

ANNUAL DINNER.

ABOUT forty ladies and gentlemen gathered in the dining room, and after due attention had been given to the bounteous spread, the PRESIDENT called the company to order, and remarked that in former times on such occasions it was customary to pass around something to sharpen the wits, with the result of giving only stupidity. To-night he hoped we had reason and eloquence enough to make this reunion profitable and entertaining without any such stimulants.

The one toast this evening was to the Queen, which was heartily drank in cold water, the company singing the National Anthem.

The PRESIDENT then called for the following paper by Mr. S. C. PARKER. Owing to the unavoidable absence of Mr. Parker his paper was read by E. A. Read :

SHALL THE BOY LEAVE THE FARM?

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen—

Among the questions of the day that are commanding the attention of statesmen and political economists in the New England States and the Maritime Provinces of our own Dominion, few are of more interest, none are more difficult of solution, than the problem of how to overcome the obvious tendency of the rural districts towards the cities and city life. Across the border scarcely a newspaper but contains more or less reference to the deserted farms of New England, and the statesmen are studying, and the editorial mind is racked, to make suggestions and provide schemes for repopulating the deserted districts, and stemming the steady tide that is draining the best blood of rural New England and flooding the factories, the counting rooms, and every department of city labor with the hardy country life.

In our own Province we find the same problem confronting us ; on the mountains and in the less favored districts the young people are leaving *en masse*, families are broken up, farms are deserted, and it only remains for the old to die, and certain parts of the Provinces will assume the condition of the primeval forest. Even in this beautiful valley, the garden of our great Dominion, a land that for productiveness, climate and beauty, will compare favorably with any under the sun, you will find the tendency of the young men, and