The Farm and Fireside.

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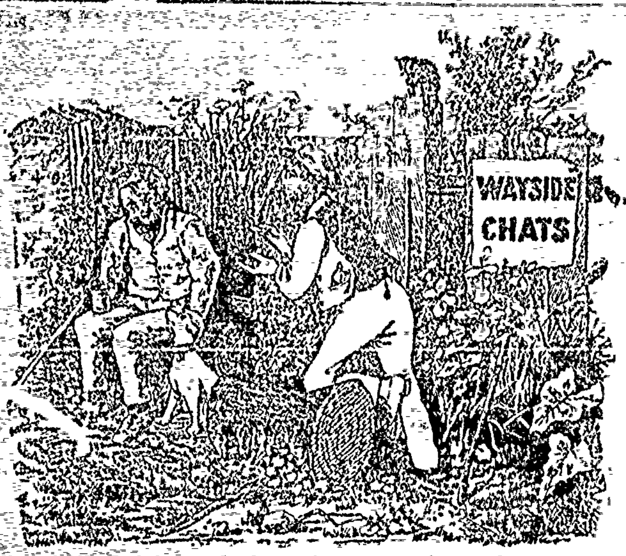

Farmers' Institutes are now being held in various localities in the province, and judging from the reports published they are well attended. I take it to be the duty of farmers to attend these meetings, as much is to be learned from the practical discussions which take place. Our most progressive farmers, as a rule, patronize these gatherings, and they are always ready to give from their fund of knowledge or experience many valuable hints that will help their less favoured brethren to achieve greater success. Frequently some of those well up in the scientific branches of agriculture are in attendance, and they endeavour to convey to the mind of the layman fragments of science that cannot but be instructive. I urge upon my readers the necessity of attending these gatherings, as such attendance is an evidence of a desire to become better acquainted with the many details of their calling.

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Is shelter to cattle a cheap way of saving food? Some say it is, among them the professor of agriculture at Perdue University, where experiments were made from January to March, 1893, with three cows kept in the barn and three exposed all night, all being fed alike. The result shows that the cows exposed to the weather during the day ate more food than those given shelter in the barn, they lost in weight, while the sheltered cows gained, as well as gave less milk, there being a difference of $13 in favour of giving the cows shelter. The university director had large posters printed, containing the results, which were placed in prominent places for the observation of farmers. The exposed cows were sheltered at night, while the sheltered cows were allowed outside for an hour on pleasant days.

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Will the price of wheat ever get back to what it was a few years ago? This is a question that is disturbing the mind of the wheat grower, especially those whose hearts were made glad at the [illegible] to new [illegible] the low cost of cultivation in other countries, to overproduction, or to some other grain taking its place on our tables? Perhaps all these reasons combine to lessen the demand for wheat, and hence reduce its price, but the last-named one plays a more important part than the wheat grower cares to admit. As an article of food corn is rapidly taking a prominent place, while oats are used for domestic purposes other than the time-honoured porridge. Ten years ago there were but three or four generally recognized ways of preparing cornmeal so as to make it palatable. For weeks one of the most interesting features of the World's Fair was a room in the Women's building where an artist in culinary knowledge taught tractable women how more than a hundred palatable dishes could be made with cornmeal as a basis. Twenty years ago about the only people in the world who didn't feed all their oats to horses were the Scotch. To-day oatflakes are almost as much of an essential on the breakfast table as coffee. There is no question that enormous quantities of wheat are still consumed, but not such quantities as the growth in population would warrant one in expecting would be consumed. The world has found substitutes for bread to the degree that what is known as a "square meal" is often consumed into which the staff of life does not enter at all. If this condition continues, and other substitutes for bread come into use, is there any reason for believing that the price of wheat will ever get back to the big prices that ruled ten or a dozen years ago.

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I am going to make an effort to catch up with my correspondence and empty my letter box. I could readily empty it by pouring its contents into the waste basket, but were I to do so I would be ungrateful to many correspondents, who put some confidence in me. The first letter that comes to my hand is from "Vivienne":—

"Dear Tramp,—This is a terrible day; it is blowing and blustering, and has been all day. I would not like to tramp very far. I am very thankful to you for not consigning that last letter of mine to the waste basket. 'Bushwhacker' was kind enough to tell me not to forget to write, as if I could do such a thing after I had written once. I am glad to see he is getting over his modesty. It is all right in its place, but too much of it makes one stupid. Do not think for a moment that I mean to [illegible] you are stupid, 'Bushwhacker'—no person could do that after [illegible] seen that last letter of yours [illegible] per is here again, and is [illegible] bout with the tyrant 'Gany[illegible] [illegible] talks common sense, which [illegible] times lacking in a few letters. [illegible] give him good wishes to aid him [in] the coming combat, although they [are] of little use.

"Oh! 'Spitfire' you are not as 'Ganymede' pictured you. I know he has [illegible] something you said, and wishes to take you down a bit, but up and battle him, for judging by your nom-de-plume you would be able to give him a few pointers.

