

LITERARY AND MUTUAL IMPROVEMENT SOCIETY.

(Continued from page 8.)

THE COUNTRY WITHIN FIVE MILES OF WHERE I LIVE.

ALBERT E. YOUNG. Age 12, Party, 95.

The country where I live is very fine; it is a very fertile part of the country, as we can raise almost any kind of fruit and grain. The principal kind of grain we raise is wheat, oats, peas, corn and potatoes, and of fruit we raise strawberries, raspberries, currants, but our chief fruit is apples. These are the staple articles.

We have no market town nearer than Tilsonburgh or Norwich. Our village or post office is Hawtrey. It is quite a stirring little place; it has two railroads running through it—the M.C.R., one of the finest roads in the country, and the Port Dover Branch of the G.T.R. The people of the country are of nearly every nationality; there are English, Irish, Scotch, Germans, and not excepting a few of the African and Indian race, but a great many are of Canadian birth. The length of time the country has been settled I am not prepared to state. They say it has been settled a great many years.

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We shall be glad to supply copies of the undermentioned standard works of poetry and prose to any of our boys or girls at the rate of six volumes for 25 cents, this being the cost of the "Penny Volumes," after paying carriage across the ocean, customs duty, and postage from Toronto:

PENNY POETS.

- *Macaulay's "Lays of Ancient Rome."
- *Scott's "Marmion."
- Burns' Poems (selections).
- *Longfellow's "Evangeline," etc.
- *Milton's "Paradise Lost," Part I.
- " " " " " Part II.
- Scott's "Lady of the Lake."
- Shakespeare's "Julius Cæsar."
- *Pope's "Essay on Man."
- *Tom Hood's Poems, Grave and Gay.
- *Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner," etc.
- *Some Ingoldsby Legends.
- Scott's "Lay of the Last Minstrel."
- *Poems of Wordsworth, Part I.
- " Cowper.
- " Dryden.
- " Wordsworth, Part II.
- * " Mrs. Hemans and Eliza Cook.
- " Gray and Goldsmith.
- " Longfellow, Part II.

PENNY POPULAR WORKS OF FICTION.

- "She," by Rider Haggard.
- * "Little Em'ly" (from David Copperfield, by Chas. Dickens).
- "Ben Hur," by Gen. Lew Wallace.
- "It is Never Too Late To Mend," by Chas. Reade.
- "Mary Burton," by Mrs. Gaskell.
- * "The Tower of London," by Harrison Ainsworth.
- * "The Last Days of Pompeii," by Bulwer Lytton.
- "Jean Eyre," by Charlotte Bronte.
- * "Hypatia," by Charles Kingsley.
- * "Charles O'Malley," by Charles Lever.
- "Uncle Tom's Cabin."
- * Lord Macaulay's History of England, from earliest times to 1660.

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In a most useful little text-book, entitled "The Highways of Literature; or, What to Read and How to Read," the author, David Pryde, M.A., LL.D., an English Professor, and a great authority on such subjects, lays down several principles which should be followed by

those desirous of deriving the greatest possible benefit from their reading. Summarized, the principles upon which Dr. Pryde insists so strongly are:

I. "Before you begin to peruse a book, know something about the author." It is not always possible to do this unless, as is not infrequently the case with works of deceased authors, a short biographical sketch is added to the volume. The advantage of this is at once apparent. Dr. Pryde says: "When you read a work written by a person you know, you are far more interested in it than in a stranger's book. You imagine you hear him speaking, and you see more in many allusions than you would otherwise have done."

II. "Read the preface carefully." "In the preface the author takes us, as it were, into his confidence, and describes to us his motives for writing the book, and his reasons for making it what it is." We would liken the preface to what is called an appetizer.

III. "Take a comprehensive survey of the table of contents." If the preface is the appetizer, the table of contents is the bill of fare. It gives us a full plan of the feast that is to follow and enables us to determine what articles we should avoid, and for what articles we should reserve our energies.

