

THE ROMP BEFORE BED.

When Bessie gets her nightie on and wants to romp with me, And dodges here and scurries there, and shouts with baby glee, I wouldn't change my fortune for the state of any king, I wouldn't give her love for all the joys that wealth may bring! Her laugh is sweeter than the song of any sylvan brook, And I see God's best promise in her sinless, happy look— Her little toes, all pink and white, appear and disappear, As, dancing 'round me with delight, she calls me "daddy dear."

I catch her fondly in my arms and toss her in the air, And set her down to chase her as she hurries 'round a chair, While mamma calls, "Now, that will do! You're catching cold, I know— It's time that children were in bed!" We never heed her, though, And Bessie makes a rush, while I whoop like a savage chief, And dodge away and keep it up till some one comes to grief!— I know a man whose lot is drawn— who'll catch it dreadfully

When Bessie gets her nightie on, and comes to romp with me.

—S. E. Kiser in Chicago Record-Herald.

Leaving the Farm.

It was Sunday afternoon. Hank Peters, dressed in his best clothes, was making a neighborly call at Deacon Pepperton's home. But somehow conversation lagged, in spite of the visitor's brave attempts to keep up a cheerful flow of words. The deacon's face was unusually long, and every now and then he sighed dolefully.

"What's the matter, deacon?" ventured Hank at last. "You seem to have the blues to-day."

"Mebbe I have—'tain't surprisin'." "Let's hear about it," said Hank, sympathetically.

"'Tain't nothing new," returned the deacon feebly, with another sigh. "I'm jest sad, that's all—sad, an' a bit lonesome at times. Mrs. Pepperton is lonesome, too. So's the farm—an' the pony—an' the dog. Everything's lonely. Jest you wait till your own boys an' girls leave home—then you'll understand how we feel."

For a moment, there was silence. Mr. Peters, thinking his own thoughts, looked curiously at the speaker's lugubrious countenance. There was sympathy in the look, and yet, combined with sympathy, there was something else in the grave blue eyes that studied the deacon's face.

"What made 'em all leave?" asked Hank at last, quietly.

"I dunno. First John went, then Mary, then Tom. Now Harry's gone, an' there's nobody left 'cept Mandy and me—an' the dog an' the pony an' the farm. Well, the youngsters have all got work in the city, an' they're scrapin' up a bare livin' there, I guess, but they could 'a' done better 'round home on the land I calkeriated to give 'em. But no, they wouldn't stay—said they'd enough o' farmin' to last them a lifetime an' longer. Why, to hear them youngsters talk you'd think that a farm ain't a fit or a pleasant place for boys an' girls to live!"

"Some farms are not."

"Eh?" said the deacon, looking up quickly.

But Hank had an innocent, far-away look in his eyes that disarmed suspicion.

The next day was Monday—wash day, of course. In the midst of the usual festivities incident to that weekly occurrence, Mrs. Pepperton made the discovery that her supply of soap had "run out."

"What'll I do," she demanded, as she rushed to the back door and announced the discouraging fact to her husband.

"Shoo-o! You don't say! Is all the ten cents' worth I bought you gone already?"

"Yes; an' I've got to have more right away."

Suddenly his face brightened. "I'll go over an' borrow some at Hank's house. They buy by the box, an' are sure to have a plenty."

And away he went across lots. Presently he returned, his hands full of soap and his head full of news. "What d'ye think?" he began.

Mrs. Pepperton snatched the soap, and retreated to the kitchen, muttering that she was "too busy an' flustered to think of anything 'cept the washin'."

But the deacon, eager to unload his store of news, followed her into the house.

"You'll never guess what Hank is up to now, woman! My! I never see such a feller for fool ideas!"

Curiosity conquered hurry. Mrs. Pepperton's lips and eyes bulged full of questions.

"Well," said her husband, after a dramatic pause, "you may'n't believe it, but that feller is jest a bustin' himself makin' a croquet ground out in his side yard under some apple trees. He's diggin' an' levelin' an' haulin' clay, an' poundin' it down. An' he's

THE PANAMA CANAL COMMISSION.



THE PANAMA CANAL COMMISSION.
From left to right in rear row: Colonel Frank O. Hecker, Wm. Barclay Parsons, C. E. Grunsky, B. M. Harrod. In front row: General Geo. W. Davis, Admiral J. G. Walker (chairman), Wm. H. Burr.