"Would some of the readers or writers of the Farm and Fireside give me a recipe for lemon jelly. I am very glad to be able to give 'Heather Bell' a recipe for barley pudding: Take ten tablespoonfuls of barley, wash it in warm water, drain off the water, and put the barley in a pan with a quart of [illegible], put the pan over a kettle of [illegible] water and stir it until it thickens, then add two tablespoonfuls of [illegible], six of white sugar, one lemon, remove the pan from the fire, [illegible] beaten four eggs very light, [illegible] rapidly into the mixture, [illegible] buttered dish and bake [illegible]. Serve with a [illegible] sauce. And now, [illegible] try this you must [be] successful, with me it [was a] success.

"[Gany]mede is having it [illegible] these heads, etc. [illegible] against him, and numerous [illegible] of him. [illegible] him busy racking [illegible] In my opinion the subject of the most of the letters sent is 'Ganymede' and his logic; so I will merely give the description of him as I have him pictured, and let him go. This is as I see him, but he is a long way off so I cannot see distinctly. In height 5 feet 10 inches; fair complexion, brown curly hair, dark blue eyes, which are small and squinting; weight 165 pounds, narrow head, thin lips, blonde moustache, and about 24 years of age. He is quick tempered, and enjoys a brawl or quarrel of any kind. Now 'Ganymede,' you must tell me just where I am right and where wrong, also remember that you are indebted to me to the extent of one 'word picture' of myself.

"Now, Mr Tramp, tell me if I may become a frequent visitor of your corner, for I would like to become such, if it is not too full already, for you have, indeed, a lot of visitors and please do not put me in the outside row, for I think it would be very cold if your days are like ours."

Certainly you may come again—come next week, and every week, as a welcome awaits you. That recipe will, if I am any judge, produce a good pudding, and one that I would not hesitate to sample if I had a chance. Yes, "Ganymede" is having a hard time of it, but your statement that he squints is the unkindest cut of all.

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"Cranbrook Tyro" wants to know if ever I 'cut a star' while skating:—

"Mr. Tramp,—I have somewhere read or have heard it may be, that history and geography are sister studies, and should be prosecuted together. Well, if this be true of these subjects, I feel assured it is just as near the truth with regard to phrenology and astronomy. Say, Tramp, did you ever begin skimming, as you thought, over the smooth, congealed surface of a part of the bosom of Mother Earth, and in a minute or two find yourself, not skimming any more, but having made a most sudden and striking impression on her lap, and also find yourself in the midst of a starry firmament, with fast growing bumps on yourself you never knew were yours before. Oh, that I had the benefit of the knowledge of phrenology possessed by either 'Ganymede' [illegible] otherwise, were indicated by such bumps. Dickens, in his Pickwickians, once, has described a little of my experience of the last week; so when you have read all the letters sent you, you might just look up some of the old papers of the Pickwick Club, and read the above mentioned one. This will save me describing at more length what knock downs—no, I mean fall downs—I have had. Here is a big chunk of johnny cake for you, and while you are munching it, I shall, with your kind permission, skate around and get acquainted a little with some of your weekly visitors. But first of all, between yourself and me, I am so ashamed of the lady voters of your city I shall not say much about women suffrage this time.

"As 'Annie' has so pommelled poor 'Ganymede' I shall endeavour to act as charitably with him as possible. However, 'Ganymede,' though I expect to be sometimes of opposite opinions to yourself, the next time you have the good fortune to be visiting our happy little borough, just enquire for me. Perhaps someone can show you the little cabin where I live, as it is only a short distance west of Cranbrook, and then we can have a look and a smile at each other. I shall not require you to teach me the use of a card pack, as I did not talk about that of which I knew nothing. No. I have been there; have played a little, both with and without the joker, though only privately, but did so some time ago for the last time. However, I shall be delighted to try you a whack at checkers, and, by the way, that is a game that is a game. Give me something there is something about, such as this game, chess, or even authors. Such games as these do us more good than all the card playing that is done between Bayfield and Cranbrook.

"I very much like your style of composition, 'Jessie, of Riverview.' Simple yet solid, and though unassuming, yet of a rather pleasing strain. I fancy if I can read you aright, you have the stamina that is required for one of the future mothers of our country. Do you not think this is about right, 'Mr Hermit?' Say, you must have a rather lonely, dismal, discouraging life of it out there all alone in your Manitoba home.

"'Ecarte,' you need not be alarmed so much about 'Denver Don.' I think he is engaged in exploring for a new gold mine somewhere in or near the Rocky Mountains. 'Observer' is right when he says women should make home attractive, as this is their privilege, but the right of voting would not prevent them doing this.

"Hurrah for 'Wild Rose.' She is a 'trump,' is she not, 'Ganymede,' she is as good as the 'joker' himself. If 'Gerald' follows her advice, and at the same time comes this way, he can be suited to a 'T' as our neighbourhood is filled with tidy, thrifty, pretty, rosy-faced [illegible] fun-loving, good-working girls. Well, 'Raindrop' 'Ganymede' has told you his age to a day, if I have the right key to his problem, and I think I have. He is twenty-five years ten months and eleven days, and as he says he is not so big as you, either you are too [illegible] for my ideal, or then his body is far too little for his marvellous brain.

