

ladies do the entertaining one evening, and the gentlemen the next.

Now, the main thing is to have an object. Suppose we were to follow the teaching of "The Farmer's Advocate," and take up as an ideal the beautifying of our homes and community. How much might be done by a Rural Club toward this end if a number were to start the endeavor! Have a number of subjects for discussion bearing on topics relating to farm life, and get the members to give short addresses or papers on them.

To have an ideal Club, every member should be on hand to do his part. Do not stay home the night you are asked to do something. No matter if you cannot make a long speech, you can surely think of something to say, if it be only a few sentences. People meeting together once a month or oftener, and talking over events and experiences of country life, will lead a broader life, and have the old, rusty edges worn off sooner than those who live to themselves.

MAZZELE.

Middlesex Co., Ont.

How One Community Managed a Club.

Editor "Roundabout Club":

Seeing in the Roundabout Club suggestions for the conducting of an ideal Rural Club, I thought it might be interesting to give you the results of my experience with one which the young people of this neighborhood started last December. For several winters we had been attending a singing class, taught by one of the farmers in his own house. Much benefit and real instruction were derived from this, but some who were more fond of literary work than singing conceived the idea of starting a literary society, to meet every fortnight, which would leave the alternate week for the singing for those who wished to patronize it. Accordingly, after much foreboding and some adverse criticism, the society was started, with a membership of about forty, and has continued meeting regularly every fortnight till the last meeting, which was held one week after the previous one, as the singing class did not occupy the time allowed for it; and so strong has the interest and attendance become that it is now proposed to hold the meetings every Friday evening.

At the organization meeting there was much debate as to the place of meeting, some favoring the school-house, but it was finally decided to meet at the homes of the members. Of course, this limits the attendance to about the original number; but as they are all young people (no married ones attending regularly), and the same ones attending, they have naturally become well acquainted with each other, and look forward to the meeting as one of the events not to be missed, except through unavoidable circumstances. The membership is included in a radius of about two miles, including parts of three concessions, and its growth is only limited by the capacity of the homes in which we meet. The officers are Hon. President, President, Vice-President, and Secretary. As we have no expenses, there is no need for a treasurer. As we have the sympathy and goodwill of the community, we have had little trouble in securing the offer of houses in which to meet, provided the meeting is conducted in an orderly manner, and due care taken of the property of our host and hostess. Sometimes the young folk grow a little boisterous, and it is necessary to warn them of the consequences, but generally everything passes off satisfactorily.

As for the programme, we always have a debate on some subject of general interest, as "Country vs. Town," "Woman's Suffrage," "Canada's Navy," "Chinese Exclusion," etc., these being contested by six who have not previously debated. They are allowed to read their speech-

es, but, as marks are given for delivery, other things being equal, those who speak have an advantage. As yet, there has been little difficulty in securing debaters, and the quality of the debates has been steadily improving, and pronounced on all sides to be "very good." In addition, we have a critic appointed at every meeting to criticise the next meeting, and report at the meeting after. We also have plenty of music and singing, as almost every house has a piano and a singer in it. "Stump" speeches, essays, addresses on specified subjects, readings, recitations, dialogues (short), and discussion on the debate, make up the rest of the programme. The meeting is opened by united singing of some patriotic song, and closed with the National Anthem. The subject for debate is decided in open meeting two weeks ahead, and the programme is arranged by the programme committee for the next meeting before separating. An effort is made to mix the lighter material with heavier, such as extracts from the best poets and authors. We are now contemplating the production of a part of Shakespeare's tragedy of "Julius Caesar." Perth Co., Ont. J. H. BURNS.

[This paper, it will be remembered, was written last winter. We should be pleased to hear from Mr. Burns how the production of "Julius Caesar" succeeded.]

Some Suggestions for a Rural Club.

Editor "Roundabout Club":

The wheels of time move steadily on, and once again we realize that spring, summer and autumn, each in its turn, has passed, and winter is here—winter, with its short days and long, long nights.

Some, there may be, who look forward to this season of the year with very little pleasure, and such we sincerely pity, but he who is fond of books can certainly look forward with pleasure to various long evenings beside a cosy fire, with his favorite authors for companions.

However, no one cares for the same order of events night after night, so just now seems to be the ideal time to organize a rural club. The first question that naturally arises in regard to such a club, almost invariably is, "How shall we conduct our meetings to make them interesting, as well as profitable?" To answer such a question, I believe one must consider the taste of each of the members. Having done so, proceed to procure such literature as is best adapted to the majority. If they prefer to study poetry, get a book of poems. If nature study seems to be more favored, procure books on nature. But whatever is undertaken, let it be studied in a systematic way, so that at the close of the season it will be remembered.

It seems to me that an interesting way to conduct such a study class would be to prepare a set of questions for each night on a certain part of the book. Have sides chosen, and proceed like the old-fashioned spelling match, the contestants not knowing the nature of the prepared questions until asked.

Perhaps every three or four weeks (if the club meets weekly) a change might be made, in the form of a debate, choosing as subjects the leading questions of the day. If the members of the club are musical, a short musical programme might occasionally be added at the close.

Another suggestion which, I think, would make two or three of the meetings during the season interesting is to have impromptu speeches. For this, select probably a dozen subjects, distribute them to as many members, asking for a three-minute talk on each. These might be of a lighter nature, to relieve the other study.

Methinks such a club would be interesting, as well as instructive. "STARLIGHT."

Wentworth Co., Ont.

Make Use of the Country Schools.

Let us consider for a moment how little we use our country schools. A few years ago, over fifty pupils would be in attendance at an ordinary country school in the winter time. Full-grown young men and women would attend during the winter months, and many thus got a splendid equipment for the battle of life.

