



Life, Literature and Education.

[Contributions on all subjects of popular interest are always welcome in this Department.]

BOB-O-LINK.

Verdant meadows make me think
Of the merry Bob-o-link,
And the cheerful, happy days of childhood time;
We were friendly, Bob and I.
Would you know the reason why?
Would you listen while I try
To explain it in a simple little rhyme?

When a lad, I learned his tune,
In the pleasant days of June,
As I used to drive the cattle morn and night;
From the fields of fragrant hay,
He would rise and soar away,
Ever trilling the same lay,
And he always seemed so happy in his flight.

Bob-o-link could soar and sing;
He could use his voice and wing;
These were his powers with which to please and charm,
And while I was often sad,
Yet he always seemed so glad,
Using just the powers he had,
That I loved and tried to shield him from all harm.

If life's pleasures you would drink,
Imitate the Bob-o-link;
Every talent God has given you employ;
Take the blessed Saviour's plan;
Cheer and bless your fellow man;
Make life glad as you can;
Help to fill the world with songs of love and joy.

—Rusticus.

PEOPLE, BOOKS AND DOINGS.

Lord Cromer has written a two-volume account entitled "Modern Egypt," of his stewardship in the country of the Nile. The books cover the history of Egypt and the Soudan since 1876, an especially interesting portion dealing with the career of General "Chinese" Gordon.

The remains of the great Swedish teacher, Swedenborg, which have rested for 136 years at the Swedish Church, Prince's Square, London, Eng., are shortly to be transferred to Sweden. A few years ago, application for the removal was refused by the English Government, but now that the Swedish Government itself has taken the matter in hand, the request has been granted.

On May 25th, M. Fallieres, President of France, arrived in London on a four-days' visit to King Edward. He was met at the station by the King, the Prince of Wales, and other members of the royal family, Sir Edward Grey, Mr. Asquith and others. A procession of state carriages, with postillions, escorted him to St. James' Palace, and the large crowds that lined the streets gave him an enthusiastic welcome. During his stay he was presented with an address of welcome by the Mayor and Corporation of Dover; visited the Franco-British Exhibition; held a

reception at St. James' Palace; had luncheon at the Guildhall, and attended a gala performance at Covent Garden, besides numerous other functions.

The Old Curiosity Shop, familiar to lovers of Dickens, was offered for sale, but as the bidding only reached \$30,000, the property was withdrawn.

Claude Monet, the great French painter, of the impressionist school, came to the conclusion that his paintings for the last three years were not worthy of him, and, with knife and paint-brush, he destroyed them all. Critics say that they were amongst the best work he has produced, and that they represented a market value of a hundred thousand dollars.

It is reported that the King has expressed a desire to hear a sermon from the youngest Bishop of the Anglican Church during the approaching Pan-Anglican Conference. The place of honor is held by Dr. Richardson, recently-appointed Bishop of Frederickton, N. B. He will preach a sermon to children in St. Paul's Cathedral, London, Eng., at which the King proposes to be present.

In the course of a special sermon preached on April 26th to St. George's Society, Montreal, in Christ Church Cathedral, by the Rev. Dr. Symonds, several phases of the immigration problem were dealt with. The first principle Dr. Symonds laid down was that no country belonged absolutely to the people who lived in it; but it was theirs to administer for the public weal. At the present time our land was not occupied. It was probably well within the mark to say that Canada could support from 50,000,000 to 75,000,000 of people. The population was not more than 7,000,000. By the same right that our forefathers occupied the country, others had the right to come here and find for themselves and their children a living. Immigration, then, was to be encouraged, not simply upon material grounds, but upon higher grounds of altruism. But it did not follow that all were to be admitted indiscriminately, the healthy and the diseased, the law-abiding and the criminal, the virtuous and the vicious. In the application of this principle, two extremes were to be avoided. On the one hand, the extreme of exclusiveness; and on the other, the extreme of indifference. What we wanted in Canada was good citizens, by which he did not mean simply law-abiding or industrious people, but men who would settle in this country, men who could and would be in the course of time assimilated to us, whose children, at any rate, would be Canadians.—[Canadian Life and Resources.]

HOW, RATHER THAN HOW MUCH.

The true lover of literature is not likely to spend much time on trash. The merely mediocre he may tolerate for the odd bits of worth scattered through it, but trash repels him as would poison. He recognizes it instantly, missing at once that indefinable something which makes the difference between good literature and that which is not "good."