"Now, little 'Spitfire,' do not get angry with his tirade of you. He is only acting, as we would expect any six-year-old boy to act. You have seen the little fellows playing perhaps with a switch, when perchance one should strike himself, and in anger, as if it were to blame, bite or break the switch. I do not fancy your looks are at all like his picture of you. I believe you have a heart that is [illegible] susceptible to injury inflicted either upon yourself or others, and to show this trait at a proper time is perfectly legitimate.

"Well, old fellow, I see your lunch is gone, so I shall go too, with the hope you can get on the sheltered side of your stump this stormy night. Just make believe you are listening to the balmy zephyrs of June."

Yes, I have skated and enjoyed the fun, but at times the ice displayed too much fondness for other parts of my person than my feet, and as I sat on it, meditating on the queer things of life, with my ears buzzing and my eyes scintillating, I wondered what unseen power made the ice rise up and give me a knock-down blow. Where's your johnny cake? What I mean [illegible] to tempt a fellow away while so chatting with the girls, but it does not work, as I overheard every word you said to them, and you have a sweet tongue that deals out honest words. You are through with card playing. That's right. If you think you should not play cards, by all means quit and quit for keeps.

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"Ecarte" has paid us one more visit, which she mildly intimates may be her last:—

"Dear Tramp,—I enjoy your chats so much that I cannot keep from writing at least once more.

"'Maple Leaf,' if I were you I would not pay any attention to the few cranks who tell us we have not enough intelligence to vote. They know there is nothing in it as well as you and I do.

"My brother had nothing to do with the cultivation of my brain, as you suggest.

"'Lonely Will.' No, I do not think you a strange mortal at all. You impress me as a person that lets your piety interfere with your enjoyment of life. When I was younger I had plenty of chances to learn how to dance. Several young gallants volunteered their services in that line, but my friends would not let me go to dances or to learn how, intimating they wished me to be pious. I was in conversation with a minister once and we were talking about various books and authors. At last he picked up a volume of Byron's poems, and said:—'What do you think of Byron?' I replied that there was a great deal to admire and a great deal to detest in his works. 'That is it,' he said, 'you have to sift the gold out from the dirt.' I often think that that statement can be applied to almost everything. There are few things that have not a good and bad side. Even dancing has a side to it that I can see no harm in. For instance, if a party of young people are good friends or are related to one another, and meet in the house of their parents and have a jolly time dancing for a few hours. I cannot see what objection you could raise to that. It is not wicked to enjoy oneself. As to young men who earn six dollars a week and spend three of it in a dancing school, I must say I was not aware there were such fools in the world. For you see if they spent all of their money on their board and dancing, according to your statement, I presume they would have to come on the town for their clothes and washing.

"'Zero,' you are wrong. 'Bushwhacker' did have his glasses on when he made that statement about 'Ganymede,' and he can see as straight as you. Come along with your shot gun, and be sure to bring a quart of oysters with you. How do you like your oysters best? I like my raw, with vinegar and pepper and salt.

"Will 'Mortimer' tell us why it was that the men who got their wives to help them in the last English elections were defeated?

"'Ganymede,' if you think it is such an easy matter to write novels, why do you not write some? You might make your fortune at it. That about your shooting is all rot. Brag is a good dog, but Holdfast is better. I will be Holdfast this time, but if it came to the test you would be Hurbert and I Robin Hood."

You surely are not sincere when you hint at retiring from our corner? We would miss you, although we have not had much chance to form a strong friendship. Personally I have enjoyed your letters, and would regret your departure. [illegible] could not [be] fairly condemned. I will not reveal your identity even to a big brother.

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"Canadian Boy" makes his first appearance this week:—

"Dear Tramp,—As this is my first appearance in your corner, I hope you will not get annoyed at it. I have been interested in the Wayside Chats, as it is the only part of the paper that there is any fun in. I think 'Daphne' is right about women suffrage, as she has enough to think about without bothering with voting.

"Now, 'Sandy,' if you were down in this part of the country you would find more than one girl who works to help the rest of the family, and I do not think as long as she is strong it does her any harm.

"A word about card playing I cannot see any harm in a good game of euchre, and I think, 'Canadian Girl,' I could beat you if I only had the chance.

"In answer to the question asked by G. H. Harkaway, he will find Rev. Dr. Talmage's sermons in the Victoria Warder, Lindsay, as they are printed every week."

I like to get letters from the boys, even though they be brief, as our corner would be dull if we had no rollicking, mischief-making young fellows in it. Come again when you have time. By the bye, the major got fined for thumping the reeve. Do you know either of them?

