

three rods apart and two feet apart in the row. As we go nearer we see that there are ropes stretched from one row of stakes to the other, close on the ground. A number of men are at work along these ropes. With their spades they cut the sod close to the ropes, to a depth of three inches, then pull their spades straight out, so that when they are through there is but a faint mark to show what has been done. This done, we are ready to hitch on to the breaking plow and plow our sod. For those who have never seen a breaking plow, I will attempt a very brief description.

The lay is a flat piece of steel twelve or fourteen inches wide, and one-half of an inch thick. This runs under the ground about three inches, and it is joined on the left, or land side, by another piece of steel that stands straight up and cuts from the top down to the lay. These are kept as sharp as a knife, and whittle the sod off like so much soap, there being not even a gravel stone in any of our soil. As the plow starts in, we see the use of cutting the sod sideways with the spades. The furrow is turned over in pieces two feet long, which do not crack in the least.

We now have the sod ready to build with. Each sod is two feet long, fourteen inches wide, and three inches thick. The men begin at once to load these. The wagons all have their boxes off, like our own. We will now step over to the house and help lay the sod. A line stretched tight on four stakes marks the inside of the house. Against this line we lay the ends of the sods, the grass side down. This gives us a wall two feet thick, which we lay all the way around, except in front, where we leave a place for the door.

The sods are quite tough, and we handle them almost like brick, throwing them from the wagons and catching them from the walls. But their corners sometimes break off, or chunks fall out, and, after each course of sod is laid, the holes made by the falling out of these chunks and corners are stuffed full of sod or dirt. This we call "wadding." After this comes the "trimming." This is going over the top of the wall with a hoe and scraping all the little hills into the hollows. When thus levelled up, the wall is ready for the next row of sods. This is placed just like the last one, only that it is started so that each sod covers the crack of the sods under it, like laying bricks. This way of laying sod is called "cording." There are many other ways; but this is considered the best, as it stands well and can be laid up the quickest.

Ah! Here are a couple of men who are old hands at the business. Don't be alarmed, my friend; they are not going to take off their clothes, if it is hot. They have learned by experience that the best way to keep the dirt from rolling down their trousers and into their boots is to bring with them an extra shirt, as long a one as they can get, and wear it over their clothes. And these men are putting on their shirts, not taking them off. I wager you that by to-morrow every man here will come out to work in this costume. Slowly the building goes up, three inches to a layer, then a short stop to "wad in" and "trim"; then another layer of three inches. It is hot, dusty work. The wind always blows in Kansas, and as the sods dry the dust gets thicker and thicker. Our eyes, ears, noses, and mouths are full, and the men around us look like negroes. We make a great many trips to the jug in the wagon.

Noon at last, and we may have a rest, and how hungry we are! We separate in two parties, half going to Mr. Votopka's and half to Mr. Deitz's. These two men live nearest the schoolhouse and have kindly offered to furnish dinner for the crowd, as long as the house is building, in order to get us back to work as soon as possible. We have a good dinner, and, after a short rest, we go back to the house. The afternoon is like the forenoon, only hotter and dustier. How slow the time goes! Will it ever be night? But at last we can stop work and go home, too tired even to dig the dirt out of our eyes and ears, but rejoicing in the fact that the walls are up four feet. The next day we lay the walls up nearly three feet more. As the walls get higher we have to go slower, on account of the extra work of throwing the sod up. Wednesday we place poles over the openings left for windows and door, and build the walls on top of them. The end walls are built two feet higher in the centre than the side walls, and the ridge-log is to be placed from centre to centre of these end walls. By night the walls are done. "That about winds

it up," says one, as we quit work; but those who have been here long know better, and it is a common saying that "a house is only half done when the walls are done."

Thursday is spent in getting the roof on. Part of our company were detached the first day and sent to the timber on the creek, six miles away, to buy the ridge-log and rafters, and cut willows for the roof. They have done their duty faithfully, and we now have all the material on the ground.

The ridge log (a straight tree twenty-six feet long, with the bark peeled off) is dragged along the side of the house. Poles are placed from the top of the walls to the log, ropes are fastened to the walls and then placed under the log and passed back to the men on the wall. Some of the men remain on the ground. "Now ready?" "All together!" "Pull!" "Push!" and the log rolls slowly up to its place. Next we place the rafters from the ridge-log to the side walls, laying them about ten inches apart. The rafters are small poles, three to six inches through and peeled like the ridge-log, to prevent worms working in them. Then we cover the roof with small willows, laying them sideways to the rafters.