And yet, a great many people waste

much valuable time, even when reading good literature—not that the literature is at fault, but by simple reason of hurrying over it too rapidly. If the subject be at all abstract or abstruse, they rush on from point to point, fondly imagining that they are being "educated," yet never once stopping to consider as to the possible "other" side of the matter, or to follow out any offshoot of thought which may be suggested. The time is, of course, not entirely thrown away—a few ideas must cling and possibly develop—but such reading cannot yield the richest harvest. Again, in reading fiction, how many there are who read simply for the sake of the "story," hurrying feverishly through to see whether the "heroine" really did marry the "hero," or whether Mr. So-and-So became reconciled to his wife—never dreaming that in the race they are losing much of that which has given the book its claim to greatness, the true literary flavor, the bits of description—veritable pastels in prose—the clever working out of character, or skillful delineation and consistency of "characters," wherein lies power.

Such readers are often given credit for being "well-read," but not by the discerning. After all, it is not how much, but how one reads that counts. Only by thoughtful, even critical, reading can one ever become a true judge of literature; and he who cannot distinguish between a good book or article and a poor one, loses more, perhaps lacks more, than he thinks. Is there anything more pitiful, more amusingly pitiful, to the true lover of good literature than to hear one of these "great readers" recommending the trashy or waxing enthusiastic over the mediocre in books?

Whatever we read, the main consideration is to read "thoughtfully." Then, and only then, may we assimilate what is good for us, reject what is not for us, and gain in mental strength and acumen.

COUREUR DE BOIS.

ONTARIO'S REPLY TO THE LADY FROM NOVA SCOTIA.

Canada will undoubtedly become one of the greatest civilized countries the world has ever known, and "Ontario Leads" is no illusion. Should "Nova Scotia Farmer's Wife" avail herself of the opportunity of attending our Canadian National Exhibition, Toronto; Western Fair, London; or Winter Fair, Guelph, she would be convinced that those well-groomed men she met at Amherst really represented the farmers of our Province.

Mr. J. H. Burns, in "Rural Districts Should be the First Care," April 9th issue, does not give so optimistic a view of the farm life as we should like, but some of his statements have been rather unfairly criticised. When he says the farmer cannot enjoy the "luxury of a bath," he surely does not infer that farmers "won't wash themselves"? Even the lower classes referred to by "A Sidney Farmer's Wife" are not so degraded. In our township, and I believe we are average Ontario citizens, the farmer is well acquainted with current events, and can converse on politics, business and trade

with a self-confidence born of wide knowledge, and he certainly does not "fight shy of soap and water." Some, but not the majority, have bath-tubs installed, as described by S. J. C., April 23rd issue. It would be helpful and profitable to intending builders if "The Farmer's Advocate" should find space for other such instructive letters bearing on the same subject. Personally, we believe the plan submitted very practicable, and mean to preserve it for future use.

As to exchange of help, we know young farmers near town who, with their teams, spend a part of each winter in the city. Many young men, students of Collegiate Institutes or those earning their way through college, are glad of an opportunity of a few months' work on the farm. For those who can enjoy winter's recreation, our social gatherings, concerts, Institute meetings, debating societies, rural telephone, daily mail, make life in the country not unbearable, but pleasant—very pleasant.

I heartily agree with Nova Scotia Farmer's Wife: "If farmers think they are sat upon, all they need to do is to rise up." They are, indeed, a mighty mass; and if, in marking their ballots, they would forget the time-worn Grit and Tory feud, and vote for farmers who have pledged themselves to work in the interests of temperance and rural districts, our country would make more rapid strides than ever before, and autos would be carrying farmers to market and church, instead of being banished from our highways.

If we do need to work hard and often during long hours, what successful business or professional man does not need to do likewise? In return, we have the delicious products of the maple, the luscious strawberries, the juicy raspberry, the cherry, the peach, the apple, and garden vegetables of the freshest and finest quality.

M. E. B.
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THE SPIRIT IN THE WORK.

A man who knows the principles of science has his imagination awakened to the vastness of our environment. He knows, for instance, on the one hand, through his study of bacteriology and physics, how minute are the constructions of the universe; and, on the other hand, when he turns his eyes to the heavens, he is aware how vast are the distances, how great is the sweep of the law, and that, from these greatest things, down to the least and invisible, there is the one underlying order, and that this order, I believe you all recognize, is a moral order. A man who goes with such a spirit as this out into his daily work, is more than a drudge, and he finds in his work a means of education. His day's toil, as he goes to it in the morning and returns in the evening, becomes to him a means of elevating him; he is not merely lost in the routine of things, but he is stirred to nobler thoughts, and he discovers, as the days pass, that, through the instrumentality of his daily toil, he is developing within him those things that are permanent, those things that set him above the daily toil, and that make