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"Caractacus" fears that our corner is so crowded that there is no room for him. You are mistaken, old fellow, as I gladly give you a place:—

"Dear Tramp,—Many thanks for allowing me to occupy part of your fence corner, although I confess I began to fear that you had so many correspondents that there would be room for no more. Our friend 'Ganymede' seems to hold quite a prominent position among the Waysiders. He refers to your wish for a design to put at the head of the Chat. How would a corner in a snake fence, filled with weeds, and a scythe placed near by, ready to be used, do? Of course the weeds will be typical of moral as well as natural weeds. I don't envy 'Ganymede' in his present position. It seems to me his zeal is worthy of a better object than the crushing out of the equality between man and woman. He must be a Conservative, surely, one of the real old-timers, who begin to feel their position at the head of affairs shaking, and is making desperate efforts to hang on. There seems to be much doubt as to whether women have enough wisdom to vote aright. I have been travelling through Ontario at different periods during the last seven years, and have come to the conclusion that the average woman is as near like Solomon as the average man. There are, of course, exceptions, and many a woman is so crushed down by the brute force of her supposed protector that the time for thought on weighty matters is used for a far different purpose. Let there be 'woman suffrage' and let it be understood that it is not an immodest thing for a woman to vote, and I think there will be no more harm come of it than there is from the 'man franchise.' Social equality among all conditions and sexes is a sure sign of advanced civilization. Let us hear some more opinions, not abuse, for abuse is not opinion, nor argument either."

I fear I could not do much with a scythe in my fence corner, as the stump would be in the road continually, and then some of my boys and girls would scurry hither and thither to save themselves from stray cuts. Oh, no. I'll remain loyal to my old stick and my pipe.

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"Mimico" attacks "Ganymede's" argument relative to Single Tax:—

"Dear Tramp,—I'm not very much afraid of venturing into your domain after seeing the picture of it. I think I could easily dodge around either end, even if that yellow dog did get after me. I think the artist must have been reared in the [illegible] an old-fashioned [illegible] I hope you will [illegible] correctly before [illegible] However, [illegible] presented [illegible]

"I have been very [illegible] interested in 'Annie's' and 'Ganymede's' letters on phrenology. I [illegible] a few good lectures [illegible] believe there is a good deal [illegible] let me ask one question. How [illegible] whose whole bad [illegible] but a small fraction of other animals' brain are possessed with a [illegible]

"Now, 'Ganymede,' about Single Tax. I think if you [illegible] under your objection to it closely you will not object to it on that ground at least. Your picture of the lot worth $300 in Toronto being worth only $100 after Single Tax is enforced is a good [illegible] let us keep to it. How did this lot come to be worth $1,000? Was [it not] the people building a city and all [illegible] advantages of civilization that [illegible] its value to that extent? The [illegible] give it that, and if it takes away [illegible] takes only what it gave. If the public [illegible] increases the value of land has [it not] a right to a portion of it? [illegible] buildings or makes [improv]ements at his own expense, will you [say] what right the public has to [a portion] of them? What good law was [ever] passed but apparently injured [some? For in]stance, the corn [laws in] Britain reduced rent and the [illegible] land; the abolition of slavery [injured] many slave owners, and prohibition, which you voted, if it is a [success], will ruin the business of many [who] could not consider the interest [of any] person unless his interest is in harmony with the good of the nation. [illegible] the value of land under the Single Tax would not reduce its usefulness [illegible] do a great good to the country. [illegible] inventions, labour-saving [illegible] railroads, etc., reduce the value [of all] kinds of wealth except land, and [add] to value of it. If land receives all benefit of good government why should it not bear the expenses? Rent and government are both the product of civilization. Why not let the one pay the other? Single Tax is the fairest and easiest way to collect the revenue of the country. It will undermine monopoly and stop land speculation, and hinder a great deal of wealth from going into the hands of the non-producer. It will give labour to the unemployed and greatly increase the wealth of the country. I believe it will [illegible] interest [illegible] almost abolish [illegible] I could [illegible] into the fence corner I will tell you why I think so. The Single Tax may [illegible] against, but I cannot set it [illegible] but [illegible] to conviction."

"If the public increases the value of land has it not a right to a portion of it?" asks "Mimico." I presume he means a portion of the value. Should "Mimico" open up a factory in a small village, and that factory prove so beneficial as to build up the village and attract sufficient population to give it the dignity of a town, would "Mimico" claim a portion of the increased value of the village lots, by being the one who brought about that increase? If rent and government are the products of civilization, as you say, then lawlessness and the [illegible] of land must have been one of the products of barbarianism. The cheapest and easiest way of dying is by going over Niagara Falls, as the body may not be recovered, thus rendering a burial unnecessary, and death in that way is not as trying as if caused by some lingering disease. The cheapest and easiest ways are not always the best.

"Happy Dot" [illegible] the alleged representation of [illegible] corner, and she [illegible]

"Dear Tramp,—[illegible] you once [illegible] have your [illegible] just read the [illegible] strikes me, what [illegible] intelligent lot of young people you [illegible] your fence corner. So [illegible] the best you can do for me [illegible] way of sending your photo. As I [illegible] I am looking at the 'cut' at the [head] of the Chats; the fence, with [illegible] and 'Ganymede' peeping through [illegible] rails, the old tree with its gaunt [illegible] stretching out, while at the trunk [illegible] our dear old Tramp having his [illegible] poke, and taking a sly look round [illegible] above mentioned; the little [illegible] looking up, and wondering if that [illegible] The Tramp will satisfy 'Happy [Dot.']

