

The Farmer's Life.

[We are sure that, while our boys and girls may laugh over this doleful tale and enjoy the fun of making it out, they will not agree that the farmer's prospect is as bad as it looks here.—Ed.]

The farmer leads no E Z life;
The C D sows will rot;
And when at E V rests from strife,
His bones all A K lot.

In D D has to struggle hard
To E K living out;
If I C frosts do not retard
His crops there'll B A drought.

The hired L P has to pay
Are awful A Z, too;
They C K rest when he's away,
Nor N E work will do.

Both N Z cannot make to meet,
And then for A D he takes
Some boarders who so R T eat
& E no money makes.

Of little U C finds this life;
Sick in old A G lies,
The debts he O Z leaves his wife
And then in P C dies.

—Exchange.

The Transformation of Jule.

(Zelia M. Walters, in the 'Christian Standard.')

'Say, are you the woman who wants to give a banty rooster away?'

I turned in astonishment at this singular inquiry. The boy standing at the veranda railing was a most unprepossessing young person. I recognized him as 'Jule,' the bad boy of the neighborhood, of whose pranks I had heard much. I was moved to dismiss him promptly, and said, 'No, I am not the person.'

'That Billy Dimmick has fooled me ag'in,' muttered the boy; 'wait till I git hold of him!'

He looked so cast down as he turned away that a kinder impulse came to me.

'I haven't any bantams,' I said; 'but I have an old hen that I would like to give to someone that would take care of her.'

It was an ancient biddy, too tough for the table, and possessed of a lasting desire to sit. She had been patiently trying to hatch two china eggs for the past six weeks.

'Would you, honest, give her away for nothing?' he asked, eagerly. 'I hain't got any money.'

'Yes,' I said, 'if you will take good care of her.'

'Oh, I've got a good coop made. I got some boxes from the groc'ryman, and some tar paper what was left from a house. It'll be as warm as anything in the winter, and there's a window in it. I've got some corn planted, too, and my mother will give me enough to feed her till mine grows. That Billy Dimmick said there was a lady wanted to give a banty rooster away; that's why I got everything ready.'

So I packed 'Biddy' in a covered basket, and handed her over to her new owner. As he trotted proudly away, I fancied that already he had a more manly and independent air.

I heard of him only once before autumn. A woman who was passing said to her companion, 'I've got a lot of raspberries this year, and for a wonder "Jule" Biddle hasn't been around to steal any of them yet.'

'It's curious how steady he is lately,' said the other; 'I wonder what keeps him busy.'

After I overheard this conversation I hoped that 'Biddy' had something to do with the reformation of Jule.

He came to see me one day in early October. He was as ragged as ever, but 'is hands and face were clean, which was a great improvement on his first appearance before me.

'I've come to pay for that hen,' he announced, holding out a silver dollar.

'Why, I don't want any pay,' I said; 'I gave her to you.'

'Guess I'll pay for her,' he insisted quietly.

'Where did you get the money?' I asked, for I knew the Widow Biddle was wretchedly poor.

'I sold six of my chickens yesterday. A man gave me a dollar a piece. He said they were fancy stock. I don't know how it happened. I just bought common eggs.'

'So you raised chickens, did you? How many have you?'

'Sixty,' was the unexpected response. 'I traded some of the first brood for another hen. She hatched two broods this summer, and your hen hatched three. Then I worked for Mr. Dawson, and he gave me another brood.'

'But didn't you lose any?' I asked.

'Yes, four of 'em died.'

'You have been very fortunate,' I said.

'Oh, I don't know. I kept the coop clean, and took good care of 'em. The preacher, he gave me a book about chickens. I'm going to make an incubator by next spring, and I'm going to rent the vacant lot next to us, and make a big chicken-yard. I'm not going to sell any more chickens this fall. I'll keep them, and have eggs to sell in the spring.'

Many more details of his work he told me as he sat on the steps, and I soon discovered the occupation he had taken up. When he left he again offered the dollar. We finally compromised on twenty-five cents as the price of the hen, when I earnestly assured him that I could not possibly have sold it for more.

The next two or three years of Jule's life would make a long story, for in that time he changed from a bad boy into an honest, capable young business man. On the outskirts of our city stands a modest home which belongs to the Widow Biddle, and the acres behind it devoted to wire-netting chicken yards and also snug-looking coops, are the property of her son. He has paid for the house and farm out of his earnings.

The Schoolmaster Abroad!

Here is the excuse made by Mrs. Mary Tomson, of the Australian bush, because her son went to school without having done his home lessons: 'Dere mister I want u to scews mi bil for not haven his lessons dun our gote liced bil's slayte it bein greesie en so pore bil doan no his sumes wich is to hard mi old man says he wunt do eny moar like the last him en bil bein dun up wen they dun the wun were u wanted to no how far a man cud walk in for ours if he walked wun myl in aytean minits he says cud u give bil nex time sumes about howses mi old man says he wunt do bil's sums agen in wauken for noboddy en I am respectfully Mary Tomson.'—Exchange.

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A Veritable 'Floating Island.'

One often reads of 'floating islands,' especially in the tropic seas. A great many—most, in point of fact—of these floating islands are mythical, existing only in the imagination.

Away up in the wild Sierra Nevada Mountains of California may be found a veritable floating island. This islet is small, but it is nevertheless a floating one. Surrounded by lofty mountains is a small lake known as Mirror Lake. The waters of this body are wonderfully clear and reflective, and the lake is very deep.

Floating about on the surface is a mass composed of plants, roots and earth. This mass is about twenty-five feet across at the top, and is nearly circular in shape. How far it extends downward is unknown. The roots of the plants are so interlocked and filled in with earth that the whole mass is firmly attached. Where the earth came from is largely conjectural, but it is supposed to be the accumulations of dust blown from the surrounding mountains. So far as is known, this floating island has existed for an indefinite period.

A great many persons have been on the islet. The lake abounds in fine trout, and its waters are much fished. By means of long poles and oars, the island may be slowly 'navigated' about the lake. Many fishermen get on the floating mass, drift about, and use their lines. Mirror Lake is much visited, and the floating island is one of the chief attractions of the scene.—J. Mayne, Baltimore.

My Portion.

(George Klinge.)

To count no cost in time or will;
To simply try my place to fill;
To do because the act is right;
To live as living in his sight;
To try each day his will to know;
To tread the way his will may show;
To regulate each plan I make,
Each hope I build, or hope I break;
To please the heart which pleases me
Through daily tireless ministry;
To live for Him who gave me life;
To strive for Him who suffered strife
And sacrifice through death for me—
Let this my joy, my portion be.

Personalities in Public.

It would seem, from observation by the writer at least, that young women are the most frequent offenders of good taste in the matter of conversation in public places. Young men, or even lads, talking in a public vehicle are much less apt to discuss personalities and to mention names. The conversation of two young women, however, is very apt to be filled with remarks edifying to those who must perforce listen, and the blind confidence which the speakers have that the persons discussed are unknown to anyone within hearing is often disastrously misplaced. Two of these foolish virgins were talking in a trolley car the other day when it swung into a residence avenue. 'Look,' said one of the girls, 'that plain house there is where the L.'s live. They are awfully rich, you know, but they live in that horrid house.' An intimate friend of the 'L.'s' on her way that moment to see them, sat opposite the talkers, and ten minutes later the 'L.'s' were enjoying a laugh at their classification from a person whom they had little difficulty in identifying when the chance listener described her.

Much more serious was the predicament of