

children old enough to handle books should be not only permitted, but encouraged to take them down at pleasure. If there are any books not fit for the use of such children, they should be boxed up and put away, or sent to auction, or—probably best of all—burnt in the furnace fire.

Some children take to books, and to grave books, as naturally as ducklings take to water. But all children do not, and I would never leave a taste for reading to the chance of their doing so. I have no such respect for the free will of children; but I am willing—as Coleridge said—to prejudice my garden in favour of roses and strawberries. And, just as I teach my boy to swim, to ride on horseback, to drive well, and to row; just as I teach him to read and write and multiply and divide, I should teach him to like books. Nor should I take it for granted that he will like them of course, more than I should take it for granted that he will swim of course. Probably he will, in a house full of good books, as a boy will probably learn to swim if he lives near the sea. But I am not going to leave either choice to that probability. Precisely because he is my boy I make it certain that he can swim by teaching him to swim; and so I make it certain that he shall be fond of books by teaching him what is the range and what the joy of literature.

I am not at all above setting him easy stents in this matter. It is quite as well that he shall be made to begin where, of his own unbiassed choice, he would not have thought of it. The time comes when, even if he is not a bookish boy, he can be told squarely that a certain range of reading is essential to a gentleman in civilized life; that if he does not like it to-day he will to-morrow or next year; and that I wish him and expect him to read an hour a day in such and such books, which I point out to him.

I have known a boy who began—and thought it was by accident—on the local history of the neighbourhood, and followed it out in the range of the various publications of the historical clubs and societies till his interest in history was sure. This was not by accident, any more than it was by accident that the *Monitor* met the *Merrimac*. It was because a wise and watchful father took care to have the right books at hand in their country home, where the boy could study the Narragansett swamp fight on the ground if he chose. In that way if you really want to do it, you can take a boy's fondness for fish, or game, or flowers, or horses, or boats, or machinery, and put him in the way of improving himself in all these things by reading at first hand. Do not be particular. Do not worry if he skips. Do not expect him to take notes until you have shown him how. Do not ask him to talk too much about what he is reading. But let him see that you are interested, and encourage him in every way by sending anywhere within range for the books he wants, and by finding the people who are the best counsellors.

And here I return to the suggestion I threw out before, that reading aloud in the family is the best possible way to break in, and always proves a persuasion and temptation. There is a long period when a boy or girl does not read so easily but that the process itself is a burden. If you will read to him then, he will be very grateful to you, and you will form an appetite which he will never be rid of. I knew the mother of a family who read the *Waverley* Novels aloud five times, as her several children came old enough to hear. The hour after tea belonged to the boy or girl who was, say, nine or ten years old. That girl or boy had, so to speak, the right to hear mamma, or somebody read aloud. Well, you can read aloud any *Waverley* novel in a month, if you read an hour and a little more every evening. In the two years when each of these children claim this privilege, which their mother's perseverance gave them, they would read, each of them, with her, twenty of the best of those stories. They would talk them over with her. Probably they would not have read them alone. But by the time those two years were ended, and another child had the turn, the habit of reading and the love of reading were fully formed.—*E. E. Hale, in the Christian Union.*

THE LIFE OF A CANADIAN PEASANT.

The habitants, or peasants, are widely separated from the gentry; there seems to be no democratic, average level of society. But all classes are on the best of terms, sharing as they do the national contentment and gaiety. Their social life in winter presents the most characteristic features, but this unambitious people find time for their simple enjoyments at any season. The home of the habitant is the plainest and cheapest shelter demanded by comfort. But his social life presents more interesting features. In this class also one is struck by the fulness of social happiness and the mesqueness of external interests; for example, Mr. D—, the most intelligent and progressive farmer of the parish, and one of the foremost men of the country, reads no paper, and gets no information on even his speciality of agriculture. He learns less than an average farm labourer among us.

"But," I said to him, "how do you keep yourself posted on the improvements?"

"Why, we don't; we don't improve; that's all. We get along well enough as our fathers did."

"I should think your long winters would be a very enjoyable season for study. What do you all do with so much time?"

"Oh, we loaf and enjoy our pipes. But we also have to work. We get up at half past five, light the lanterns, and go to the barn to feed the stock. After breakfast, at half past seven, the two principal labours of winter are begun, viz., hauling wood to keep the house warm, and threshing grain to eat. Those who go far for wood start at four or five o'clock. We used to see forty or fifty sleds in a line going up the mountain at St. Pacome to our wood lots. When the wind blows we set the windmill going, and thresh grain in the barn. After smoking the after dinner pipe we saw wood or thresh or fan grain till the chores come again at half past four. After supper the men always go to visit a favourite neighbour—for the parish is somewhat divided into sets—until nine o'clock. The final visit to the barn, to bed and feed the stock, finishes the day. And we don't make much out of reading."

