of every umbrella I stole durin' ten years' steady application to business. It seemed to have a soothin' effect upon a instinct that was nacherally vigorous in all manner of cussedness. It seemed to me if a man would only just keep clear of all such places and pursuits as he would not like to see his sister in, he was bound to die with a halo bigger'n a barrel-hoop playin' round his beamin' profile. It was trooly amazin' how hard I struggled and fit to live accordin' to that ere adage.

Fust of all I was in the blacksmith business, but when I diskivered that I could not raley enjoy seein' my sister whackin' away on the anvil and shooin' hosses at 80 cents a day, I gin that up right off. Then I went into the carpenter line, but when the idee kem home to me how would I like to see Sal a straddlin' the roof of a three-story house, with her mouth full of nails and her thumb stove in, it was too much for me and I quit. It was six months before I done another stroke of work. About this time I jined the Masons, but after goin' throo the inishashun I concluded that Sal would look kinder promiscuous like and primitiv in such a scene, so I gin up payin' any dues, and was bounced from the order. Also from the Templars, as I could not actually recommend any sister of mine to take the full bumper degree and ride the goat in exactly the style I did.

It was just the same with everything I tackled. That mean, mangy, lyin', sneakin' old precept which sounds so much like gospel kep' makin' life miserable to me. About the slickest time I ever had in my life was when I was sparkin' old Squire Whalen's gal Susan. She was so apetzin'. It seemed to me that she was a good cel soother than the precept. We used to sit powerful close together winter nights, and the things we said to each other was comfortin' to the last degree. But when I says to myself, could I raley ask Sal to be present and take in the performance in its litoreal sense, I diskivered that it really was wrong for Suse and me to okepy the same end of the sofa to onst, so I knocked off courtin' and Susan revenged herself by marryin' the minister what had give us the precept. Its amazin' what a fool I was them times. For a day or two I was in the butcherin' line; but as I was a killin' a ten-year old steer for spring veal one mornin', I thot I could see Sal's profile in the animal's soft, confidin' gaze, so I dropped the axe in a jiffy and chucked up the job that same afternoon.

Then I jined the fine department. One day there was a big blaze up town. Half choked with smoke a lot of people on the top flat was tryin' to save their lives, the fire comin' closer and closer every minit. "Go in there and save them dyin' orfins," sez the chief to me. "Where?" sez I. "In there," sez he, pintin' to the flames, "through the winder." "Never!" sez I, "I'll never go anywheres where I cant take my sister." So they bounced me from the kumpany and since then I hev gone my own drive and Sal's gone hern.

Echoes of the Boom. New subscribers to PROGRESS frequently take occasion to give the recent illustrated edition of the paper very complimentary notice and many not intimately acquainted with St. John say that it gave them a splendid impression of the city. A member of a large city firm said that he travelled was in Nova Scotia and met the illustrated holiday number in every store he visited. The merchants were greatly pleased with the appearance of St. John's business houses, and the gentleman said that he was confident that the general impression created outside of St. John by the paper was a very favorable one.

PLAYING SANTA CLAUS

HOW A GOOD WOMAN MADE SOME CHILDREN HAPPY.

The Perfect System That Prevails in a Dry-Goods Palace—Mary Anderson and the Cranky Critics—Things Seen and Heard by a Dweller at the Hub.

[SPECIAL CORRESPONDENCE.]

BOSTON, Jan. 9.—I saw a pleasant sight, Christmas day. I was walking through a part of our city where there is much poverty, when I met a lady, about 30 years of age, genteelly dressed, who carried a good-sized hand-bag that looked to be filled to its utmost capacity. Somehow, I was attracted by her face, the expression was so kindly. I paused in my walk and turned to watch her. Very soon I saw her stop before a group of little children, and could see she spoke earnestly and kindly to them. Their faces broke into smiles, and their eyes opened wide, for the lady while speaking, had taken from her satchel cakes, candy, and a small doll, or toy, for each little child. Then she passed on. I had the curiosity to follow. I saw her stop again before two poor little waifs, who were lounging in front of a dirty shop. The satchel was again opened, and two more little hearts cheered. As the lady went on, I spoke to the little ones, and found they knew about Christmas, although it was evident they seldom knew the pleasure of "keeping" it. I hurried on again after the lady, and followed her at sufficient distance to avoid attracting her attention. Her supply seemed like the widow's cruse of oil. However, the end finally came, and the philanthropic lady hastened in another direction, hailed an up-town car and disappeared from my view. Her original mode of making Christmas a happy day to some of the unfortunate little ones impressed me. I wish her example could be widely known and followed.