Now, if a boy or girl has not passed the Entrance at 12 or 13 years of age, and is able to attend a High School, he or she is ashamed to attend a public school. The result is that only a handful of small children are getting any benefit from the myriads of school buildings scattered all over the Province.

Get busy this winter, boys and girls, and use your schoolhouses. Start a Literary and Debating Society, a Farmers' Club, Reading Circle, or something of this kind. Get a training in public speaking, widen your range of reading, and develop the true social feeling among neighbors. JOHN D. MCGREGOR.
Halton Co., Ont.

Hope's Quiet Hour.

From Strength to Strength.

Blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee. . . . They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God.—Ps. 84: 5, 7.

A noble army—men and boys,

The matron and the maid;

Around the Saviour's throne rejoice,

In robes of light arrayed.

They climbed the steep ascent of heaven

Through peril, toil, and pain;

O, God, to us may grace be given

To follow in their train.

—Bishop R. Heber.

Did you ever realize that the life of an enthusiastic follower of the Master of the world is full of living, ever-growing interest? The other day I read a few verses in a magazine expressing the writer's evident opinion that life, which seemed rosy in youth, grew dull and flat and tasteless in middle age, sinking down wearily into the grave at last. If that is the best the world can give, then it is far wiser to seek a grander, nobler service. Our Leader Christ never offers a dull day or hour to His servants. If we choose to be dull and find life wearisome, it is our doing, not His. He offers pain and sorrow, without which we can never climb to the heights of courage and self-sacrificing love, but He offers always His own wonderful joy. How can any hour be dull when we may use it as a stepping-stone to climb from strength to strength? If it is filled with difficulties, then by conquering them our characters can be steadily strengthened, so that to-day finds us a little nearer God than we were yesterday, while to-morrow is bright with the prospect of mounting still nearer to the One Who is altogether lovely in the perfect beauty of holiness.

Did you ever hear anyone talk in a doleful fashion about the awful wickedness of human beings? I have. If I were not an optimist by disposition and by determination, quite sure that God made no mistake when He created man and gave him this world of beauty to live in, I might be converted to the pessimistic theory that mankind was going from weakness to weakness, instead of from strength to strength. Do you want statistics to convince you that the world is not growing worse, but better? Well, one very good test of a practical determination to do good is the test of dollars and cents. In 1909, the gifts to public institutions in the United States—institutions for the betterment of mankind—reached the high-water mark of one hundred and forty-one millions of dollars, forty millions more than the record of any previous year. These gifts reveal not only practical philanthropy, but also scientific, up-to-date philanthropy. The money is not carelessly and foolishly given, in a way which would injure the community by encouraging pauperism, but

is intended to help the poor to climb from strength to strength, mentally and physically. This is just a small fraction of the money expended in a single year by Christian nations for the purpose of helping mankind to climb. Many millions are given to missions abroad, and to the needy at home, and millions are poured out freely in the advancement of science. Do you think science is not practical Christianity? Sometimes it is. Our Lord went about doing good, setting sick people on their feet again so that they could do their work. Science is following in His footsteps in fighting disease to the death. Think of the thousands of deaths caused by malaria in the Isthmus of Panama, and the terrible ravages of yellow fever in New Orleans a few years ago. Science went to the fountain-head of the trouble, found that malaria was carried by one kind of mosquito and yellow fever by another. Then the breeding-places of the mosquitoes were destroyed by drainage, or poisoned by larvicide, a deadly war was declared against every mosquito, and now malaria is hardly known in Panama, or yellow fever in New Orleans. By scientific preventive measures, cholera and the plague are kept under control in Christian countries, so that an epidemic is a thing of the past.

Christianity has aroused the world to a new and divine opinion about the value of man and of men. God felt that it was worth while to offer the greatest conceivable Sacrifice in order to save mankind, and it is only in heathen countries that helpless babies, incurable patients, and aged men and women can be thrown out to die. Even the life of the incurably insane is shielded and made as comfortable as possible in the countries where Christ is King. Even men who do not own His claim to rule their lives are often captivated by His ideals and example. They may not have the joy of conscious fellowship with Him; but, as they climb from strength to strength in their pursuit of the highest life within their reach, they are—consciously or unconsciously—walking in His steps. He has told us beforehand that many will be surprised when He shall welcome them, saying: "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me in: Naked, and ye clothed Me: I was sick, and ye visited Me: I was in prison, and ye came unto Me. . . . Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me."

What is the chief business of each one of us every day? Is it not to climb from strength to strength until we appear before our God in heaven? In that delightful little book, "The Lady of the Decoration," the writer says that she did not object to the pain of burning herself with curling-irons, if only she could improve her appearance by having curly hair. She suggests that "crosses are the curling-irons of character," worth enduring if only the character can be improved through their means.

If we were allowed our own way we should probably choose the life that seemed easiest and most attractive to us—and then we could not understand the joy of One who has fought valiantly in Gethsemane, endured gloriously on Calvary, and passed through death's blackness fearlessly. He wants to call us "friends," to enter into full fellowship with us. How great are the possibilities He sees in each one of us when He desires our friendship! Shall we grudge any of the pain and loveliness which help us to understand our Divine Friend? We are not satisfied to remain on a low level, when there are infinite possibilities of climbing to the heights of glorious living held out by God to draw us onward and upward. But we can only climb one step at a time—and each step counts. The grand and important days of our lives are not the days when the world admires us most, but the days when God is pleased with our progress; not the days when we have received much, but the days when we have given cheerfully, looking for no return of gratitude or applause. One day we wasted in self-pity, another day we climbed higher by cheerily doing the work our Master offered. One day we slipped backward by encouraging dislike for