



### The Prize Essays.

As promised, we publish in this number the two essays on "Why I Like Life in the Country," which are entitled to honorable mention. They are as follows:

THERE are a great many reasons why I like to live in the country. I will commence with spring, and give my reasons with the seasons. In the spring, when warm weather commences, there is a great deal of fun to be had by making maple sugar and having sugar parties. Surely all people at a sugar party enjoy themselves very much. Then in a short time the warm, sunny days of the latter part of April and the first of May come with their beautiful, many-colored flowers and fresh green grass and trees just putting on their summer dress of green leaves. How very beautiful a fresh, green landscape, dotted with great forest and fruit trees and bushes in full bloom, looks! I am sure that there is no natural thing in towns or cities that looks so extremely grand as that; and you cannot get any such pure flower-perfumed air in any place but the country. Now is the time that the grain is sown. It is scattered over the ground and covered with warm, moist soil, and soon the fields are covered with green, and in a not very much longer time, with golden grain. Do not the fields covered with golden grain, and the busy reapers cutting it, make a very grand picture? Soon after the grain is cut and put in the barns, the apples and nuts are ripe. The fun we have gathering apples and nuts in the beautiful Indian summer sunshine is not equalled in any place but the country. Sometimes there are corn-husking bees made, and everybody in the neighborhood is invited, and nearly everybody comes. They husk corn till all are hungry, and then have supper on pumpkin pies, cakes and everything else that is good. After supper there is generally a dance, and all must dance and enjoy themselves whether they want to or not. Now in a very short space of time winter is with us again. All the pieces of water, large and small, are frozen, and we get out our skates, sharpen and polish them, and go to the nearest pond, river or bay. Of course the weather is bitterly cold sometimes, but we cover our ears and hands and tell Jack Frost to do his worst. Then the sleigh rides that we can have whenever we like, almost come up to skating for sport. Now we can keep skating and sleigh-riding till spring comes again and takes all the snow and ice away. I like to live in the country because I can enjoy all these things at their very best and the fullest measure of them; but what I prize more than all these pleasures, is the perfect health which results from pure breathing air, and from a life which is almost entirely free from temptations that would lead me into habits that would ruin my health. Do you not think I have good sound reasons for liking life in the country?

MALCOLM OUTWATER,  
Adolphustown, Ont.

In beginning my essay, I must say that for no other reason than viewing the beautiful town of Oakville, with its splendid harbor, its pleasant country surrounding, and everything so bright and cheerful connected with it, one is ready to admit country life is indeed enjoyable. The country has much variety of scenery, consisting of hill and dale, winding rivers with mountains on either side, broad maples and oaks, which spread their fine foliage in order to afford a shade on a hot and sultry summer day. Here the grass is long and thickly grown, and with the many trees looks like one mass of greenness. There are many delightful sports in the country. I enjoy those connected with the water most of all. Our lake is almost always dotted over in summer with sail boats, steam yachts and small boats which skim the water like birds. Fishing is much made a pleasure of, and although the fish are small in quantity, their quality of sweetness is not often found. Games of all kinds are a source of delight, such as ball, croquet and lawn-tennis, and much ground in the country is found to enlarge upon. I like the country for the many picnics we have in its woods. These woods are attached to every farm, and are often a long distance away. They are the spontaneous production of nature, and beautiful wild flowers grow among the shrubs. These flowers and ferns are of many classes and orders, and are of much use for botanical purposes, but they make pretty wreaths, being of such lovely tints and various shapes. I also like the country for the birds of brilliant plumage which inhabit it. We have the golden-yellow oriole, the bright robin red-breast, the cunning blue-bird and many others. But lovelier than all these birds are the ones that have sweet melodious voices. Early in the

morning, when all is calm and peaceful, we hear their notes of praise. Lastly, I like the country on account of the sociability of the people, which makes it pleasant for strangers and the residents around. The people are mostly all in favor of temperance, which is a happy thing for any place, and above all they are sincerely religious, not being taken up with the vanities of this world, and not forgetting Him to whom they are indebted for their beautiful country.

SARA PATTERSON,  
Oakville, Ont.

### Chinese Kite-Flying.

THE following interesting account of the Chinese Kite-Flying festival is taken from a book written by Rev. Justus Dcolittle, who was for fourteen years a member of the Fuhchan mission of the American Board.