"I admire 'Ganymede's' arguments on woman [illegible] His arguments are strong and full of common [sense]. I think women have their equal [illegible] Home is the great political field [for wo]man. It is in that field she should [illegible] her vote. It is all right for women [to] understand politics, as they might [help] their husbands a great deal, but I cannot see why women [should] take from men the 'little' they [illegible] It is far better for women [illegible] to the rights that they are [illegible] and they are to be found [in] the home. 'Mortimer' will surely make a good husband if he will practise what he is now preaching. I think he is after some of your fair correspondents. Girls of the fence corner, let me tell you 'Ganymede' is a married man with a homely wife, and that is why he is so hard on us. 'Lonely Tom' must attend your at home, wear a [illegible] hat, but don't shave off your moustache. I'll be sure to meet you there, and I think when you get one good look at me it will settle you about me making your shanty attractive. I am simply horrid looking.

"'Canadian Girl' wants to know how to make flakey pastry. I will give her one way: Three cups of flour, take a cup of lard and half a teaspoonful of granulated sugar, and sufficient water to mix it. I always have nice flake paste by doing this.

"I must say good-bye for the present, Mr. Tramp. I live in hopes of getting that photo. You are trying to scare us by telling us Mrs. Tramp would be vexed.

Your writing is up to the average, but there is room for more [illegible] being exercised. What a discovery you have made! "Ganymede" a married man, and a soured one at that, because his wife is not nice looking. I think you are mistaken. Perhaps some pretty girl jilted him, which accounts for his opposition to woman's rights. How quickly you recognized him peeping through the rails. Does he not resemble a hen-pecked husband or a love-sick swain? Please don't press me too keenly on the photo question, or I will certainly get into trouble.

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"Truth," of Toronto, takes "Junius" to task for certain statements made by him:—

"Dear Tramp,—[illegible] enough, I would write you and I hope I will find you in a good humour. If you are not I think a little taffy will be a good tonic. I therefore beg to compliment you on the improvement in Farm and Fireside. I am sure your efforts [illegible] appreciated by your host of readers. What wonderful controversies you bring about. Every issue is as good as a lecture, for what one does not think of someone else will. I think a good maxim for the head of the Chats would be: 'Read and Learn.' For no one who reads these interesting letters that appear week after week can fail to be benefited thereby. Of course there are sure to be some stray critics wandering about, like our eloquent friend 'Junius,' who thinks because he makes a statement it is true. He says that all men who vote pay taxes and do statute labour. What about those that live in towns and cities? I never saw any of that going on, did you? He also says that if women were allowed to vote they would have to go to Parliament. Does every man that votes expect to have a seat in the House of Commons? He asks what is the situation at the present time? The women are crowding out the men from the schools. Cause is that no one but himself has found it out, and that every newspaper we read generally has from one to a dozen advertisements for teachers of both sexes, and of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grades. Then he says as a result many men are leaving the country, and those that remain are working for reduced wages. Can it be wondered at in times of depression like the present, when there is a better chance to live now than there was years ago, for everything is so cheap. He also adds, those who remain cannot get enough for themselves. What is the reason of that? This class of men do not succeed because they spend more than they make. They must have their tobacco and every time they go to town they must treat all of their friends they chance to meet, and end up with a general spree. Then they loaf around and talk about hard times, and say that the women are doing all the work and getting all the money. After talking for two or three years about their misfortunes some friend, to get rid of them and do a good deed for his country, gives them money enough to go over to Uncle Sam's domains. These are the men who cannot get along. Girls, you who are doomed to be old maids, according to 'Junius,' may thank your lucky stars for such a blessing, rather than become wives of such men, whom he would arouse sympathy for."

Are the men as bad as you make them out to be? Are there not many sober and industrious men suffering from the dull times? If so, why decry the whole race? Don't be a man hater, or don't rush off to extremes just because some other person does. I am pleased to hear your good opinion of Farm and Fireside, and welcome you again to the fence corner, where you find so much to interest you. I will write you in a few days, and relieve your anxiety, as well as apologize for my apparent lack of courtesy.

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"Polly Pry," of Buffalo, is a warm advocate of woman suffrage:—

"Dear Mr. Tramp,—As I am interested in woman suffrage, may I come over to your side of the fence for a chat? It makes me tired the way 'Ganymede' brags about the size of his brains. I should not be surprised if he finds he has brains as big as an ox and nearly as useful, as he judges all things by their size. I don't doubt 'Ganymede' that men are more stronger bodily than women, but not more so mentally. Men were created out of the dust of the earth, women not till that dust had been refined, purified, and made into a human body; therefore I believe women were intended to be spiritually stronger than men. Supposing, 'Ganymede,' you are right, and men are the wiser, do they use their superior wisdom striving to make us better or stronger, watching with jealous care lest one should fall? While trusting in the wisdom and strength of the other, we do not see it, so we cannot believe that men are the wiser. And yet men boast about the size of their brains. There are plenty of men who, if they formed a friendship with a woman who was weak and simple, instead of being a blessing to them are more often a curse. They teach the women to put their whole faith and trust in them, making promises that they never mean to keep, and when they have dragged them down till they are neither fit for God nor man, go on their way congratulating themselves on being stronger than those who have fallen.

