

Poor Richard and his Almanac.

"Poor Richard's Almanac" was, one hundred years ago, the foremost book in the literature of America. It was the work almost wholly of Benjamin Franklin, and in it he spoke in the character of Richard Saunders, whose name, quite fictitious, was put forth on the title-page as the author. "Observing," said Franklin himself, in giving an account of the work, "that it was generally read, I filled all the little spaces that occurred between the remarkable days of the calendar with proverbial sentences." These were not his own, but contained the wisdom of many ages and nations. The book became so widely known, however, that even in England these proverbs are now attributed to "Poor Richard."

The proverbs that the American country boy hears to-day are largely from among those which Franklin put into the mouth of his Poor Richard, such as—

"Early to bed, and early to rise,
Makes a man wealthy, healthy, and wise."
and
"He that by the plough would thrive,
Himself must either hold or drive."

The almanac found its way to the hearts of the people the more readily, no doubt, from the fact that the eclipses and other sidereal facts were announced with a joke. In 1734 Poor Richard announced his eclipses in this fashion:

"There will be but two, the first, April 22, the second, October 15—both of the sun, and both, like Mrs. M——'s modesty and old Neighbor Scrape-all's generosity, invisible."

He then proceeds to make up for such a scanty lot of eclipses, which he regards as a shame to the year, with a mathematic problem which is impossible of solution.

Franklin did not hesitate to insert in his calendar predictions of the weather, but they were of a sportive sort. Challenged with the inaccuracy of his predictions, he apologized thus:

"However, no one but will allow that we always hit the day of the month. As for weather, I consider it will be of no service to anybody to know what weather is to be one thousand miles off; therefore, I always set down exactly the weather my reader will have wheresoever he may be at the time. We only ask an allowance of a few days in time, and if there still be a mistake, set it down to the printer."

The almanac for 1735 has a scolding preface, which appears to be the work of Mistress Saunders. She says her husband had set out to visit an old star-gazer of his acquaintance on the Potomac, and left her the almanac, sealed, to send to the printer. She suspects some jests directed against her, bursts the seal, and plays havoc generally with the almanac. She says:

"Looking over the months, I find he has put in abundance of foul weather this year; and therefore I have scattered here and there, where I could find room, 'fair,' 'pleasant,' 'sunshiny,' etc., for the poor women to dry their clothes in."

Franklin really did go on by turning to ridicule all the pretensions of the astrologists, who were at that time much believed in to predict the weather for a year or a time. His ridicule did not, however, drive out the pretensions to this day the almanacs commonly used by the farmers contain detailed and confident predictions of the weather for the entire year which are only too often trusted.

Clothes and company do oftentimes tell tales in a more but significant language.

Don't.

Don't tell your child the happiest days he will ever know are his days of childhood. Don't say with maturity come cares and work and troubles and fears that make life a burden.

If your child comes to you with a trial that is great to him, but to you, in the light of your years and experience, is the merest trifle, don't say, "You are very foolish to be troubled by so small a thing," but remember he has but little reason to use, and no experience to guide him, and that for the time his grief "clothes him as a garment," and it is for you with your love and sympathy to rend it and bring him sunlight again.

It is a great wrong to believe the wild fears, grotesque fancies, and nameless doubts which haunt the minds of children are passing whims. So vivid are these, they often come to us in middle life or old age and cause us an involuntary shudder.

If a child's troubles are usually small, the understanding is smaller. The pitiful gravity with which they attempt to settle weighty questions which their elders often give up as hopeless, demands our most delicate sympathy.

Every stage of life has its peculiar trials, and just as surely its own joys. Let us not then so recklessly risk our reputation for wisdom as to point to children and say, "Now, my dear child, is your hey-day. Enjoy it to the full, for the years that are pressing on you are full to the brim of care and trial." Say rather, "If the future has great work and responsibilities, so has it proportionate reward." The truest, greatest happiness of life should come with the full development of mind and heart.

R. M. P. D.

Notices.

SEEDS AND PLANTS.—Our subscribers should procure their seeds and plants from the reliable seedsmen and nurserymen whose advertisements appear in the *Advocate*. Do not be led astray by any traveller who asks you fabulous prices for some re-named old variety, or some useless, discarded plant or seed. Send for their catalogues.

"Medical Common Sense," by J. B. Wolfe, M. D., Cincinnati, a clear, concise little work on diseases of the nose, throat and lungs and analogous complaints. Dr. Wolfe is a strong champion of the system of treatment by inhalation, etc., in its various forms, and supports the doctrine with good, common-sense reasoning.

