

they were not welcome there,—the room wherein of all others, a farmer's boy conceives he has the right of entrance and domicile, was made so unpleasant that they generally kept away from it. They were treated too much as inferiors, as of no account except of being good for so much work. It is such neglect, such treatment as this, that drives hundreds of well-meaning and deserving boys from the farm to the city. No doubt there are many who live through it all, and remain at home. No doubt there are farmers' sons who develop superior talents for some particular branch of science or art, for the successful practice of which a great city is the only remunerative field. It may be proper for such to leave the farm, as every man should go where he is most wanted, and the world may be benefited by such enlargement of their field for usefulness. They are evidently born for some other pursuit than that of farming.

It was this general neglect that was working on Tony's active mind so strongly as to lead him to think of adventuring on a city life. Though he knew nothing of the risks of that, yet he understood the discomforts of this. Boy-like, he was willing to encounter the former, though unknown, in order to escape from the latter, which he knew too well. The exhortations of Uncle Benny had so generally ended in a condemnation of Mr. Spangler's mode of farming, without effecting any marked improvement in the management, that Tony began to despair of an amendment in which he could participate. All boys who happen to be born on farms are not calculated to make good farmers. Some are so constitutionally organized that their tastes and talents run in another direction. Taking that they succeed; but adhering to the farm, they would fail. Others dislike farming because of its hard work,—no one whose duty it is taking pains to diversify that work by interweaving amusement or recreation, or the stimulant of juvenile profit. Others can see in farming no prospect of becoming rich.

But Tony did not belong to either of these classes. He had been born in the country, had no aversion to hard work, and would prefer remaining on a farm; but he was getting tired of Mr. Spangler. It was singular, however, that, while thinking of making a change, it had never occurred to him to go away and engage with a really good farmer, where he would be sure to learn the business thoroughly. Instead of entertaining this sensible idea, he had thought only of a plunge into the city. But Tony was young in the experiences of this world, and had much to learn.

The dissatisfaction thus manifested by Tony to the farm life around him was a new difficulty for Uncle Benny to smooth away. Heretofore, he had

had only Spangler's lapses and mismanagement to contend with, but here was trouble in a new quarter. Yet his concern for the welfare of these boys was so great, and he was so well satisfied that they could do pretty well at farm life if there was any way of making them contented, that he resolved to do his utmost toward counteracting these unexpected symptoms of restlessness. He was quite pleased that the youngest boy, Bill Spangler, came into the barn just in time to hear Tony's remark about quitting the farm, as he too would have the benefit of his reply.

As the old man was a great reader, he generally carried a newspaper of some kind in his pocket, from which he was in the habit of reading aloud to the boys any article that struck him as being likely to amuse or instruct them. Sometimes, when they had been debating or discussing a topic with him, he would produce a paper containing an article on the very subject they had been talking about, and on his reading it aloud, they found in it a remarkable confirmation of what he had already told them. As it was in a newspaper, the boys considered that it must be true, and as it always supported him in his views, they wondered more and more how the old man knew so much, as well as always to be right. These readings became so popular with the boys, that, whenever a chance offered, they uniformly inquired if there was not something more in the paper that was worth hearing.

The fact was that Uncle Benny, discovering how tractable these boys were, and how much they needed the right kind of instruction, had subscribed for two or three papers which he knew contained such reading as would be useful to them. After examining them himself, he would select some subject discussed or explained in them, which he thought would be important for the boys to understand, and then, putting the paper into his pocket, would give them, on the first suitable occasion, a verbal account of the matter, or start a discussion about it. After it had been pretty thoroughly debated and turned over, he would produce the paper and read the article aloud. Of course it confirmed all that he had been saying, and as it was in print—for they saw it there—it clinched the argument beyond dispute, and must be so.

But this stroke of ingenuity was not adopted by Uncle Benny for the purpose of impressing his audience with an exalted idea of his superior knowledge or wisdom, but more as an attractive mode of interesting their minds in subjects with which it was important that they should become well acquainted. It was surprising how much his method of proceeding interested them. There has been a great deal said of the usefulness of farmers' clubs, and of the addresses delivered before them. No one