

darning, with each stitch weaving cross-threads of a mother's unending care and unerring skill. One daughter, with deft fingers, is arranging one of the many little decorations which beautify home, while another pores over a book or paper.

Such is a picture of a farmers' home enjoyment, not, indeed, as it is always found, nor yet an ideal one; yet, albeit, the apparent aimlessness of purpose, happy the home, comparatively speaking, where it is even generally found. By the home fireside a boy usually learns no evil. There are darker phases of the way in which farmers spend their evenings. Why does that moral plague spot, the village tavern, at times give forth sounds of profanity and brawling? Why do the as yet innocent boys draw near its door? Why is the village store or shop, evening after evening, crowded with representatives of every home in the neighborhood? Why, night after night, until well-nigh in the morning-dawn, do the sons and daughters of country homes mis-spend their youthful hours and golden opportunities? Why is it that a mother's life is saddened and her life burdened because of the waywardness of some erring one? Why is it that the day of rest is a day of extreme weariness, if not altogether profaned by visiting, driving, &c.? Why? In answer, I would not lay the whole blame on mis-spent evenings, but I do claim, and I think justly so, that much of it may be attributed to the way in which farmers spend their evenings. Such being the case, the question then comes most pointedly, "How should farmers spend their evenings?" The question being so broad, and the space too limited to admit of details, I must for the present confine myself to general principles. We must bear in mind that there should be a due proportion of edification and recreation, for both are essential to physical, mental, and moral development of boys and girls on the verge of manhood and womanhood.

As a first means, then, to the proper spending of the evening hours, we would suggest *reading*. Any father, any mother worthy of the name, cannot but be pleased to see their children in good company. In books we find the best embodiments of great men's thoughts. We mingle with their authors, loving them as familiar friends. Can better society be desired than McCauley, Ruskin, Tennyson, Longfellow, Bryant, Browning, Pope, Bacon, Spencer, Hugh Miller, Chalmers, and many others? Dickens, with admirable portrayal of character, draws aside the curtain which shuts us out from our fellow travellers, while Scott weaves such a web of history, romance and landscape, that the reader is entangled ere he is aware. Current periodicals can be obtained at a cost which would not pay for a "fragrant(?) Havana"; works of popular authors, pure in tone, lofty in sentiment, and comprehensible by average minds, for recreative reading, are available in every farmer's home, while agricultural journals should receive the cordial and unanimous support of the class whose cause they espouse, and whose interests they defend. Not to patronise their advocates betrays short-sightedness on the part of the farmers. With all due deference to the intelligence of the yeomanry, I would suggest a "Manual of Common Politeness" as a further addition to a

farmer's library. If a farmer's work is at times rough, that is no reason why his manner should be uncouth. If in his daily work he has to employ a shovel, that is no reason why he should literally *shovel* his food to his mouth. It is painful at times to observe the total lack of culture in a gathering of country youths. In intellectual endowment (lacking only in development), in kindness of heart, in nobleness of purpose, in purity of words, they can compare very favorably with their city cousins; but why this lack of minor attention to their mothers and sisters? Why those discolored, neglected teeth?—(remember again a brush can be purchased at less cost than a No. 1 cigar)—those untrimmed nails, and coat inclined to a crescent-shape from stooping shoulders? The result of habit in many instances. But I digress, and saying that in all reading it is more profitable to read a few books well than many carelessly, I proceed to the second point.

Next to reading, and as an assistance to it, I would suggest *music*. Not so easily obtained as books, perhaps, yet quite obtainable in the ordinary farmer's home. The paper editions of standard literature are only equalled by the five-cent sheet music. When eyes have to be rubbed and the yawn becomes infectious, let books be laid aside and the evenings enlivened by vocal and instrumental strains.

Long after the boys and girls of the old homestead have scattered, when their homes, if not their graves, shall be separated by "mountain, stream, and sea," tender will be the memories of those evening hours. The songs and hymns of early days link the heart to the home by a chain so strong, an influence so potent, that even in the ages to come chord with chord will vibrate, and reunited families will remember with joy the music of other days.