"I believe it is wrong for a woman to think she [illegible] She must feel that she alone has to answer for her wrongdoing, and not [illegible] herself because she is a woman. I think she should strive to be good and true, doing all the good she can, not trusting to another to do it for her. It would avail her naught if she were accused of a crime to plead that she was a woman, and did not understand the laws, as she would be put down for being more knave than fool. She is expected to know enough of the laws to observe them as well as men, and think she should help to make them. 'Ganymede,' you say the only reason women are filling the positions formerly held by men is because they work for half the pay. I think the men have the remedy for that in their own hands. Let all men advocate and insist that in all places where women do the same work as men that they shall receive the same pay. If the men are so much better workers is it likely the employers will have their work done by women when they can do it better and for the same pay? I do not think the women workers will object to this plan. They will run the risk of keeping their positions, and find a use for their double pay. I think it is all nonsense that if a woman is married she must do just as her husband tells her. If he told her to put her head in a tub of water, by way of swelling her brains, and to vote according to his ideas, a refusal would be breaking her marriage vow. Well, 'Ganymede,' women only obey their lords when they feel like it, and just as soon as a man tries to make her, she leaves off altogether. Those homes are the happiest where each one respects the wish of the other, and where that little word must is never heard or used. Either married or single, I believe women would try to get elected men who aim for a high moral and temperate policy, and if they should enter into dishonest or corrupt practices they would stand a poor chance for a second term. I do not think women would whitewash them and treat them like martyrs, the way that is so often done now.

"Then, again, others say a polling booth is no place for a woman to enter. Who makes it unfit? I believe these places are only occupied by men, and because a few of them are there when a woman goes to vote is it possible these men cannot behave with common decency because a woman enters to vote for the most honourable candidate?

"'Sandy,' of Cromarty, remarks that it would add considerable to election expenses if women were allowed to vote. Why did he not say he was afraid there would not be enough money left to pay bribes and buy government supplies that were never in existence. You know, 'Sandy,' your clever men would not want to get government positions if they could not make a good thing out of it. Don't it make you shake when you think of what the country will come to when the women vote at the expense of the Government? You say that the women are leaving their natural calling for a sphere in commercial life if they are to do that kind of work. I hope they will get it to do. There are enough of them who have to do the drudgery now. There are plenty of women in this city who have husbands and places that they call homes, who have to go out to work day after day washing, sewing, teaching, or at anything they can get to or can do. Are these women able to look after their children as they should? Are their lives so bright that those who are able should not strive for something better? You say nothing about these, but when she takes a few of the easier positions, and wants an hour once in a while to go and vote, you raise a great hue and cry about her neglecting her home duties.

"I read of a case some time ago where a husband and wife had separated, and the man was trying through the court to gain possession of their only child. The woman was very respectable and hard-working, and well able to take care of the child, but the man was given to drinking at times. This woman, in her desperation, and as a last recourse, swore in court that she had never been married to the man, but it was proved that she was, and the child was given to the man. If she had not been married she would have had an undisputed right to her child, but being a wife she had not as much right to her child as the lowest outcast.

"Oh, 'Daphne,' can you say that a woman should not help to make the laws when they have the power to tear from her arms her child? Maybe it was all she had to brighten her life and to keep her from losing faith in God.

"Hoping my letter will not take up too much space, I will, wishing you and Mrs. Tramp a very happy new year, now close."

"Polly Pry" has related, in a plain way, a circumstance that shows clearly where even the law is distorted in favour of man. A similar case occurred in our [illegible] and as both parents were wealthy the case was carried from court to court. The husband became more dissipated after each legal argument, until at the last trial he was such a wreck that his wife won. When the case was first in the courts it was plain, from the man's appearance and general conduct, that he was not a fit person to hand children over to, but his purse helped him and there's where equity fails though laws are claimed to be just. That husband and I were school fellows, and I sorely regretted his downfall through the use of liquor, but our paths in life were so widely apart, he having dollars where I had not cents, that I felt it would be no good were I to remind him of our younger days and make an appeal to him to abandon his glass. He has passed over to the great majority, and notwithstanding his wealth and his once brilliant prospects, scarcely one, even of his own family, care to remember him. If the law operates against women surely they are justified in doing what they can to secure legislation that will recognize their rights.