In organizing the commission which is to have charge of the construction of the isthmian canal, the character of the selections made by President Roosevelt justifies the hope that a high grade of ability will characterize the management of the great enterprise. Admiral Walker, the head of the commission, has had a long experience in dealing with a variety of naval and engineering problems and as president of both the Nicaragua and the Isthmian canal commissions has become intimately familiar with the work now in hand. Major General George W. Davis, who will represent the army, as Admiral Walker represents the navy, will bring to the administrative phase of the commission's work the useful experience acquired as military governor of the Philippines and Porto Rico. William Barclay Parsons is the engineer who supervised the construction of New York's mammoth subway system. William H. Burr, professor of civil engineering in Columbia University, is an expert builder of bridges, docks and other public works, as well as a former member of the Isthmian Canal Commission. Since two of the other members of the commission are also engineers it is safe to assume that the canal enterprise will be dealt with as a practical engineering problem. The difficulties to be overcome are not extraordinary or novel, but they call for expert knowledge and hard work. Questions of business methods and finance and of laborers will be involved. The object of the commission should be not only to secure the construction of the canal according to the best standards of modern mechanical science, but to observe wise economy in administration. The President's appointees seem to be in the main men who will keep these ends in view and take a proper professional pride in achieving success.

bought a croquet set an' a big, red, two-seated swing, an' two hammocks, that he's swung close together under a spreadin' tree, an' don't know what else—I didn't stop to see any more."

And, panting and growling, the good deacon subsided into a chair and fanned himself vigorously.

"For the land sakes!" ejaculated Mrs. Pepperton, her mouth wide open with astonishment.

"An' there's worse yet," continued her husband. "Bill Waddle told me this mornin' that Hank Peters had bought a rubber-tired buggy, so's his youngsters could have it to ride in whenever they pleased."

"You don't say! Why, those 'ere Peters youngsters already have bicycles, an' everything else that heart could wish for."

"Yey, it looks like a fool business," commented the deacon. "Somebody oughter warn Hank against sech extravagance. Why, our own youngsters had no sech pamperin' an' gim-cracks when they was at home—no, sir-ee!"

Somehow that last sentence made Mrs. Pepperton look suddenly sober and thoughtful. The silence of the big, empty house seemed all at once to crowd into the kitchen. The clock ticked nervously, insistently.

"Darn that clock!" cried the deacon, irritably. He, too, seemed to feel the stillness that had suddenly pervaded the room.

He looked at his wife; she looked at him. There was a long pause; her face flushed—grew pale. Hesitatingly she crossed the room to where he sat, his eyes fixed moodily on the floor. A moist, soapy, wrinkled hand slipped into his and a soft voice said sadly: "Mebbe Hank is right, after all."—Indianapolis Sun.

ROYAL FAMILIES NOT SO OLD.
Mikado Dean of Them All So Far as Ancestry Is Concerned.

When it comes to "old families" the Mikado of Japan can fairly assert that his family stands at the head of the list, for his ancestors have been rulers of Japan for 2,550 years, according to a fairly well authenticated genealogy.

This would place the first ruler of the family in the year 646 B. C., and make him a contemporary of Nebuchadnezzar's father.

Extraordinary as this claim to ancient lineage is, there seems to be no valid reason for doubting it, and the Mikado always begins his proclamations with "Seated on our ancestral throne from time immemorial."

The Czar is a mere mushroom compared with the Asiatic ruler as regards family.

The best he can do in the way of ancestry is to trace back to Michael Romanoff, who became Czar in 1613, only a few years before the Pilgrim Fathers landed on Plymouth Rock.

And the Czar can claim descent from the Romanoffs only through a round-about way, as the male line of the

house came to an end in 1730, and the direct female line expired in 1762, 14 years before the American Declaration of Independence.

The reigning family of China is even more modern than that of the Czar. Though the Chinese Emperor claims to be descended from the Sun, historically his family is younger than that of a Mayflower descendant. He is descended from a Manchu chief, who made his appearance in China in 1644, and drove out the lawful sovereigns of the country.

This Manchu chief was a successful soldier, and that is all that is known about him.

He was, in all probability, what would be called in these days a self-made man.

Edward VII., if he were not a king, would be known as Mr. Wettin, for that was his father's family name. His family trace back to 919, which is a pretty long way for a European King to go.

