

remarkable results. Into whatever part of the corn-field this wash of the barn-yard was carried by the the spring rains, it bore with it so stimulating a vigor that there the corn came popping up out of the ground in advance of all other places. In addition to coming up earlier, the corn was evidently stronger and healthier, presenting a deeper tinge of green throughout the season. It refused to turn yellow under a succession of cold days and colder nights, though all the other plants became pale and spindling. Many of the hills showed double the number of ears, than the others produced.

The boys could not fail to notice these things from the start. The weeds came in to share in this general feast of fat things. As this had been a neglected spot, so there the weeds had been allowed for many years, to grow and ripen their seeds. These seeds, now fed by ten times their usual supply of nourishment, sprang up rapidly and thickly in proportion. Every dormant germ seemed to put on vitality under the quickening influence. Varieties now vegetated which had not been seen on that place for many years. These numerous pests had evidently started with a determination to dispute with the corn for undisturbed possession of the ground. Had they encountered no opposition, they would have quickly smothered the whole crop.

But as they multiplied, so did the labors of the boys increase in subduing them. Uncle Benny was compelled to spend much of his time in keeping this crop clean. He had set out to raise corn, not weeds. Moreover, he had a stake in it as well as the boys. But while working with his hoe around the corn-hills, he was never tired of admiring the surprising difference between the half-acre upon which the barn-yard had been emptied and that of the remainder of the field. The latter was good, but the former was magnificent. It maintained its superiority throughout the season, the roots striking into the earth so widely and deeply as to hold up the stalks in a heavy August storm which prostrated half of the others.

It afforded, moreover, too striking an illustration of the theory and practice of applying manure, to be overlooked. The boys, frequently working in the cornfield, came to understand clearly how it was that a plant grew almost wholly by virtue of the liquids that were supplied to its roots, and not by merely undecomposed manure. They knew well that rain-water was a good thing, but here they saw that, when the barn-yard extracts were mingled with the rain, the mixture was the true food for plants. So clearly were they made to comprehend this formula, that they regretted a hundred times their inability to bring a larger portion of the cornfield within convenient distance of the barn-yard.

Poetry.

THE RATS.

When I'm sitting
At my knitting
After tea—
Deary me!
Such commotion,
Land o' Goshen!
And it's all
In the wall.

Rumble, tumble,
Flurry, scurry,
Now a rushing,
And a crushing,
Now a rattle,
And a battle,
Now a squeak
And a fall.

So I sit
And I knit;
And I ponder
And wonder,
And scarcely know how,
In the racket and row,
My wits to recall.

But the clatter,
For that matter,
And the rumble
And tumble
And scratching
And catching
Keep on
Through it all.

Rats in dozens,
With their cousins,
Or in droves,
With their loves,
Now it's raps,
Now it's taps,
Or it's crunching,
Or munching.

Or a creak,
Or a shriek,
If I knew
What to do,
Or you'd show
Where to go,
I'd be off
Like a streak.

But no, I must stay
While they clamor away.
Traps, cats,
Sticks or rats,
Bane or gun,
It's all one.
No, it's fudge,
They won't budge!

Rats are rats,
Spite of cats
And the rest.
But—my star!—
Beginning or end,
Or middle, depend
The things are a pest.
And they're all
In the wall,
So they are!—*Earth and Home.*

Music.

We must still ask the indulgence of our readers in the matter of Music, as we have not yet succeeded in making the necessary arrangements for this department. It is our hope that they will be completed by next issue.