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Life, Literature and Education.

[Contributions on all subjects of popular interest are always welcome in this Department.]

PEOPLE, BOOKS, AND DOINGS.

Of inventions, as of the "making of books," there seems to be no end. To the adding machine, which is now in use in many large banks and business houses, has now been added a bookkeeping machine, which, it is said, with very little manipulation, makes all records except the ledger work. Again, in France, a Dr. Marage has invented a real talking machine, one which, upon the blowing of a current of air through it, enunciates all the vowel sounds, the volume of sound depending upon the amount of air-pressure exerted. This machine, which is to be used solely for determining keenness of hearing, is peculiar in that part of it is made up of casts copied exactly from the human mouth in different positions of enunciation, teeth and all, appearing exactly as in the human head.

Lord Avebury, better known as Sir John Lubbock, will celebrate his seventy-third birthday in a few weeks. He is noted as a writer of philosophic books, as a scientist and philanthropist, is head of the great banking-house of Robarts, Lubbock & Co., and has been president of nearly every learned association in Great Britain. The secret of his wonderful achievements lies in the value which he places on time. His industry is, in fact, prodigious, and he is said to employ even his spare moments in waiting for a train in reading or study.

The Canadian Magazine for June contains, as one of its "Canadian Celebrities" series of articles, a fine biographical sketch of the Rev. Dr. A. E. Burke, of Prince Edward Island. Rev. Father Burke is well known through his "Maritime Letters," to the readers of the "Farmer's Advocate."

Through the recent death of the Rev. A. B. Nicholls, husband of Charlotte Bronte, the little museum which enthusiastic admirers of Charlotte Bronte have established in the old stone rectory at the top of the bleak hill at Haworth, has been enriched with a number of interesting relics of the family. Among the most interesting of these is a charming portrait by Charlotte Bronte, who was an artist, as well as a novelist, of her sister Anne. Another is a striking silhouette of the ill-fated Branwell Bronte, cut in black paper touched with gold; also a large plaster cast of a medallion of him, by Leyland.

AN IDEAL RURAL SCHOOL.

Those who believe that a common school should be something more than a barn, with windows, black-board maps and desks and stove; who believe that environment tells in the rearing of child-character, and who would like to see the rural school made the social center of its community, may find their desire

realized and their ideals in a large measure justified in the Rittenhouse school, at Jordan Harbor, County of Lincoln, in the Niagara Peninsula of Ontario, a district now boasting, with good claim, the title, "Garden of Canada," and not less honored as the theatre of some of the most thrilling exploits of early Canadian history.

The immediate neighborhood of the school is an early-established settlement of immigrants from the State of William Penn, and broadly classed by the general designation, Pennsylvania Dutch, a name that stands wherever its representatives are known for integrity, stability, thrift, good farming, and good, if somewhat plain, living. This latter characteristic is perhaps hardly true of the younger generation, which, trained in English-speaking schools, has become ameliorated by Anglo-Saxon influence, and combines with the sterling character of its ancestry the polish, mobility and social graces of Young Canada. And right here let us observe that perhaps nowhere is to be found a better illustration of the fact that satisfactory rural conditions can

humor to be found among the Canadian-Pennsylvania Dutch.

So much for the locality. The school itself stands half a mile south of the Lake Ontario shore, on the west side of the townline between the Townships of Clinton and Louth. The school is in Clinton, while an assembly hall, called Victoria Hall, is just across the road, in Louth. On the Clinton side, lying between the school and the lake, is the ninety-acre farm donated by Mr. Rittenhouse to the Ontario Government for the purpose of a horticultural experiment station. Both buildings, as well as two acres of grounds surrounding each, have been provided and equipped with the most elaborate appointments by Mr. M. F. Rittenhouse, a native of this vicinity, who has made a fortune in the lumber business in Chicago, and whose contributions to charity and benevolence in his home land, as well as in his adopted city, are unostentatious but large, including, in one instance the defraying of a High-school student's expenses for several years without allowing the origin of the gift to be divulged. Just how much has been spent on the

organized what it calls a lecture and entertainment course. The evening of May 24th is reserved for entertainment, and the programme of music and literary features this year, in Victoria Hall, would have done credit to any city club.