* * *

"Minnie Merle the Spitfire," comes into the corner with a hop, step and jump, and lands with such weight on the log that she crushes part of it in, as will be observed in the illustration. Her Tomboyish ways frightened even the cat:—

"Mr. Tramp,—You did not ask me to come again, but all the same here I am, for as you may well guess if it once entered my head that you did not want me I would be sure to come if for nothing else than contrariness. Wouldn't I love to hear you trying to conciliate me when once my Scotch was roused? Who told me tramps were deceitful? Why, experience of course. Most of those that go our road come from Toronto, and are going to Kingston, looking for work and praying—it's the only time they ever do—not to find it. No you wouldn't take my bangs off either, for I haven't any, false or otherwise. How on earth do you know you didn't call on me. Put on your thinking cap, and see if you can't imagine me like some girl you saw during your holidays? Now, Mr. Tramp, I think you might send your photo. Do! that Mrs. Tramp you talk about need not know anything about it if you are afraid of her lecturing you, as I am sure you are. I wouldn't do any such a thing as take it to the looking-glass, much less put it in the kitchen—the idea! I would simply hang it, very carefully too, high up above the piano and then when we had company I would be sure to sing and play 'Goosey hangs high.'

"What were you doing, 'Ganymede,' at that college when you had so much time to size up the girls. It reminded me of the story about the school master who asked the first boy who saw another one looking off his book to come and tell him. It wasn't very long before one went up and told that such and such a boy was looking off his book. 'How do you know?' asked the teacher. 'Please, Sir, I saw him,' answered the boy. 'And where were your eyes when you saw him?' What could the poor child say. He saw then how he had been caught. Your birthday is on the 20th of Feb. is it? I fancy it would have been more suitable had it been the 1st of April. Do you really think that women did not help make the money in the country? If so open your eyes and look around, and if you are not so blind that you won't see you will soon find out that they do their own share and sometimes more, if you can't see it by doing that, and as you are so fond of turning to books for facts, it might do you good to read one on 'Pioneer Women.' I would like to see you put down some fact, that is something reasonable, instead of what you have been giving, why women should not vote, or in other words, have a say in the government of our country. If we take it for granted to be true what you say about the men's excuses we will be putting them down as a deceitful set—in fact a set of liars—a nice gang to have the ruling of our land in their own hands, aren't they?

"And you are against women suffrage too 'Tot'? Is not woman's position in the world to try and do all the good she can? Why then should she not enter politics as well as other things? Our Parliament at present is very corrupt as you know. Two of the members are in gaol and no doubt there are others who deserve to be with them. Since Sir John A. Macdonald died a great many things have come to light. I say let the women try, they are just as apt to do good in the House of Parliament as in the Church.

"Look here, 'Denver Don,' if you [illegible] get a 'hustle'—some more slang—there's no saying what we'll do with you.

"So you want some of the girls' experience with lovers, Mr. Tramp. Well I can't give you any. But you see I don't bother my head about them, and am not likely to be troubled with any yet a while at least, as I haven't my hair done up in the latest style nor a train on my dress yet. 'Ganymede' is spoiling, as you say, for a fight with me. [Is]n't he though? I'm not in it for a while anyway. But, Oh my, deliver me from any taffy he can make. I'm not in the market yet, Ganymede' but will send you word when I'm 'put up.' As to slang expressions, all I will say is 'Ditto.' He's like the wee lad, isn't he, Trampy? What he lacks in size he takes up in feeling. He reminds me of a toad with salt on its back.

"And now I wish you a merry merry New Year with as many certain lectures as you deserve, which, if you get them all, won't be fun."

I didn't ask you to come back. Why should I? Nothing was surer than your return. You couldn't stay away, as your love of mischief was bound to bring you here. Remember you? Of course I do. We'll never forget that day, will we? What fun we had chasing that goose we were to have for dinner next day. What a picture you were when I picked you up out of the mud and mire around the horse trough! How grateful you were to me for the gentle way in which I wiped the mud off your clothing with the only silk handkerchief I ever owned, and what a hearty hug you gave me, at the same time remarking, "Oh, I'm so sorry you're married. I would not have recognized you but for your reference to 'goosey hanging high.' We did hang it high, out in the driving shed along with your muddy dress. Oh, we're old friends, and we must cease making further fun of each other, for who knows what might happen when you're up." It is time you curled your bangs, and studied the fashion plates, as that brute man requires just such a woman as you to keep him in his place. Be sure and come again, and let me know what happened to that goat who so greedily devoured the auburn head which you let fall out of your window?

* * *

"Thornless Rose," of Lindsay, who has not visited us for a very long time, comes forth this week, and opens with congratulations:

"Dear Tramp,—I must write and congratulate you on the size and appearance of your paper, and the interest the boys and girls take in the different subjects for discussion. This is the first week the new frontispiece has appeared, and it made me laugh every time I looked at it. There is something so comical about the set of the corn-cob pipe and the inviting look toward the kids peeping through the bars. It was necessary to enlarge the Farm and Fireside in order to publish all your correspondence. I speak for a great many of my acquaintances who enjoy the Chats. Many a laugh and comment we have on them all. 'Ganymede' gets it from all quarters but he seems able to hold his own with them all. He must be a small man, and if ever he gets married he will in all probability be a henpecked husband.

"I see 'Lonely Tom' is an old resident of Mr. Henry's neighbourhood, and I have an idea who he is. I also enjoyed your letters written while there, and could see with my mind's eye some of the fun; how you and Mr Henry thought you were boys again, teasing the girls, and how the house would ring with laughter caused by jokes and repartee. I also could see mischief in your eyes as you led Mrs. Tramp off to dance the Scotch reel or whatever it was. May you have a jolly vacation every summer such as last.

