

Erasmus; it is Rasmus, and no E to it; he wouldn't know me.'

'It ought to be Erasmus,' insisted Rod, 'for that's right.'

'What makes a name right, is bein' so,' said Rasmus, stoutly, 'and I don't care what my name ought to be. I know that it is; it's Rasmus, and you set it down so.'

There was now silence: Rodney and Rasmus each lost in thought. During this silence a head rose over some boxes piled not far off, and a pair of keen eyes, under heavy gray brows, began to scrutinize the man and the boy, sitting on the coil of rope. The head rose more and more above the boxes, until the shoulders came into view. The head was large, and had abundant long hair and full whiskers and beard, all iron-gray, like the brows. The face was middle-aged, sensible, and kindly, tanned as if by much out-of-door life. After a long inspection of Rodney and Rasmus, this person came round from behind the boxes. He was very snort—only the height of the boy Rodney, but his shoulders were broad. His hands were slender, and though browned, were soft, as if he had not worked at manual labor. He wore a corduroy suit, a soft, wide-brimmed felt hat, and a fine gray flannel shirt, laced up the front. He came softly up to the pair on the rope, and said, abruptly, 'I heard all you said.'

'We don't say nothin' we're ashamed of!' retorted Rasmus.

'So I should suppose,' replied the little man, blandly, taking a seat near them. 'I have seen you since you came on the boat, but I have not spoken to you, for what I have to say does not generally interest folks. I'm more acquainted with plants and insects, than with people. I spend my time in the summer, travelling about the country, and observing, and in the winters I compare in the libraries, and write up what I know.'

'There, now, brother,' said Rasmus, turning to Rodney, 'here's a learned man, as studies the roads. Wish you luck, dad,' he added irreverently to the stranger.

'I understand from what you say,' said the little man, 'that you contemplate a trip across the country, to New York?'

'What's that agin?' asked Rasmus, dubiously.

'You mean to walk from Pittsburg to New York?'

'Maybe we do.'

(To be continued.)

## The Boy on the Farm.

### His Pleasure and Work.

Pleasure and the pursuit of it are not first things inculcated in young minds among farming people. Pleasures come after duty has been done, and they are the rewards for the duties that have been well done. This placing of duty first is of great disciplinary advantage in the training that the country boys receive. The chores and crops cannot be postponed, and the prompt accomplishment of duties becomes a habit of life. Pretty nearly everything a country boy encounters day by day has a tendency toward the development of a healthy and wholesome individuality.

There is a deal of regular work that every country boy must do. This work, chiefly out of doors, inculcates industrious and regular habits, and at the same time contributes to a physical development which in after years is just as valuable as any athletic training that can be had. A boy who has the hard work and wholesome pleasures of farm life can hardly fail to grow up with sound lungs and heart, and with sturdy limbs. When the time comes, some of the world's great work will be shouldered by him naturally and as a matter of course.

A boy's early thoughts are not of his personal appearances, but of his surroundings,—the yard outside, the cattle and other interesting inmates of the great barn, the fields, and the unknown, wonderful possibilities of the woods beyond. He wants to investigate, to walk, to run, and climb. Here is where the country boy has the advantage of the poor boy of the city whose playground is the sidewalk, and whose object lessons are the unyielding faces of the buildings and the passing drays and street cars and itinerant merchants.

From exploring the yard, the country boy

goes naturally to the barn, with its cattle and mysterious mows and treasure-troves of hens' nests. His small eyes are round with the wonder of what he sees, and the suggestions of what he does not see; but all the time the wonder is giving way to shrewd comprehension. By the time he has explored the fields and woods, and has followed the windings of the stream to the borders of the next farm, and investigated the woodpeckers' and owls' holes in the decayed trees of the orchard, he has become master and companion of his surroundings. By that time, although he may not be beyond the kindergarten age of the city boy, he is old enough to begin work.

### What a Boy Means to a Farm.

Sometimes I contrast a farm supplied with a boy with one that is not, and wonder if everybody, the owner of the unfortunate farm included, does not realize the difference.

The farm boy is always in strong evidence. He is not an incumbrance, but a factor; and though he is in the way occasionally, and is sometimes mischievous and unmanageable, he is also a necessity and the source of endless pleasure and satisfaction. It is he who picks up stones in the spring, and potatoes and apples in the fall; who rides the horse for ploughing, does barn chores, cuts wood, attends school, runs endless errands, and still finds time for his own private world of amusement and plans. He keeps down the woodchucks and other mischievous prowlers that menace the farmer's prosperity. He manufactures successful scarecrows to ward off robins from the strawberry bed and crows from the cornfield. It is upon him that the household depends in the spring for cowslips, in the summer for huckleberries and blackberries, and in the fall for a rich store of nuts, and perhaps an occasional feast of partridge, or quail. He keeps the house clear of rats, and the flower garden clear of weeds, and the brook clear of trout.

