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# HOME JOURNAL

## Life, Literature and Education

### IN THE WORLD OF LITERATURE AND ART.

Miss Clara Clemens, eldest daughter of "Mark Twain" is a talented contralto singer. An Ottawa audience had the pleasure of listening to her not long ago.

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Mr. Theodore Roberts has written a new story, "The Red Feathers," which will delight children and grown ups. The scene is laid in Newfoundland at a time when that island was inhabited only by Indians.

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The great-grandson of Robert Burns, the poet, has recently been acting as Judge of the Police Court of Louisville. His name is J Marshall Chatterton and for many years he has been an attorney in Louisville.

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The Neepawa, Man., High School is issuing a monthly magazine called "The Oracle." It is devoted largely to school news but has also some good short articles. Business men of the town are helping the enterprise with their advertising.

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A notable feature of the first Mennonite convention ever held in Canada and which took place at Langham, Sask., was the Sangerfest, or Feast of Song, which lasted all one day. It is a great singing contest in which large numbers take part.

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Orders are said to have been issued by the New York Board of Education that no hymn or carol containing the mention of Christ or Christmas be henceforth sung in the City schools. This order is said to have been framed through Jewish influence.

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Mr. Antoine Lumiere, of Paris, has perfected a practical method of making photographs of objects in their natural colors. The process will not be, it is stated, much more expensive than ordinary photography, and the manipulation of plates, etc. will not be more difficult than by the present system.

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The first place of worship erected in the Dominion of Canada was a Roman Catholic chapel formed partly of living trees, built in New Brunswick in 1604 by the earliest band of French colonists. Their governor was De Monts, a Huguenot, who, it is said, was allowed the free use of his religion with the strange proviso that he should endeavor to convert the aborigines to the Catholic faith!

### OPPORTUNITIES AT HOME.

Opportunity for getting good is not allowed to slip by so frequently as opportunity for doing good. The former is grasped almost as soon as it appears in sight—no time wasted in waiting for a clear view; but for the latter we put on our spectacles after polishing them carefully and settle ourselves for a deliberate examination. And then we are surprised when we are actually ready to do something, to find that this particular opportunity has slipped along to join its many brethren in the Land of Lost Opportunities.

People like ourselves living in the country, with neighbors few in number and at great distances fancy they have no opportunities. But there are chances to live well by making life easier and happier for other people. One family among our own readers found the way when they gave special thought and preparation for the threshers. Not satisfied with giving the strangers three meals a day, this household gave friendly interest, pleasant evenings, and a glimpse

of home life to men who must necessarily be away a great deal from their own homes.

In another case a woman felt that she had power to influence and help other women, but living on a farm and with the care of little children, she could only grieve over unused powers. But one day after reading of a friend's success in settlement work among foreigners in a large city, it occurred to her suddenly that there was a foreigner in her own kitchen,—a Norwegian girl in a long line of other European immigrants who had stayed a while in that kitchen. There was no picturesqueness about this missionary task, but the mistress made it her work to teach and train hand and mind and soul of the girls who come to her home. She did not win any gratitude nor any tangible reward, for the girls left her as soon as her training had made them worth more money than she could afford to pay, but she had used her opportunity.

### PUBLIC SPEAKING FOR FARMERS.

One great fault there is among the farmers of Canada, viz., the inability to talk. It has been said that "Silence is golden;" it might rather be said that "Silence in season is golden." There are times when speech is the true metal, silence the dross.

We refer, of course, to talking in public. Any man can talk to his neighbor over a back-field fence, but when it comes to speaking before a concourse of people, there is all too often "another story." And yet, should not public speaking be regarded more often than it is as a duty, upon which hinges, not infrequently, the welfare of our community, perhaps of our country itself? How many farmers are there, one might ask, in Parliament? Why this scarcity in a country in which 80 per cent of the population belongs to the rural districts? Is it that the farmers have no interests which need especial guarding? Is there nothing in connection with the agricultural life which demands especial spokesmen in that sympathy with it, and with that anxiety in regard to it, which only the actual occupation of farming can give?