"Judging from the vote given by the women of Toronto, the woman suffrage advocates should back down a little. I could scarcely believe my sight when reading the account in the papers. I don't think it is a woman's place to vote at elections, not but what she is as capable as men, for some men don't know how to vote only as they are told. I believe that a man is what his wife makes him, and her influence and usefulness is not at the polls. If I had a hundred votes I would use them against liquor being sold as a beverage.

"Every farmer should make his home attractive, and one of the reasons it is not is that so few who are farming are really owners. Tenants who pay more than they are able in rent will not spend time and money to fix up buildings, etc., for those who would take the last cent, whether the tenant is able to pay it or not. 'Lonely Will' wrote nicely on the inside attractiveness. If home is happy, and the boys and girls are allowed to have amusements and pleasure at home, they will prefer home to any place in the world. I was talking to a young man the other day who used to gamble, and he said if his parents had not been so strict he would never have gone any place else to play cards. 'Lonely Will's' face must be very long. He should take a turn in a reel and enjoy life and not be so serious about harmless amusements.

"I heard your Mr. Galbraith preach last Sunday, and thought his sermon excellent. He dwelt largely on the visible and invisible enemies of Christianity. It was my intention to only write a few lines, so if it is too long curtail it."

You naughty truant, where have you been all these months? The only account you give of your movements is going to hear Rev. Dr. Galbraith preach. He is a deep thinker, a great Bible student, and a kind hearted man. I thought I would have met you last fall, but was disappointed. Won't you attend my [illegible] will not only peep through the rails but boldly walk in. You are astray about "Ganymede." In this week's illustration the artist gives as his idea of what our lively friend looks at. Of course you have no difficulty in distinguishing The Tramp. Ain't it a life-like picture, but keep it to yourself which is the other fellow. A too tight grip on the reins by parents does not always prove profitable to the young folks, as sooner or later they will take the bit in their teeth, and then they rush madly after all manner of pleasures. Come again soon, as the fence corner is large and roomy.

* * *

Good day, "Ganymede," I thought I heard your solid footstep; just jump over, never fear the dog, and if we are prohibitionists we'll sample that bottle:

"Dear Tramp,—It's a fine day for our business. The wind is blowing a hurricane from the west; the heavens are as black as printers' ink, and the thermometer is at 50 degrees above zero. The snow is all gone, and the roads are in fine shape for losing rubbers. The plough will be started in a few days if this weather continues.

"You are right, 'Maple Leaf,' when you state that there must be some queer girls around Buffalo. My letter of January 2nd is quite correct in regard to them. I might also state that there is no difference between the girls here and in any other place. A girl is a girl, no matter where she lives. It appears to me as if it was bred in woman to look for a home for herself when she comes to a certain age; and the only way she can procure that home is by marrying one, and therefore she is always on the lookout for a desirable mate. Now, 'Maple Leaf,' if you will search your store of knowledge to the bottom I think you will admit, at least to yourself if not to these columns, that I have struck the truth fair and square.

"You are doubly welcomed to the fence corner, 'Zero.' I was agreeably surprised when I read your letter to find that I had one staunch supporter. I am not used to having support, and it sort of knocked me out for a time. Do you not think, 'Zero,' that 'Mortimer' must be the big-headed boy that 'Ecarte' has taken under her motherly care and is going to start a side show with? You know that he is continually cracking nuts and then eating them himself in the most self-contented manner, just like the epicure that 'Ecarte' claims he is.

"I admire 'Lonely Tom's' letter on card playing. I think that he has hit the nail square on the head and has done the best for his side of anyone yet. I think we had better leave the card question with 'Lonely Tom' and 'Lonely Will,' for they are well mated, as they are both lonely fellows.

"The Tramp seems to be poking fun at you, 'Raindrop,' for writing on both sides of the paper. He forgets to mention that by so doing you show that you are economical, and that, as everybody knows, is a good trait of character. I might just mention here that your correspondents can show economy, Mr. Tramp, by leaving their envelopes unsealed and marking it 'Printers' copy,' with a one-cent stamp. It is certainly wrong, 'Raindrop,' to lose money at the card table when that money is needed for something better. I do not know why you asked me such a question as that when you know I only uphold card-playing as a home amusement.

"Your description of 'Ganymede,' 'Winter,' is worse than 'Raindrop's,' for he has no conceit as you stated. As for the size of my head, it will hold its own with the most of them. You wish to know where I get my figures in regard to the ambition of women. I can [not] tell you. Go out among your lady friends and use your powers of observation if you have any, and tell us what you find there. That is all that is necessary to do.

"Now, 'Frenchy,' would you kindly tell the many readers of the Chats how much better the women did in voting for prohibition than the men. You are in favour of giving women a vote just to crush the liquor traffic. Allow me to tell you that if all women had a vote they would not vote in the same ratio as the men all over the country, [illegible]