But it is in the fall, when the bulk of the farm work is over, that the boy rises to his full strength. He has more time of his own and it is all occupied. His chores are accomplished with surprising rapidity and his own concerns reap the benefit of the saved time. His shrill whistle is heard from the barn and from the fields and from the garret and from the tops of the apple trees and from the cellar, and generally the whistle is accompanied by the anticipatory barks of a dog and perhaps the laughter and comments of some other boy.

Harvest days may be long but the boy does not dread them as he does some of the planting and cultivating days of spring and summer. There is something exhilarating in the shocking and husking of corn and in the uncovering and measuring of potatoes and turnips.

It is hard work, it is true, and the boy goes to bed with aching back and limbs; but for all that, harvesting seldom makes him weary of the farm, and he wakes in the morning with a fresh store of energy which will carry him through the day.

### In the Glorious Autumn Days.

And then the picking and sorting of apples, barrels and barrels of smooth, firm greenings and richly-tinted baldwins and fragrant bell-flowers. Some of them will go into the store-room and some into the cellar and some be sent away to market; and, if it is an apple year, there may be great piles of good keepers to store in deep pits in the earth, to mellow and flavor during the long winter months, and be uncovered in spring when apples are scarce. The boy has his favorites for each month, and almost each week, and he eats them with the keen, wholesome appetite of the country boy.

After the apples are gathered and stored away there are pumpkins to be brought in from the fields. They are piled in great yellow heaps, to wait until frosty nights make it necessary to remove them to some warm corner of the shed or barn.

Then comes the late husking and the stacking up of immense piles of cornstalks as reserve food for the cows during the winter; and after that, perhaps, a few days of cranberry picking.

By that time the work is being 'caught up' and the boy has frequent opportunities to go

after chestnuts and walnuts, and to set snares among the birches and in the deep woods where he thinks there are 'signs' of quail or partridge. He has chums who come to him from the neighboring farms, and they go off in couples and trios and quartettes, and they have calls and signals which enable them to scatter through the woods without danger of strays or defections.

### 'Helping Father.'

Even at its hardest, when there is a mortgage on the farm or more stock needed or new tools required, so that every dollar saved and every hour's work that can be added is something to be planned for and made the most of, the boy's lot in a loving home is not a hard one. He is 'helping father,' and so far as possible is doing a man's work. He knows just how much is paid on the mortgage from time to time or how much is being saved up toward another horse or pair of oxen or a plough, and whether mother will be able to have her new dress from the fall apples or have to wait until she sells her turkeys at Thanksgiving or Christmas, and he is keenly rejoiced or disappointed as the case may be. As soon as he begins to work, however young, it is 'our farm' and 'our work' and what 'we' intend to do, and though every bone in his body may be aching from a long day of picking up stones, he will look one squarely in the face as he says it, with his shoulders well back.

Then his sleep? During these times when his small shoulders are helping to sustain the farm burden, he just gets into bed at night and slips out at the 'Come boys, get up!' in the morning, and that is all he knows about the matter. Then, the leisure which comes after the hurry! what farm boy does not know the joy and exultation of it? There is no holiday so full and glorious as that which follows hard work that has been thoroughly done.

The chores that a country boy does are not always pleasant; they are far less agreeable than training for a boat race or a football game. In their accomplishment there is little applause; it is mostly humdrum work, which usually begins with the day and which does not end until darkness has settled down and it is time to sleep. But it is work which transforms the boy into a strong-hearted, clear-headed man; the kind of work which makes great men.—'Wellspring.'

## Our Diamond Jubilee.

It is just sixty years ago since the late Mr. John Dougall started publishing the 'Witness.' That is three score years ago. This is therefore our Diamond Jubilee Year as a publishing house. We are not asking for presents in commemoration of the year, and much less are we asking for Diamond presents. But we are asking all of our subscribers—and we want the request to be personal to each reader—that an effort be made to increase the 'Witness' circulation by the addition of five thousand new subscriptions mailed during this month of February.

'Messenger' readers into whose homes the 'Witness' has not been taken before, can join this 'Diamond Jubilee Club' on very advantageous terms, as they are entitled to get the 'Weekly Witness' on trial for all the rest of this year for only half the annual rate by filling out the Diamond Jubilee coupon which appears on page thirteen, and remitting fifty cents therewith. A brief notice of the 'Weekly Witness' will be found on page 2.

And those 'Messenger' subscribers who are already enjoying the weekly visits of the 'Witness' newspaper will be able to work up clubs for it and the 'Northern Messenger' to the advantage of all concerned. Our clubbing offers appear in this paper or will be sent on application with subscription blanks, etc., to facilitate canvass.

Which of our readers will be the first to avail themselves of our Jubilee Club offer by cutting out the Jubilee Coupon and remitting fifty cents therewith for the 'Weekly Witness' for all the rest of this year on trial?

And who will be the first to mail us during this month of February a club of 'Messenger' or 'Witness' subscriptions?