I frequently drop into one or other of our large stores and look about me a little. The other evening I happened in at R. H. White & Co.'s, very near closing time, which is at 5.45 o'clock at this season. Five or ten minutes before the quarter, each clerk tidied up the goods under his particular care, and when the gong sounded exactly at "a quarter of," every employe—salesmen and women, cashiers, bundle girls and boys, formed into line and marched to the basement, where each one has a closet for his or her own special use. All was done with perfect order.

On former occasions I have visited the basement, where there are 1200 or more closets. They are about five feet in height and about 1 1/2 feet square. In each there are hooks and a small shelf, and each has a different lock. Every employe has his key and number. The firm employ about 2000 hands in all, but that includes the wholesale department, and the employes there and in the offices keep their out-door clothing nearer at hand.

There is also, in the basement, a good-sized dressing room, with mirrors and tables, for the girls, and a dining room with long table and seats, where all who carry their dinners may eat privately. Anywhere from 11.30 a. m. to 2.30 p. m. this room is occupied. If one peeps in, he sees groups of girls here and there, some with hats and jackets on, ready to go out as soon as their lunch is eaten, and others in their indoor costume reading as they eat, or, having finished their meal, busy with crochet-hook or in doing "fancy-work" of some kind—for each employe has an hour for dinner. The men also have a room of the same description.

At the closing hour, as soon as outdoor clothing is donned, all pass out by means of a flight of stairs leading to an entrance on a side street. At this door one of the "floor walkers" is stationed, it being his duty to allow no one to pass out with a parcel that has not been properly checked, according to rule, by some one in authority.

Now, just a word about our theatres and the critics. Miss Mary Anderson has played to immense audiences, at the Hollis street, and Miss Margaret Mather to good houses at the Boston. Everyone is united in praise of Miss Anderson's beauty, which is displayed to a marked degree in her part of Perdita in *A Winter's Tale*, especially when she dashes into the merry rustic dance. When one remembers Miss Anderson, the statuesque, elegant woman, it is almost impossible to realize it is she, dancing with girlish enjoyment. Every movement is grace itself. Her arms and body sway in an indescribable motion, that keeps time to the music. Her clinging garments unfold her supple figure, and her beautiful hair flows loose and unheeded. She is altogether delightful. In the two characters Miss Anderson impersonates in this play, she is justly entitled to a higher rank, as a dramatic artist, than she ever reached before. She re-arranged this play of Shakespeare's herself; adapted it to the stage of the present time, and has made it thoroughly acceptable to a modern audience. To do this she, of necessity, had to take some liberties with the dramatist's work, and some of the critics are severe in consequence; but the majority feel that she was justified in omitting what she has.

One gets tired hearing one or two of the critic "cranks" who seem never to be weary of saying, "Miss Anderson will never be truly great." If one asks what is the hindrance, the reply is, "She lacks magnetism—she cannot affect her audiences," etc. But if one turns to Miss Mather, over whom Boston enthused to a tremendous degree a few years ago, and refers to her effect on her audiences, and to the feeling she shows, the same critics pronounce it, "A vulgar display of passion"—so one grows disgusted with such critics and decides to "discriminate" for one's self.

A word must be said regarding the staging of *A Winter's Tale*. In the past, American "stars" have relied on themselves alone to draw audiences, paying small heed to their support or the details. Irving taught a lesson on these points; and to Miss Anderson's long stay in England is probably due the perfect staging of the play she has revived. It is simply a series of magnificent pictures, and the auxiliary forces, in the mob scenes, etc., have been thoroughly drilled, so that nothing "grates"—all is elaborate and perfect.

FRANK.

HE GOES TO SCHOOL AGAIN.

Johnny Mulcahey's Young Idea to Shoot—Ink Through the Keyhole.

I went to school last Monday, 'cause pa negotiated with the trustees to get me back. I don't think me'n our teacher'll ever agree on sum things, 'cause you know we couldn't whenever he beat me, and then I made a big rooster on his back, and everybody luffed when we went along the street, and all us fellars crowed. He said I see a young outlaw and shouldn't enter them school doors again.

Young Buntin, what's in our room got a squirt, what'll squirt like anything, so he bring it to school. He let me try it, and I filled it with ink. I thort it'd be a sin to waste the ink, so I got out fur a drink and locked our school door. Then I rapped, and 'cause our teacher couldn't open it he put his eye down so's to look in the key-hole, and I squirted. Jiminies! you ought to see him, spittin' out the ink, and he looked like one of them circus niggers what's turmin' white. He's in a awful mess, and got worsen 'cause all the fellars luffed. So then I called all the female teachers up to see him too, and a course they couldn't help luffin, 'cause their young womin, for they say what they are.