PERNICIOUS WEEDS.—Farmers are constantly and anxiously asking how to subdue such persistent weeds as sorrel, Canada thistles, etc., etc. There is but one way, which is to prevent them from getting air. This soon causes them to perish. Air is as necessary to plants as it is to animals. Such cultivation as will effect this will quickly destroy the worst weeds. There are no more effective weed killers than the "ACME" Pulverizing Harrow, Chisel Crusher and Leveler, or the Revolving Disk Harrow.

R. Rivers & Son, of Springfield Farm, Walkerton, have replaced their old stock bull, Duke of Hamilton 776, by the well-bred Shorthorn yearling bull "Vivian," recently purchased from Mr. Hugh Thomson, St. Marys. The Duke of Hamilton was bred by Mr. James Russell, Richmond Hill, and is own brother to the sire of the Bow Park sweepstakes bull of the Dominion. This animal has left them a very fine lot of young stock, who have been very successful as prize winners. Their first prize cow, "Lithia," is a fine Holstein cow by the old Duke of Devon, now at the head of the Springfield herd of twenty-five Shorthorns, is a bull of a useful style. They have not had any trouble in disposing of their young stock bulls at fair prices, and have secured a good yearling lot for next year.

Having received numerous kind invitations from our subscribers in different Provinces to pay personal visits to them, and also to attend at public meetings, most of which we have been obliged to decline. The present season we hope, as far as time and opportunity will permit, to have a personal interview with as many as we can conveniently see. Most probably we may travel from the Atlantic to the Pacific coast this year. We shall be at the Rossin House, Toronto, on Tuesday afternoon, the 15th of this month.

WM. WELD, Editor.

Mr. John Hope, manager of Bow Park Herd Brantford, Ont., writes: We have just sold at a high price, to Mr. Jas. McArthur, Princeton, Ont., Waterloo Duke 18th. This young bull is a roan son of 4th Duke of Clarence, from Waterloo 42, by 38th Duke of Oxford, and is one of the best bulls ever bred at Bow Park. The demand for well-bred bulls was never better than at present. Cantab, the white two-year-old heifer that was first at Toronto and Guelph, has given us a fine roan cow calf.

It is always pleasing for us to mention the success of Canadians in the States. A representative of this journal recently called at the large stock farm of Geo. E. Brown & Co., Aurora, Ill., and was rather pleased to learn that the manager of that large concern was a Canadian, Mr. G. T. Van Norman. He is from St. Thomas, and he spoke pleasantly of his friends and acquaintances at St. Thomas and London. When it is known that the stock of this farm comprises 100 imported Cleveland Bays, 150 English Shires, and 300 Holstein cattle, it will be seen that Mr. Van Norman holds a very responsible position.

Those who wish to improve their stock and secure the best, will, by consulting our advertising columns, find such a choice to be procured by auction sale as has seldom or ever been offered in Canada. Secure animals from the best herds and from the most honorable breeders. The Hon. M. H. Cochrane's sale for Shorthorns and Aberdeen Angus; J. C. Snell's, for Shorthorns; J. Cowan & Sons and T. C. Patteson's joint sale, for Shorthorns; J. D. Pettit's sale, for Shorthorns; and Seachard Bros.' for Holsteins, besides those offered by private sale. These sales offer grand opportunities to purchasers.

Mr. Jas. Picken, jr., of Boreland, Kirkcubright, Scotland, called at our office on his return from a tour in the Western States and Territories. He is one of the noted Clydesdale breeders, and his surplus stock has been shipped for years past to some of our best Canadian importers; he also ships some to the States. He expressed himself as much better pleased with the western part of Ontario, as a place of settlement, than with any part of this continent he had seen.

We have just received from Messrs. Cassell & Co., of New York, an excellent work on Horses, entitled, "The Practical Horse-keeper," by George Fleming, L.L.D., F.R.C.V.S., Practical Veterinary Surgeon of the British Army. It is certainly a very valuable work to all engaged in Horses, as it treats upon all subjects of great importance.

An English writer, discussing the low condition of English agriculture, says "the great difficulty is to get men to work on a scale suited to their means. At present the custom is universal for a man who has the means to do justice to 100 acres of land to try to work 300, and so starve himself and the farm too." This is sound sense and a great economical truth, for waste of labor is waste of money and material, and where there is waste there is want and loss, which must be paid for without any return. The above remark is applicable to our own circumstances, for, on the average, it is a positive fact that thousands of American farmers would be better off were they to cultivate well one-fourth as much land as they now work in a poor and profitless manner, and so produce as much from 10 acres as is now made from 40 and at one-third of the cost. (N. Y. Times.)