"What do the women do all winter?"
 "Oh, their work is never done. They, of course, keep about the same hours as the men. After making the fires and putting the breakfast and pea-soup to cook, they take the lantern and go to milk. After the breakfast, the washing of the children for school, and the sweeping are done, they sit down to spin, weave, or knit all day. Sometimes the dog may be harnessed to the little sled, and my wife rides over to a neighbour to make an evening call. But, as a rule, the women go out very seldom, excepting to the church. Of course, there are days of general scrubbing—with spruce boughs for the pleasant odour they give—of washing every three or four weeks; and seasons of special labours, as butchering before Christmas, when meats for six months are dressed, and frozen, either on the shelves of an outer room, or in boxes and barrels filled with snow. On Sunday the women must rise earlier than usual to get ready for mass at half past nine o'clock. Some families who live far from the church take their dinners with them, and eat them by a friend's stove while waiting for vespers, after which they may visit a little on the way home. Then in the fall there is the general preparation for winter, when some families move into the most sheltered end of the house, and give up the other as a store-room for wood, etc. There are also the special labours of cooking for Christmas-eve and New Year's, the carnival season, and so on."—*C. H. Farnham, in Harper's Magazine for February.*

I CLIMB TO REST.

Still must I climb, if I would rest;
 The bird soars upward to his nest;
 The young leaf on the tree-top high,
 Cradles itself within the sky.

The streams, that seem to hasten down,
 Return in clouds, the hills to crown;
 The plant arises from her root,
 To rock aloft her flower and fruit.

I cannot in the valley stay:
 The great horizons stretch away!
 The very cliffs that wall me round
 Are ladders unto higher ground.

To work—to rest—for each a time.
 I toil, but I must also climb.
 What soul was ever quite at ease
 Shut in by earthly boundaries?

I am not glad till I have known
 Life that can lift me from my own;
 A loftier level must be won:
 A mightier strength to lean upon.

And heaven draws near as I ascend:
 The breeze invites, the stars befriend,
 All things are beckoning to the Best;
 I climb to Thee, my God, for rest!

—*Lucy Larcom, February Cottage Hearth,*

A MINISTER'S EXPERIENCE WITH CHOIRS.

Is art a "service"? Does the exercise of it in divine worship partake of the spirit of the inspired counsel, "Whoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant"? This thrusting forward of a personality of display does not look like it. Once our alto asked me, as I was entering the pulpit, whether I had any objections to changing the closing hymn, for she was expecting some friends that evening and they could not come till late, and she wanted to sing a solo. And once, at a week-day funeral, our tenor crowded me even to my embarrassment with a request that he might be permitted to precede the arrival of the train of mourners with a vocal piece in the gallery, for he had just heard that two members of the music-committee of another congregation would be present, and he wished them to hear him, as he desired to secure the place of conductor there.

"Art's a service, mark!" But does it take the place of the rest of the service also? This entire discussion turns at once upon the answer to the question whether the choir, the organ, the tune-book, and the blower are for the sake of helping God's people worship Him, or whether the public assemblies of Christians are for the sake of an artistic regalement of listeners, the personal exhibition of musicians, or the advertisement of professional soloists who are competing for a salary.

In our travels, some of us have seen the old organ in a remote village of Germany on the case of which are carved in the ruggedness of Teutonic characters three mottoes: if they could be rendered from their terse poetry into English they would do valiant service in our times for all the singers and players together. Across the top of the key-board is this: "Thou playest here not for thyself, thou playest for the congregation; so the playing should elevate the heart, should be simple, earnest, and pure." Across above the right-hand row of stops is this: "The organ-tone must ever be adapted to the subject of the song; it is for thee, therefore, to read the hymn entirely through so as to catch its true spirit." Across above the left hand stops is this: "In order that thy playing shall not bring the singing into confusion, it is becoming that thou listen sometimes, and as thou hearest thou wilt be likelier to play as God's people sing."—*The Rev. Dr. Charles S. Robinson, in the February Century.*

PERMISSION to erect a monument to Luther at Riga has been refused by the Russian authorities.

W. H. MCGUNNIGLE, of Saginaw, Mich., has a gold watch in which a bullet is embedded. His father wore it in the Seven Days' battle, and just as an officer was congratulating him upon an escape and he was saying, "There's no rebel bullet for me," a Minie ball struck the watch. The momentum of the bullet was such as to break three of Mr. McGunnigle's ribs.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN NEWS.