The good lookin' one what give our teacher the sign he's got in his hat said it's a shame and pulled my hair afore I knew she's goin to do it, so I put some shadder pictures on her clean tire.

I thort it was no good stayin' so I went home 'cause perhaps if I stayed I had to come home in an omilybus. Ma says what goodness nose she don't want any docters bills so soon and so I thort gettin out quick was the better part of valer, and went, and me and another fellar what sells papers and pins broke 16 winders in the hanted house in 24 shots, and the old fellar what lives in it says he's goin to have us 'rested 'cause he knows our names.

JOHNNY MULCAHEY.

Blown in by the Wind.

The neatly gotten-up calendar of the Canada Life Assurance company has been received from Mr. C. J. Gillespie, special agent of the company in this city.

Calendars of the Merchants' (Marine) Insurance company of Bangor, and the Central Fire insurance company of New Brunswick, and *The Ingleside*, published by the United States Life Insurance company, come from the St. John agent, Mr. Thomas A. Temple.

A combination memorandum tablet and blotting book, bearing the imprint of the City of London Fire Insurance company, limited, is one of the most convenient articles that have yet come to PROGRESS. The agents, Messrs. H. Chubb & Co., have it.

Twenty-five cents can be exchanged at J. & A. McMillan's for *False*, a Lovell library novel. Geraldine Fleming is the authoress. There are 318 pages of fiction, sufficiently lurid to suit anyone. The title is a fair index to the contents. Patrons of sensational literature can find what they want in *False*.

Thought There Was Only One "Tug."

Under the heading, "Gone but not Forgotten," the *World*, of Toronto, says: Mr. R. H. F. Wilson, better and fondly known as "Tug," of the Bank of Toronto staff, has become a citizen of Gotham. "Tug" went off a couple of weeks ago to enjoy his holidays, but instead of returning yesterday he sent in his resignation, saying that he saw more inducements for his peculiar talents in New York than he did in Toronto. "Tug" is gone, but he may rest assured that he is not forgotten.

THE NEREID'S MAIDEN'S DREAM.

O, could I but borrow the wings of a lark From this dreary old planet I'd fly: I'd paddle through space and at last disembark Where they never have pancakes to fry. My face, which is freckled, my feet, which are large, Would be modified somewhat, I know. I would sail down the stream in my canopied barge, And yank up the sun-fish below. My robe would be royal, my sandals would bring Just the tip of my ankle in sight; My hair would be coiled in a classical ring 'Neath a bonnet of boundless delight. And I'd have me a house of mahogany built, And I'd spend half eternity Constructing a beautiful, big crazy quilt Of a marvellous shape to see.

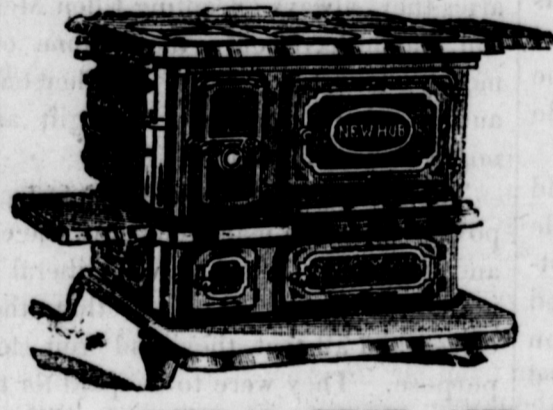
But since I have not got the wings of the lark, I'll take to the goose-wing anew, And as I've got my own canopied bark I'll paddle my own canoe. And as both the robe and the bonnet I lack, And no sandals my feet conceal, I will stick to the dress that is ripped up the back, And the sock with the hole in the heel. BILDAD.

Evening Dress Wear.

NOW SHOWING: THE LATEST COLORINGS in NEW FABRICS for SEASON 1899. PONGEE SILKS, SATIN DUCHESS, SATIN MERVEILLEUX, PLUSHES, MOIRE FRANCAIS; TINSEL SPOT NETS, CHENILLE SPOT NETS, POINT D'ESPRIT NETS, spots and stripes; SEVENTY-TWO inch PLAIN NETS, in the new shades; WHITE BEADED NETS, BLACK BEADED NETS; WHITE BEADED LACE, WHITE and GOLD DRESS FRONTS; COLORED and WHITE MECHLIN; BLACK, WHITE and CREAM FLOUNCINGS and ALLOVERS; BLACK SILK GRENADINE, Stripes and Checks; NOVELTIES IN HOSIERY, GLOVES, RIBBONS and LACES.

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