The holiday of kite-flying on the highest hills in the city and suburbs is observed regularly on the ninth day of the ninth month at this place. Perhaps the inquisitive reader may be curious enough to enquire why the Chinese select that day for kite-flying in preference to any other day, or why they select any particular day at all? The Chinese explain that in ancient times a certain man was informed, by one who pretended to know the future, that on a specified day some calamity would befall his house or his property; so he took all his family on the morning of that day and went to the hills, spending the time the best he could. On returning home at nightfall he found his domestic animals all dead. That day was the ninth of the month. They also say that in imitation of his example they go to the hills on the ninth of the month and thus avoid any domestic calamity which might have befallen them at home; and to while away the time pleasantly they take along their kites and fly them. This is called "ascending on high," and indicates the flying of kites on the particular day mentioned. The interest of the sport centres on the day specified. Then if the weather is fine, the air is full of kites, of all sizes and of a large variety of shapes. Some are in the shape of spectacles; others represent a kind of fish; others are like an eel, or some similar-looking animal, being from ten to thirty feet long and of proportionate size; others are like various kinds of birds, or bugs, or butterflies, or quadrupeds. Some resemble men sailing through the air; others are eight-sided, in imitation of the eight diagrams, invented by one of the earliest Chinese emperors. Most or all of those which represent animals are gaudily painted. The most common and simple ones are usually adorned with the head of the tiger or the dragon, or some idol, or some felicitous character, painted in bright colors. A foreign resident or transient visitor passing along in the street about this period often sees, at a distance in the air, what seems to be an immense bird, and he is filled with surprise and joy at having so near a view of the unusual phenomenon, until he is reminded, by its nearly stationary position and mechanical movements, that it is nothing but a paper kite. At other times he notices a group of large hawks, apparently hovering around a common centre, and finally remembers of having heard of the skill of the Chinese in elevating five or more paper hawks into the air, and of controlling them by one strong cord, to which each are attached by short and separate lines. And again, he will behold with admiration, half a mile distant, an immense kite, consisting as a whole, of a large



CHINESE KITE-FLYING.

number of smaller ones, made to resemble the different blocks which constitute the game called "dominoes;" from the two ends of each block extend a reed or rush four or five feet long. This presents a singularly pretty appearance. Every year there is an especial proclamation issued by a city officer with reference to this kite-flying, warning against tumult on the ninth day of the ninth month on the Black Rock Hill. A petty mandarin, with a large staff of policemen or constables, is annually stationed on the hill, on the arrival of the day, for the purpose of keeping the peace and quelling the disturbance, should any arise. Probably thirty or forty thousand people visit that hill to fly their kites, especially if the weather is fine on that day.

### Advice to Boys on the Farm.

BY HARRY DULMER, WHITEWOOD, N.W.T.

Boys, take the advice of one who knows and stick to the farm. I know from experience it is hard sometimes, but go where you will you will meet with obstacles far more trying and numerous than any to be encountered on the farm. I know what it is to be called from a warm bed at four o'clock in the morning, and, with halters on your shoulder, start back to the pasture field for the horses. But they, poor innocent creatures, do not consider the fact that it would be far more agreeable to the still more innocent youth, should they be near the bars. But no! With bare feet you must tramp to the farthest corner of the field, and then you fully make up your mind you won't have to tramp back "anyhow." You sneak up holding the halters behind your back with one hand and with the other extending your old straw hat towards the brute to attract his attention till you can get hold of him. But "Old Bill" has been deceived before. He knows the old hat, and starting off, leads you through the wet grass back to the bars, where, on your arrival, he stands switching off a mosquito, looking the picture of injured innocence. I also



know what it is to be running through a field trying to "head off" a runaway cow and get the stalk of a large Canadian thistle between your first and second toes, and with the next step strip it from bottom to top, leaving between said toes a bouquet of beautiful green thistles. Many times have I stubbed my toe and had stone-bruises. I've had a young calf ram its head into the bottom of a pail with sufficient force to almost dislocate my arm, while, with my fingers in its mouth, I was teaching it the art of drinking. But all the little troubles are nothing compared with the uncertainties to be contended with off the farm. Boys, stay with the farm and it will stay with you.

### The Boys.

What would we do without the boys,  
Without their rollicking, rumbling noise?  
Without their whoops and their whistles shrill?  
I tell you the place would be too still!  
It wouldn't be home if we couldn't hear  
The drummings and thrummings that split the ear.  
Tho' they tie tin cans to the poor cat's tail,  
And beat a tattoo on every old pail,  
Tho' they're never two seconds at a time at rest,  
Tho' we vote them a bore, a nuisance, a pest,  
Yet we know in our souls life would lose its joys  
If anything happened the noisy boys.

—Susto M. Best.