The schoolhouse is a commodious, handsome, red-brick structure, the class-room of which will nicely accommodate fifty pupils, all provided with single desks. The floor is covered with linoleum, and all the appointments are the very latest and best. In the southern wing is a library containing over 2,000 volumes, costing not less than \$1,500. The northern wing is used as a museum of biological, geological and archaeological curiosities, such as extensive collections of Indian arrow-heads, with the location and date of finding ticketed on each. The school is heated with a hot-water system, and in the basement are modern lavatories.

Outside, the front lawn is profusely embellished with trees, shrubs and grass. At the back, on the portion shown in our picture, is a large playground, a part of which in winter is converted into an open skating rink. This rink was largely patronized last winter by both old and young. A small building at one side affords a comfortable place for putting on the skates. Behind the rink is a small toboggan slide for children, from the platform of which our photograph was taken. At the north, and back of the schoolground proper, is a plot of one acre, where school-gardening is carried on. The whole two acres of land is surrounded by a spruce hedge and spruce trees, with a row of hard maples as well on the two sides and at the rear. Altogether, it is a school to delight the heart of teacher, child and parent. The average attendance at present is thirty pupils. In addition to school-gardening, manual training and nature study have been introduced along lines similar to the system in the Macdonald Consolidated Schools. One teacher has charge of the whole school.

Crossing the road, you enter an arched gateway bearing the inscription, Victoria Hall. This, also, is a beautiful building, containing the caretaker's residence and a fine assembly hall for school concerts, lectures and entertainments, such as described above. It is fitted with opera chairs, a first-class piano, and a stage platform. Here, too, are sheds, a water tank (partly shown in the illustration), hothouse, and plant for acetylene lighting. Half a mile north, at the lake, a gasoline engine is used for pumping water into the large tank. There is a hot-air engine in the basement of the hall, used for pumping rain water into a smaller tank in the hall attic. The two-acre grounds include a fine grove of trees on the north.

It is superfluous to add that the school is popular, as is also the hall, not only in the immediate neighborhood, but for many miles around. The villages of Jordan Harbor, Jordan Station, Vineland, Campden and Beamsville, as well as the intervening country, all take a kindly interest in this hall, and help to fill it to



Victoria Day at the Rittenhouse School, Jordan Harbor, Ontario.

only be produced in communities where thrift and good farming provide the means for indulging a wholesome taste for the aesthetic, so that the people may cultivate and gratify their tastes for music and art, as well as good furniture, carriages and other material comforts, without facing a grim spectre of shanty, poor-house or prison at the other end of the hall. The thrifty inhabitants of this favored section consider it a religious duty to live within their means, and to make money before spending it. The logical result is plenty of money to spend, and that they use it to good purpose is apparent to the ever-welcome visitor who is entertained in their palatial homes or sits at their sumptuous board. And the visitor will soon be struck with another fact. It is said the Dutch are slow, phlegmatic, and devoid of sense of humor. That may be true to some extent of the ancestors in Holland and Germany, but, whether owing to the Pennsylvania or the Canadian environment, an unmistakable change has been wrought. For drollness and shrewd point, for good nature and heartiness, it would be hard to excel the streak of native

school at Jordan Harbor, Mr. Rittenhouse has never made known, but we have pretty reliable authority for placing the estimate at \$25,000.

An excellent half-tone illustration of a front or roadside view of this school appeared in "The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine" of May 3rd, 1906. The accompanying engraving shows a snapshot, taken from the toboggan-slide in the rear of the playgrounds, on Victoria Day, 1907, by a member of our editorial staff, who had the good fortune to join the crowd of several hundred people assembled from a radius of five or ten miles to celebrate the 24th of May with athletic sports in the afternoon, and with an evening programme, rendered by a local organization, known as the Lake Shore Literary Society. A word, in passing, about this latter institution. Forty years ago, in Mr. Rittenhouse's schoolboy days, a very successful literary society was conducted in the old schoolhouse, which, by the way, is still standing. Some twenty-five years back the Lake Shore Literary Society was started, and has continued under that name ever since. For three winters the Society has