May not the absence of farmers from such places be found in the fact that they hold back, or are held back, simply because, to the overwhelming majority of them, public speaking is an unfound art? The farmers have opinions, certainly they have opinions; many of them now-a-days are possessed of considerable education; most of them have an idea, by no means vague, of their wants and grievances, and the legislation needed, from their point of view, for the country's welfare. Speaking to but one or two auditors, most of them are in no wise lacking in fluency; but when it comes to speaking in public, most of them are diffident, mute. Let a farmer and a lawyer oppose each other on a public platform, and in nine cases out of ten the lawyer will talk all round the farmer. Of course, he (the lawyer) has been trained to talk. He knows all the tricks of oratory that sway a crowd; and if the contest be for a public position, he is more than likely to carry the day.

It is really too bad to see farmers so often outdone in this way. They should at least have a fair representation among those whose hands immediately guide the destinies of this great agricultural Dominion; and the fault that such a condition exists is their own. It is all very well to say that they may carry this or that election by their votes, and so wield their influence. This is, to a great extent, true, yet there are other considerations which will appear on a little study of the subject.

We firmly believe that great gain would come to the farmers if they once took it in hand systematically to train themselves to speak in public, to "think on their feet," or, rather, to keep the thoughts of which they are already in possession, marshalled in logical and forceful order while speaking before an audience—the sort of training the city man of affairs invariably gets, at meetings at clubs, at dinners, etc. It is not necessary, for the occasions that really count, to make flowery speeches, but it is necessary to be able to pound down good hard common sense in the most convincing way. Such "horse" sense, delivered with necessary emphasis, without any roundabouts, and in a voice that will carry to the outermost edge of the listening circle, must, in any thinking audience, carry weight; and this is the sort of oratory our farmers might well cultivate. The best speakers are perhaps "caught young." The boy who begins public-speaking in the school-room, and carries it on in literary or other clubs in his vicinity, is likely to find little embarrassment in addressing the more extended audience of the Farmers' Institute or political meeting. Take a man of mature years, on the contrary, who has never spoken before a dozen people in his life, place him on his feet before the gazing eyes and waiting ears of several hundred people, and what happens? No matter how strong his feeling on the subject in hand, his ideas are more than likely to be scattered; his voice sounds strange and far away; his knees weaken; his tongue seems thick and his mouth parched; when he sits down he feels that he has mumbled the business, left out half of the most important considerations, and he goes home for once in his life repenting, in most orthodox manner, both the things that he has done and the things that he has left undone. Just possibly he swears that, as the experience has been his first, so it will be his last. And yet, perhaps, this man has ideas which, if well expressed, might have accomplished much for the community.

Not only in political meetings and Farmers' Institutes may the gift of speech be a boon to the farmer. In municipal affairs, he may require to use his voice. There are, too, numberless occasions on which delegations are sent on important business, to interview this corporation or that an operation which is often preceded by an oral "Donnybrook," as to who shall be principal spokesman. This discussion should not be necessary. Every man with an idea in his head or a message in his heart should be able to present it. Then, there are the little social gatherings, church assemblies, presentations, addresses of welcome, introduction, etc., at which a few aptly chosen words are so necessary for the general comfort and pleasure. For even such times as these, a little training in public speaking may not come amiss.

The winter is again upon us. The long evenings are here. Why not, throughout all our rural communities, begin such training at once, a training which will not only facilitate the use of the tongue, but be of still deeper value as a stimulation to thought? Why not begin clubs—Literary Clubs, Debating Clubs, Mock Parliaments, name them what you will, provided they "bring out" the boys and young men, aye, and the old men, too—and teach them not only to acquire ideas, but to express them? Why not?

FARMER'S ADVOCATE. London.

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Bishop Vincent, of Baltimore, said in a speech before the Toronto Canadian Club:

"With the growth of both countries, the reasons multiply for the cultivation and the combination of mutual understanding and appreciation. Our wisest representatives believe that just and generous sentiment must reign in the hearts of both people. We may now and then tease each other in playful fashion with quips and jokes, but these are fruits of humor, the essence of which, as Carlyle says, 'is sensibility, warm, tender fellowship with all forms of existence.' I believe that the attitude of the people on both sides of the lakes is one of generous, big-hearted, habitual sympathy and confidence."