The Emperor William of Germany, if he were bound to have a family name, might call himself Mr. Burchard, for he is descended from Burchardus, of Zolorin, and Burchardus is nothing more than the Latin form of Burchard.

But people had no surnames in the days when old Burchardus lived, and when the family began to prosper and built a castle at Hohenzollern they took their name from that place.

The Emperor goes back in his genealogy to 1061, the days of Burchardus.

The Emperor of Austria calls himself a Hapsburg, but really the male line of the Hapsburgs became extinct years ago, and he represents it only through the female side. His family name, if he had one, would be Eberhardt or Everard, for it was a man of that name who laid the foundations of the fortunes of the family in the male line in Alsace in the ninth century.

Wheat in Algeria.
Practically all the wheat grown in Algeria is hard wheat. The total product in 1902 was 21,000 metric tons. Of the annual crop all but a very small portion is consumed in Algeria. The native population use only the Algerian wheat, which is made into bread, semoules and couscous. The latter is a dish highly esteemed by the Arabs, and very extensively used. The flour used for breadmaking and other cooking purposes by the European population is imported.

A Word from Brer Williams.
A New York minister having declared that there will be no female angels in heaven, Brother Williams remarked: "De will er Providence be done! En I'm sho' dar's wisdom in it—kaze dar's six Mrs. Williamses gone dat way, en de bigges' problem I had lately is—how ter squar' mysef wid all er dem w'en I gits dar!"—Atlantic Constitution.



Have Your Farm Vaccinated.

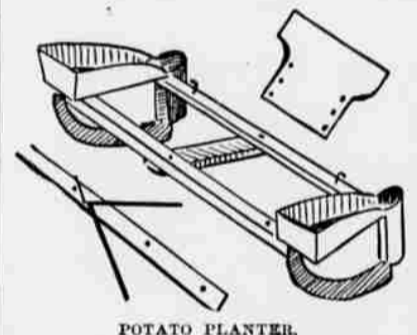
Have you had your farm vaccinated? If not, you should proceed to have it done at once.

Science has done a great deal for the farmer. It has killed the bugs and worms that prey on his crops; it has treated his animals when sick and saved their lives; it has experimented with seeds and raised the quality and quantity of their yield; it has done a great many things to help him achieve success. The latest service of special interest of which we have heard is noted in the National Geographic Magazine, where it is shown that the process of inoculating sterile ground and making it bring forth the fruit in abundance is an easy task. Inoculation to prevent smallpox, diphtheria, rabies, etc., we know about, but it is quite as mysterious as the inoculation of old worn-out soils to make them fertile.

The germs make for fertility of the soil. They are collected or generated by the department of agriculture, according to this veracious authority, and sent by mail in a small package about like a yeast cake. The cake is said to contain millions of dried germs. It is thrown into a barrel of pure water and turns it a milky white. Seeds of grain and grasses are washed with this water and when planted are said to produce wonderful results even on what is regarded as exhausted soil. The land is really treated to an inoculation and cured of its disease of barrenness. Have your farms vaccinated and get rich from the big crops you will raise.—Minneapolis Journal.

Potato Planter.

C. P. Jones, of Gage County, Nebraska, sends Iowa Homestead his plan of a potato planter: "Take an old corn planter with wide shoes at the rear part and if there is a division there knock it out with a cold chisel," he says. "Take an old boiler or a piece of heavy tin, cut and bend to fit the back of runners large enough to give plenty of room for pieces of potatoes to go through. Take a piece of 2x4 three feet six inches long and bolt the back of each runner at the ends. Take another piece of 2x4 twelve inches longer for the front, leaving six inches project at each end on which the boxes are to rest. Make the boxes as shown



POTATO PLANTER.

in the illustration. Attach the remainder of the planter at the back with the L bolts shown. Fasten a strong board back of the boxes, but in front of the wheels for two boys to sit on and do the dropping. Plant and harrow just as they are coming up."

Teaching a Calf to Drink.
Pour fresh milk in the pail to the depth of about one-half inch. Gently place the calf's nose into the milk and against the bottom of the pail. It will soon get a taste of the milk and will begin to sip and suck on the bottom of the pail. When the milk is gone, replace it with the same amount as before, and continue till the calf has enough. If care is taken not to put enough milk in the pail so as to cover the nostrils of the calf, it will soon learn to drink. When it has learned to drink, a small quantity more can be added each time until the lesson is fully learned and then the amount required for a feeding may be placed in the pail without fear of the calf not drinking it.