IV. "Give your WHOLE attention to whatever you read." In order to understand it, we must shut out our own circumstances, cast off our own personal identity, and lose ourselves in the writer before us."

V. "Be sure to note the most valuable passages as you read." "If the keeping of a notebook be a care too harassing for you, then, if the book be your own, write your notes on the margin with a pencil."

VI. "Write out in your own language a summary of the facts you have noted." "It is not enough to note several random particulars. These particulars will float about for some time in a disconnected way in your memory and then be lost. You must arrange them after a method of your own. The arrangement of them after your own method will make them more completely your own; the expressing of them in your own words will make them much more clear and definite; and the mere fact of writing them down will fix them more securely in your memory."

VII. "Apply the results of your reading to your every-day duties."

If our friends, who are co-operating with us in our work of mutual improvement, will follow the rules laid down by so eminent an authority as Dr. Pryde, they will soon find that they are well repaid for the slight extra trouble entailed. We suggest that some of our friends send us, from time to time, a short summary of the facts they have noted in some book they have recently read.

NOTES OF A SERMON.

"Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily."—Col. iii: 23.

Whatsoe'er you find to do,
Do it, boys, with all your might;
Never be a little true,
Or a little in the right.
"Trifles" even lead to Heaven,
"Trifles" form the life of man:
So in all things, great and small things,
Be as thorough as you can.

Spotless truth and honour bright!
Let no spot their surface dim!
I'd not give a fig for him
Who says any lie is white!
He who falters, twists and alters
Little items when we speak,
May deceive me, but believe me
In himself he is a sneak.

Help the weak, if you are strong,
Love the old if you are young,
Own a fault if you are wrong,
When you're angry, hold your tongue.
In each duty lies a beauty,
If your eyes you do not shut;
Just as surely and securely
As the kernel in a nut.

Love with all your heart and soul,
Love with eye and ear and touch!
That's the moral of the whole,
You can never love too much.
'Tis the glory of the story
In our babyhood begun:
Hearts without it (never doubt it)
Are as worlds without a sun.

If you think a word will please,
Say it, if it is but true:
Words may give delight with ease,
When no act is asked from you.
Words may often soothe and soften,
Gild a joy or heal a pain,
They are treasures, yielding pleasures
It is wicked to retain.

Whatsoe'er you find to do
Do it, then, with all your might;
Let your prayers be strong and true—
Prayer, my lads, will keep you right.
Pray in all things, great and small things,
Like a Christian gentleman,
And for ever, now or never
Be as thorough as you can.

E. G. O.

FARMING COMMUNITIES IN VILLAGES.

John Bookwalter, of New York, a large land owner in Nebraska, Illinois and Ohio, proposes a plan to make life on the farm more attractive, and perhaps to make farm work more remunerative. His idea was obtained from observations in the rural districts of France and Switzerland, and may be productive of much good. It is simply to concentrate the rural population in villages of 500 to 5,000 persons, to give them the advantages of social life and modern luxuries and amusements. Mr. Bookwalter will begin on a 60,000 acre tract he owns in Nebraska, and proposes to organize a town with theatre, music hall, library and other advantages.

In France, as is well known, the rural population is grouped in villages, the farms radiating in narrow strips from the town in the centre. Mr. Bookwalter claims nothing new for his idea, but thinks the French villages may be improved upon in this rich, new country, where large acreage may be laid out with the village idea, instead of growing by subdivision. There is no doubt the centring of population in this way would add greatly to the attractiveness of life on the farm. The social contact is one of the chief attractions of the city. Neither can there be much doubt that such community of the rural population would give it greater influence in state and national affairs, in legislation and administration. It would naturally lead to better sanitary conditions, to conveniences, to police and fire protection that are now lacking in the widely separated farm houses, and all this without detracting from the advantages of rural surroundings, such as trees, flowers, and the supply of the best and freshest that the garden, dairy, orchard and farm can produce.