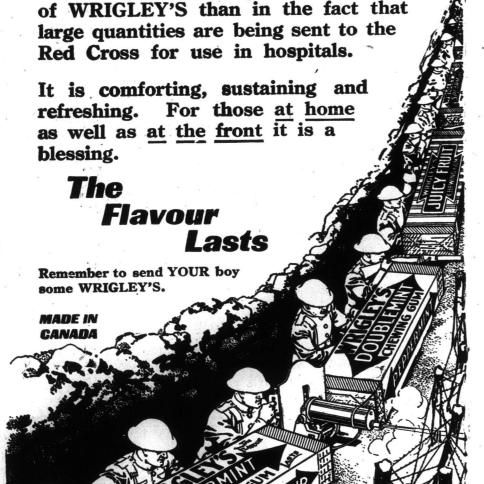
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Woman and the Home

How to Keep the Boys and Girls on the Farm

By Blanche Gertrude Robbins

Too often we hear the perplexed parent cry out, "my boy has left the farm, and just at a time when he was becoming most useful to me."

Again we hear the assertion of other parents, "Our home is lonely now. The children are scattered. They went out into the world early in life to seek their fortune.

Why did these young people leave the home farm to seek employment? Why is your community so devoid of youth and spirit? Why has the burden of running the farm fallen heavily on the shoulders of the parents, when they should be relaxing and relying on the younger generation?

The answer is this-Farm life makes little appeal to the progressive, ambitious, adventure-loving age. Its monot-ony is irritating, for the race is pos-sessed with a passion for excitement. It is little wonder that the city, with its mystery and spirit of competition lures the boys and girls from the country.

Is there a remedy? Yes—and it lies in your own farm home and vicinity. First arouse your children's interest in the farm. Allow them to assist in all duties; but be careful not to burden them with duties beyond their strength, or make drudges of them. Secondly, give to them the idea that they are co-workers, or partners with you. To each child might be given as a birthday gift, the deed to a certain lot of land. No matter how small this lot of land may prove to be, it will have a tendency to interest the recipient, for the power of ownership has great appeal.

Watch the youth of your vicinity closely, and give thought to their development along the lines in which they exhibit the most interest. But do not harp upon the subject, until the idea nauseates them with its persistency.

Organize in your community a cluba sort of juvenile institute, which has for its object-development and the seeking of opportunity. This may also be combined with entertainment for the young people. Induce lecturers on agricultural subjects to give a series of talks. Provide moving picture films, which will illustrate these practical lectures. For instance-lectures could be given by a good authority on sheep or beef raising and made more interesting by pictures of local stock flashed on the screen. Local suggestions always make a hit.

Engage a soil expert to talk to the club members. If he is a live talker, he may arouse the enthusiasm of a future chemist. He may so appeal to the youth of your settlement that they will go home and study the soil of your own farm. Perhaps this has never been accomplished in your work. Possibly the younger vision may discover that you are growing corn on land that would yield you a bigger, more valuable crop of beans. Perhaps your boy may be quick to sense that the muck soil, which you so despise, could be converted into a valuable onion bed.

Be sure that the lecturers are enthusiastic regarding their subject, and if possible, humorous. Do not allow a single "dry" speaker a place on any programme. The training that this club should give toward arousing the young people should startle the older folks with original ideas. Do not cry these down. Even if many of them fail, keep the boys and girls active and interested in experimenting.

If you laugh at some suggestion that appeals to you as crude, some day your boy, then recognized as an authority, may throw it up to you in this manner, suggested this very thing to you, father, years ago. Had we tried it out then the farmers long ago would have reaped benefit."

Should a lecture on fertilizer arouse the interest of a scientific mind, the club might be the means of establishing a fertilizer plant. This would provide employment for many of the surrounding company and keep the work seekers at home. Indeed, the fertilizer plant might be owned by the club, each member tak-

If the boy exhibits a genius for carpenter work, do not hurry him off to the

city to apprentice him to a block builder: but interest him in the agricultural buildings being erected in the neighborhood. Impress upon him the necessity of improving upon the present method of building stables, etc. Perhaps when he has mastered his trade, he may prefer to take contract work in the country, erecting modern piggeries and henner-

Should another boy prove mechanically inclined, let him monkey with your machinery. Later, when he has made of himself a master mechanic, he may come back to that corner lot that has never paid you in raising grain, and open up a machine shop. Think what a boon this would be to the farmers, struggling with new machinery and unable to operate it, because they have so little mechanical knowledge. Think of the valuable time lost as the farmer ponders over some necessary repair, which is simple enough to the machinist. When questioned as to why he came back home to put his trade into practice, he will truthfully answer:

"When Dad and I used to get balled up with machinery, we used to say over and over again, if there were only someone near who understood machinery; and I decided that I would be that one."

There is the girl who has a talent for cooking-let her mother give her the freedom of the kitchen. Do not restrict her when she wishes to try some dainty dish. Do not say to her, "we are only farmer's folks and farmer's food must be plain and hearty." Give her a chance to study Domestic Science. Persuade her to come home and open up a tea room, the daintiness of which will have appeal, because it is so often lacking on the home farm. Perhaps the same girl, interested in the seed as she has watched her father plant it, will study out new methods of making bread from that home raised flour, and thus increase its

Modernize your home. Do not keep it old-fashioned because it is in the country. Perhaps it is the modern home of the city that lures your son and daughter from you. Remember that they belong to an age that demands change. Add something new to the home several times a year, if it is only a rug, a chair, a book-case or a jardiniere.

Provide the youth of the home with books and pictures. You would not think of refusing to purchase new hats or gloves each season for your daughter. If you do not hesitate to please her vanity, why should you deny her food for her intellect?

Occasionally, when you hear of a high class concert or performance in the neighboring city, make up a crowd of young people and take the excursion. Even if it costs several dollars per person, it is nothing to the amount that your girl or boy would spend on cheap shows and movies, if living in the city. And when the trip is over-and doubtless, you will have had to remain in the city over night-you will have the satisfied feeling that you are taking the young people back with you.

Instil into the youth of your community strong ideas of patriotism and loyalty. If you find your children corresponding with city friends, who picture the glories of the metropolis gaudily, discourage that correspondence. If you discover your nearest tradespeople quoting other nations, holding up their ideas, manufactured articles, modes and fashions, urge that this be discontinued.

Be individual and be original. Cultivate in the youth of your settlement a love for the native, a spirit of progression, a genius for development and in-

vention. Encourage the building up of your community, and with its progress will

leap the progress of the nation.
Challenge the youth to assist in this making of history for Canada and proudly will they echo Pauline Johnson's spir-

ited song: We first saw light in Canada, the land beloved of God;

We are the pulse of Canada, its marrow and its blood; And we, the men of Canada, can face

the world and brag That we were born in Canada beneath

the British flag.

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