It is thought no effective French movement in Tonquin will be possible before the end of February.

A CONFLAGRATION at Lourvig, Norway, destroyed sixty-two dwellings, causing a loss to the amount of \$250,000.

THE Spanish Government has prohibited the holding of a banquet on February 11th in honour of the Republic of 1873.

MR. WM. KIDSTON, of Ferniegair, has given £1,000 towards reduction of the debt on Hermitage Public School, Helensburgh.

MR. O'DONNELL, Home Rule M.P. for Dungarvon, intends at the close of the session to make a literary tour in the United States.

MR. E. ERSKINE HARPER, advocate, has been appointed Sheriff-substitute of Cuthness, in room of Sheriff Spittal, who has been transferred to Selkirk.

OVER Rothesay and the Island of Bute the whins and primroses are in full bloom, and in sheltered spots, especially at Ardmacish, the roses are blooming.

SINCE the commencement of the operation of the Parcels Post system, more than 200,000 parcels have been posted in Edinburgh and Leith, while 120,000 have been delivered.

THE Spanish Council of State has rejected the proposed new treaty of Commerce with England, on the ground that England did not grant enough in return for the advantages given her.

A BATCH of arrests has been made at St. Petersburg, consisting of a number of persons whose names were found in a list in the desk of the murdered Col. Soudeikin marked "dangerous."

MRS. JOHN ELDER has purchased North-park House, Hillhead, Glasgow, and intends it to be used as a college in connection with the Glasgow Association for the Higher Education of Women.

IN Wurtemberg the Minister of the Interior has ordered the police authorities to take care that no one of either sex under sixteen is permitted, except at wedding festivities, to dance in places of public amusement.

HENRY GEORGE, the notorious land agitator, is being very coldly received in his tour through England and Scotland, and is asserted to be very much disgusted with his lukewarm reception at the various places he has visited.

THE School Board of Dundee has resolved to make a representation to publishers and teachers against the use of the words "England" and "English," as though they were proper equivalents for "Britain" and "British."

BERLIN circles are still much agitated over the reported apparition of the White Lady of the Hohenzollerns, which, taken in connection with the indisposition of the Emperor, caused merely by a slight cold, excites apprehension.

THE entire income of the University of Cambridge is put down at £231,265 8s. 2d. Oxford has at least £100,000 more; but the two together made up but little more than half what Lord Dudley has received in one good colliery year.

THE inventory of the estate of the late Mr. Thomas Coats, of Paisley, shows personal estate amounting to over \$6,500,000. This does not include his real estate, nor any real or personal estate in America. He leaves no charitable bequests.

THE gardens of Under Cliff, Isle of Wight, are full of spring flowers. It is nothing uncommon for single carnations to go on blossoming there, throughout the winter, and for fuchsias to continue in flower out of doors long after mid-winter.

THE Herr Johan Frantz Luther heads a colony of Germans, 500 strong, who are on their way to southern California, where they will settle as farmers. They will not even plant vineyards, such is their hostility to all that can intoxicate.

A NASHVILLE merchant, speaking of women who will not buy goods on Friday, told a reporter also of a man who, if he meets a red-headed man when he starts for his business in the morning, immediately goes back to his home and takes a fresh start.

So mild is the weather in North Wales that primroses, honeysuckles, snowdrops and roses are to be found blooming in the valleys and on the hillsides. Vegetation in the low-lying districts is also fast springing into life, and in the Vale of Llangollen fruit trees are in bloom.

THE most remarkable, if not the largest, collection of photographs in the United States is owned by Detective Henry Weyl, of Philadelphia. It contains 2,000 pictures of "crooks," and with them are newspaper clippings describing them in their exploits, reports of trials, and other memoranda.

AT the last election for York, England, which was the first under the new Corrupt Practices Act, the expenses of Sir F. Milner, the successful Tory candidate, were \$4,000, and of Lockwood, Liberal, \$3,500. At the previous election James Lowther spent \$25,000 in an unsuccessful effort to keep his seat.

IT is said that Mr. Franz Lachner, until lately director of the Munich court orchestra, was asked by his successor, Hans Von Bulow, after a concert, if the orchestra had not done well. "Why shouldn't it?" was the reply. "An orchestra which I have directed for thirty years could scarcely be spoiled by you in two months."

A DIFFICULTY of a somewhat novel character has arisen between the Rev. Mr. G. T. Jamieson, of Portobello, and his kirk-session. A few weeks ago the Rev. G. T. Jamieson, Portobello, delivered a sermon in which he gave it as his opinion that no publican should be admitted a member of a Christian congregation, and he stated that, with the consent of the session, an applicant belonging to the trade had been refused admission.