

TALKS WITH APPRENTICES.

Apprenticeship, twenty-five or thirty years ago, was something very different from what it is now. The lad who desired to learn a trade found little difficulty in obtaining a situation, and generally he was provided with an agreeable home in the family of his employer. It is not the custom now-a-days to take the boy into the family, for, in truth, the family too frequently does not care to recognize the shop. Between it and the bench and lathe, and forge, there is an impassable gulf.

An honest, industrious, and well-disposed boy, who goes out from his quiet home to cast his lot among strangers, in order that he may learn to become a skilled workman in some branch of useful industry, has rather a hard time of it. First, he is lonely—inexpressibly so; and to make his case worse, he is considered the lawful prey of every older boy, and the jesting-stock of thoughtless workmen. Accustomed to kind treatment, and to more or less of the refinements of a home, he is now compelled to submit to rough usage, and sometimes to treatment that is absolutely brutal. If he is quiet and good-natured, or if he has sufficient well-disciplined muscle to compel the older boys to respect him, he will make his way in the shop. But what is he to do with himself nights and Sundays?

We write these lines in the hope of being able to give some acceptable advice to the boys regarding this very question; advice which, if they will heed and follow, may prove in the end a mine of wealth to them. Not that it will make them rich in money; but, rather, in things that money cannot buy.

Nights and Sundays! Well, indeed, who would suppose it possible for a boy to find it difficult to dispose of his leisure hours? But we speak of the boy fresh from home, and commencing life among strangers. A little later on, after he has made acquaintances, and his notions as to what a boy ought to be in character and life have undergone somewhat of a change, we fancy he will not be lonely. The chances are that he will then do just as the majority of other boys—spend his time without profit to himself, and in a way that works him permanent harm. And we may as well say right here, that if the boy who reads these lines has got into the habit of roaming about the town nights and Sundays, and is unhappy without his pipe and beer; if he goes to every place of amusement his purse will allow, and sets great store on a round at whist or euchre, and other games; in short, if he has learned how to idle away his priceless hours of leisure, then what we say will scarcely be of benefit to him. But let us get back to our boy fresh from home.

About the first task set before him after securing a situation will be the selection of a place to board. He will be directed to a boarding-house, and, very likely, requested to occupy a room in company with others. Here he must make his first fight. His whole future depends on his stubborn resistance to any such arrangement. What he wants is a room entirely to himself, and this he must make every possible effort to secure, even though he be compelled to select an unfurnished garret in a rickety old house. And he must find a room with a chimney in it—if there is a fireplace, so much the better, for our boy will require fire.

Here let him pitch his tent, and make up his mind to call this dreary place home; for dreary enough it will be for some time to come. But there will be a certain sort of independence about this arrangement, and it admits of a start being made towards perfect freedom from any dependence for rest and pleasure on one's outside surroundings. Let him bear in

mind, too, the importance of a fire, for it will always give him a welcome in the long winter evenings; and coming in late, he will often be able to spend a pleasant hour, book in hand, that otherwise would be lost in sleep.

Domiciled in this little room, though poor in purse, he will begin to set about furnishing it. At first a rough table, a chair for himself, and one for a chance guest, will be all that he requires. He will get out his little store of books and writing materials, and photographs of the dear ones at home, with what few keepsakes he may have; arranging these on his table, he begins life. If he works in wood, it will not be a long time before he will be able to add a few articles of furniture that will be useful as well as ornamental. Whatever he can get the time to manufacture he will have a place for, and he will know how to appreciate its value. As the days go by he will continue to add to his possessions. He will pick up now and then a choice engraving, or a pair of vases, and get a carpet on his floor. There will be growing plants in his window, and a canary to sing him welcome when he comes in after his day's work is done. We draw this picture in order to show that there is no absolute necessity for him to room with a lot of rough fellows unless he chooses to do so. If he can find a pleasant room, furnished, where he can have a fire and be by himself, so much the better; if not, let him hunt for an attic, nor rest until he find it.

Now, having seen our young friend settled, and ready to begin the years of his apprenticeship, the subject grows upon us; and we feel inclined to not be content with telling him what to do during his hours of leisure, but to talk with him on a variety of subjects; so it seems to be necessary that this article should prove the first of a series. In our next we will endeavour to tell him something about what proportion of his leisure hours should be spent in his room, and how to pass them with profit and real pleasure. And he must not get the idea into his head that we desire to make of him an anchorite, for nothing is further from our thought. We will talk to him of companionships and amusements, for we believe a good deal in the latter—"all work and no play makes jack a dull boy,"—and of many other things that we think will profit and please him.

American Builder.

The Process of Cremation suggests a means to solve the serious question, what shall be done with the street refuse and garbage. An analysis of collections from 13 representative districts give the following average results:

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| Water..... | 3.032 per cent. |
| Nitrogen..... | 0.369 " |
| Combustible material..... | 28.454 " |
| Incombustible material..... | 68.514 " |

Prof. Chandler, President of the Board of Health, suggests that a system of garbage cremation in furnaces similar to those in the manufacture of shell-lime. It is said that 200 tons of refuse and garbage can be cremated and rendered innocuous in 24 hours. Such a system would involve less cost than conveying it to deep-water, and be far more consistent with the demands of civilization and public safety.—*Am. Architect.*

An Improved Foot-Bellows are proposed take the place of the old fashioned hand-bellows. They are set end to end on a platform and connected with a strap, so that when one is in a state of collapse the other is full, thus keeping up a continuous current at all times.