Farm Notes.

Good farming is impossible without good teams.

The secret of success in stock raising is superiority in quality.

Superior roadsters are gifted with both speed and bottom.

Feed the pigs refuse fruit and vegetables from the garden.

The best sheep is the most profitable one under all circumstances.

Breed the horse first for strength and endurance and then style.

A horse with an unruly disposition in very many cases is of little or no account.

Clover is one of the best of green manurial crops, a great restorer of worn-out lands.

Medium-sized sheep usually have the best and heaviest fleeces.

It pays to have horses perform work that are naturally good walkers.

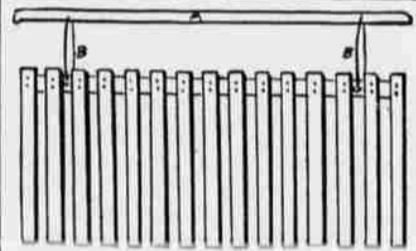
One acre of clover and one acre of corn are worth three acres of corn for making healthy porkers.

A fast walk and prompt-telling road gait are, to a great extent, matters of education.

Colts require plenty of exercise in order to develop their lungs when they are growing rapidly.

Good Flood Gate.

A subscriber to an agricultural paper sends a sketch illustrating a water gate and writes: "Some flood gates are built so as to catch and hold all trash, though swinging freely, and others will allow obstruction to be freely disengaged and pass away. One of the best I have found is composed of a 2x6 upon which slats are nailed



GATE FOR A WATER GAP.

of a proper length to reach the low water mark. This gate is hung to a log or beam extending across the stream, attached by chains or wire. In this form we find a very good gate for a water gap."

Use the Harrow on Corn.

Many farmers read with surprise the statement that a harrow can be run across young corn without damage to the crop. Try it and see. It is better to use the iron-toothed harrow with teeth slanting backward at an angle of 45 degrees. It is remarkable how much work a three-section harrow will do in a cornfield in one day during the early spring season. Harrow corn just as it comes through the ground. Harrow crosswise again within a week. In some cases it is necessary to weight the harrow. A seventy-five or ninety-tooth harrow will cover fifteen acres of corn with a slow team and twenty acres if the team is a quick stepper. If doubtful about the use of the harrow on your particular corn crop, take it out and run it for twenty-five feet and test the work done by pulling at every stalk passed over to find whether or not the roots still hold. Harrowing will lay the crop down for a day or two, but it soon straightens. Harrowing kills weeds and destroys young grass, lets the air into the ground and is the best possible method of cultivating young corn until the crop reaches eight or ten inches in height. Use the harrow on corn.

Farm Labor in Demand.

It is estimated that in seven States out west 45,000 men will be needed this summer to harvest the wheat crop. Crops are increasing faster than labor to secure them can be had, and this, too, in the face of the fact that nearly 1,000,000 immigrants a year are coming to America. Last year college students were attracted to the west by the offer of \$2.50 a day and board and lodging, but so many fell by the wayside in the hot sun that scarcely enough remained to marry all the daughters of the rich farmers. Harvesters can find employment from May to nearly October, moving up from Texas to Canada; wages are high and there is plenty to eat. With a foreign war now in progress and the regular demand for foodstuffs in the countries in Europe which always buy from Americans, on the increase, the outlook for a great business in exporting agricultural products is excellent.—Baltimore Herald.

Twenty Thousand White Ducks.

The largest duck farm in the United States is at Riverton, Va. There are 20,000 white Pekin ducks in the place. In the laying department 1,500 mother ducks are kept in 10 pens set apart for them—150 to the pen. The hatching is done by incubators, which during the hatching season bring forth 2,000 ducklings each week. At the age of 12 weeks they are slaughtered for the market. It requires a carload of food every week to feed the ducks.

Sitters to Rent.

A poultryman of Montgomery County, Pa., has been doing a thriving business buying hens at low prices and renting them out as sitters, charging seventy-five cents for the season. At present he has nearly one hundred to rent out, and claims he saves the feed, gets seventy-five cents a head for the hen's time and has them again to sell in the fall.

The pigs will do well in the apple orchards, especially if there are many sweet apples.