On these we place our first layer of sod, laying them very closely, with the grass side down. Then we cover this with another layer, this time with the grass side up, being careful to lay each sod so that it covers the cracks in the first layer. After this we throw fine dirt all over the grassy top of the house. The grass holds the dirt from blowing away, and the first rain will wash it into the cracks in our last course of sods. Now the roof is done. So is the day. Friday, two of us go back with the carpenter to help finish up. The door and windows are put in, then we spade off the corners that are left in the two-foot wall at both sides of the door and windows, leaving them nicely rounded.

Next the walls are trimmed down smooth with the spade, so that they may be easily plastered. All the dirt we have made is then thrown out-of-doors. In the meantime the carpenter has made a dozen straight-backed pine desks. We help him carry them in, and our work is done.

School District No. 26 now has a schoolhouse. It has taken eight or ten men four days to build it—days that could hardly be spared from the farm; but we have resisted the desire to hurry, and our work is well done.

There is still much more to do—the walls need plastering, the roof should be covered inside with muslin, and a blackboard should be made. But all these must wait until next winter, because we lack both time and money, and the first teacher must do without them.

"I hear that the director has hired our teacher. He has gone two days to find one; but found her at last, way down on the Sappa, somewhere. I didn't hear her name; but I'm going up, the fifteenth, and see that everything starts right, we've worked so hard for it. Won't you come along?"

So half-past eight of September 15th, 1884, finds us again at the schoolhouse. A lumber wagon soon drives in with the teacher. One glance convinces us that, though young, she is no novice, and will be equal to the situation.

After glancing at the room and removing a few raps, she proceeds—with our help, of course—to take from the wagon a small stand, a bell, a chair, and a rubber blackboard. The latter she unrolls and takes to the further end of the room. The children come straggling in—one, two, and three at a time. She greets each one cheerily, and shows them where to sit. At ten minutes of nine they are all in, just a dozen. Soon the bell rings and all are silent, while the teacher, in a clear, low tone, reads a chapter from the Bible. The scholars are then asked to rise and repeat the Lord's Prayer.

It is very awkwardly done; but then this is the first time these children have all been together.

The enrolling was quickly accomplished; but, when it came to forming classes, I don't see how she managed, for there were but three books alike in the whole school. Every set of books had come from a different state. However, classes were formed, and each scholar set to work, and we came away well pleased with the way we had started our school.—*N. Y. Independent.*

Duty walks with bowed head, as if always tired; faith has a way of looking up, and it sees things duty never sees.

For Friday Afternoon.

THE COMING MAN.

A pair of very chubby legs,
Encased in scarlet hose;
A pair of little stubby boots,
With rather doubtful toes;
A little kilt, a little coat,
Cut as a mother can;
And lo! before us stands, in state,
The future's "coming man."

His eyes, perchance, will read the stars,
And search their unknown ways;
Perchance the human heart and soul
Will open at their gaze;
Perchance their keen and flashing glance
Will be a nation's light—
Those eyes that now are wistful bent
On some "big fellow's kite."

The brow where mighty thoughts do dwell
In solemn, secret state;
Where fierce Ambition's restless strength
Shall war with future fate;
Where Science now from hidden caves
New treasures shall outpour—
'Tis knit now with a troubled doubt,
"Are two or three cents more?"

The lips that in the coming years
Will plead, or pray, or teach;
Whose whispered words on lightning flash
From world to world may reach;
That, sternly grave, may speak command,
Or, smiling, win control,
Are coaxing now for gingerbread
With all a baby's soul!

Those hands—those busy little hands—
So sticky, small, and brown;
Those hands whose only mission seems
To tear all order down—
Who knows what hidden strength may lie
Within thy future grasp,
Though now 'tis but a taffy stick
In sturdy hold they clasp!

Ah! blessings on those little hands,
Whose work is yet undone;
And blessings on those little feet,
Whose race is yet unrun;
And blessings on the little brain,
That has not learned to plan;
Whate'er the future holds in store,
God bless "the coming man!"

—*Presbyterian.*

THE BOY.

When you hear a fearful racket,
Like a miniature cyclone,
With some sounds so strange that surely
Their like was never known,
While the mother listens calmly,
Even with a smiling face,
You may know that it is nothing
But the boy about the place.

When there's famine in the cupboard
And the milk pail soon runs dry,
And you can't keep pies or cookies,
No matter how you try;
When you vainly seek for apples
That have gone and left no trace,
Hard times is not the trouble—
There's a boy about the place.

When there's sawdust on the carpet
And some shavings on the beds,
When the rugs are tossed in corners
And your chairs stand on their heads,
While, if a tool you're needing, you
All round the house must race,
You may know he's making something,
Is the boy about the place.

When the house is full of sunshine
On the darkest kind of day,
And you have to laugh at seeing
Some outlandish, boyish play,
And when eyes so bright and loving
Oft are raised to meet your face,
You will pray, I know, "God bless him,
Bless our boy about the place."

—*Pacific Coast Endeavourer.*