If the youngsters at times grow uproarious, let them expend their buoyancy of spirit. Perfect development is attained, not by curbing, but by guiding; a good gardener will not cut away a vigorous shoot because it inclines to grow away; he will train it while yet of tender growth.

As a third means to the pleasant and profitable spending of evenings I would suggest *social intercourse*. Interchange of ideas assist in the development of the mind, while that ease of manner and readiness of expression we admire in the cultured circles can only be obtained by contact with society. We farmers, as a class, are deplorably lacking in this respect. Who has not been at gatherings in the country where, the weather, the crops, and the local items, worn threadbare, the silence became first awkward, then embarrassing, and finally positively painful, the oppressive feeling in no degree lessened by the occasional whisper from those who, though rude, are often unconsciously so.

To obviate these difficulties, there are many games, requiring a moderate amount of mental ability or physical dexterity, which may profitably be introduced, while the reading and music before mentioned can be most happily utilized. Fair reading or reciting, as well as music, is ever a source of pleasure. Short selections, however, are best for all, save professionals in either art. I think outdoor amusement, such as skating, coasting, &c., could be

indulged in occasionally. There is a danger, however, of devoting too much time to these things. If physical or mental well-being demands much exercise, the time is not wasted when spent thus. If indulged in solely to pass the time, then that which is in itself innocent, becomes sinful. Is proof demanded? "Live Redeeming the Time." Each sunset that bathes the landscape in golden glories, and hallows the twilight hour, returns not again; the moments of this one life once gone are gone forever—*forever*.

A fourth means as to the manner in which farmers should spend their evenings I beg to suggest before I close. It differs materially from the others in one particular; while they can be laid down as a basis of general conduct, subject to occasional interruptions, it can and should be always observed. With such an inimitable description of the means referred to from pen of immortal fame, I would not mar the exquisite picture with untrained brush. Silently bowing "Good-Night," I leave a master hand to paint:—

"The cheerful supper done, wi' serious face,
They, round the ingle, form a circle wide;
The sire turns o'er, with patriarchal grace,
The big ha'-Bible, once his father's pride,
His bonnet reverently is laid aside,
His lyart haffets, wearing thin and bare,
Those strains that once did sweet in Zion glide;
He wales a portion with judicious care,
And 'Leet us worship God' he says, with solemn air."

A Frenchman experimented on the depth for planting wheat. He made thirteen beds and planted 150 grains in each, at depths beginning at seven inches, decreasing to the surface. In the seven-inch bed five grains out of 150 germinated. They gave fifty-three heads, with 682 grains. This return kept on increasing for each bed as it decreased in depth at which the seeds were planted. At three and three-quarter inches deep ninety-three seeds sprouted, with 992 heads, yielding 18,534 grains. At one and three-quarter inches, sprouting 142 seeds, there were 1,660 heads, containing 35,816 grains. At one and one-half inches deep sixty-four grains sprouted, growing 529 heads and 15,587 grains. On the surface only twenty grains germinated, yielding 1,600 grains. The greatest return in grains and straw was attained by the one and three-quarter inch bed. The sower should, therefore, endeavor to cover the seed not more than two nor less than one inch.

There are several easy ways to prevent rusting of ploughs and cultivators, and to keep the teeth bright. One is to give them a coat of thick limewash as soon as they are brought in from the field; another is to dissolve an ounce of resin in four ounces of linseed oil and while hot mix this with a quart of kerosene and stir well. This is laid on to smooth iron with a paint brush. Another way is to dissolve an ounce of camphor in some turpentine and add this to four ounces of lard and one ounce of pulverized blacklead or stove polish, and mix well. This may be rubbed on with a rag. To remove rust from ploughs or tools nothing is better than a mixture of half a pint of oil of vitriol poured slowly into a quart of water, and apply this to the rusted metal. Wash off with water.