

labor, that to keep a boy at school, after he is twelve or thirteen years of age, is to alienate him from the farm, and enlist him into the vast army of those who live by their wits, and that the number of mere brain-workers thus created, and of whom the necessary force of hand-workers is thus depleted, is altogether beyond the requirements of the country. While I have no sympathy with the cry of over-education, and believe that the farmer's son can profitably know as much as is imparted to the son of the lawyer or the merchant, I must frankly acknowledge that it is difficult to combat, nay impossible to refute the statement, that too many of our young men, at least, leave the farm in search of an El Dorado which exists only in the pages of the poet or of their own, in this particular, too active brain. That some, who abandon the plough, succeed in finding wealth no farmer could hope for, or would care to enjoy, as the citizen enjoys, even if he found it; that many, flushed with the vigor of rural youth, have entered the professions, and secured a competency; that a few, reared on the old homestead of two or three generations, have reached the highest positions in the state, is beyond contradiction, and we lovers in country parts proudly point to such instances of the success of the country lad. But it is safe to say that a largely preponderating majority of those, who desert the farm for the city, commit a capital blunder, and that where one succeeds three absolutely fail in securing more than a tithe of the substantial happiness which rural life affords. Our cities teem with wrecks—with ill-paid clerks, broken-down merchants, briefless barristers, needy doctors, and graceless ne'er-do-weels, who followed their father's team when young, and who, had they stuck to the land, would have been comfortable and wealthy farmers now. The itch for something better—a valuable incentive to progress, and its most valuable aid when driving us along in the right path, and therefore not to be despised,—urged them from plenty to penury, induced them to gamble for stakes which but few win, and impelled them into a life for which they were totally unfitted. In too many of such instances, the little learning which the school-house afforded, had been a dangerous thing. Unaffrighted at the warning so pointedly conveyed to all who care to see it, seeing, as they fondly believe, a chance to escape the drudgery of the home-life, and the prospect of affluence without excessive labor, worried often by unappreciative surroundings, our farmers' sons are continually leaving a certainty for an uncertainty, and solid happiness for a mixture of bitter-sweet, and learn, before middle age comes, that they are on the wrong track, and would retrace their steps if that were possible. That young men should desert the farm, when they obtain that glimpse of the outer world which a smattering of education affords, is not surprising. Labor, in any form, unless there is some stimulant, some reward, present or prospective, is not in itself attractive to any, and especially to the young. Again and again—I was about to say almost everywhere, but that statement would probably be of too sweeping a character,—we see how the farmer's son does the work of the hired man, without the opportunities and remuneration of the hired man. It is very well for a parent to assert, as many do, that, until a young man is of age, he cannot legally or reasonably expect wages, from his father, but if by working for others that young man can earn more than board and clothing, and gratify the little tastes, call them "fancies" if you will, which raise him above the animal, and which