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VIRGINIA FARMS

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"Mostly Boys"

The newspaper humorists and poets are responsible for much that goes a long ways toward making life brighter for the majority of folk, and they deserve all and more recognition than they get. Among the best of the western artists in this line, and one of the best in the country, is Bide Dudley of the Kansas City Star. Mr. Dudley sings of the quaint and homely things of life, and his verses recall days that are bright spots in the average man and woman's life. Under the title of "Sketches; Mostly Boys," Mr. Dudley has recently issued a handsome book containing boys' poems that give ample evidence of the fact that the writer was once a hearty, wholesome, mischievous boy—and hasn't entirely recovered yet. The book is handsomely illustrated with drawings by H. Wood, and the letterpress by the Hudson-Kimberly Co., is excellent. The man who reads "Sketches" will have the pleasure of living again several happy hours of childhood.

VIRGINIA'S TEMPTATION

Virginia seems likely to have a spirited contest over a proposed section in her new constitution restricting the appropriation for the education of the negroes. The plan suggested, and strange to say it has received considerable support, is to provide that the appropriation for negro schools shall be in proportion to the taxes paid by the colored people.

The Richmond Times denounces the scheme in the following language: "The state will cruelly have neglected its duty if it give to the white children the means of primary education, and withhold it from the children that are black. Nor do we believe that the people of Virginia are willing that this cruel thing be done."

Senator Daniels, in a letter recently published, says:

"Primary education ought to be free to all. With the three R's open to everybody they have the keys that unlock the book of knowledge, and it is their own fault or peculiar misfortune if they do not then work out their own salvation. You will observe that I speak of primary education. I do so because I think much of education has been wasted, and there is ample room for improvement and reform without disturbing the foundations of education and denying to any one primary opportunities. * * * Our own people are liberal by nature and history, and there was never a time when they could better afford to be liberal by interest. Every southern state and every border state has had a constitutional convention, and some of them two constitutional conventions since Virginia's last one, in 1867. All of these states have had racial questions to deal with, and some of them were stirred to the highest pitch of indignation by the atrocities of carpebag government. Yet in no one of them has any such radical move as the partition of school funds by severe racial lines ever found favor. This is a most significant fact. It shows the concurrent opinion of all commonwealths similarly situated to ours that no such step is advisable. We would isolate ourselves by taking it and chill the temper of reform."

The question raised is one of very serious importance—of far greater importance than the educational qualification which has been adopted in some of the states. An educational qualification, however objectionable it may seem at the time, is only a temporary barrier, for with a proper school system the franchise is soon within the reach of all; but to disfranchise the negro by an educational qualification and then deny him the means of getting an education, is a much more serious matter.

While it may seem a hardship for the white people to bear so large a share as they do of the expenses of instruction for colored children, they find some recompense in the fact that they own a large share of the taxable property. In no state of the union is there an attempt to make each family or class pay for its own education. In every community the expense of public schools is paid by general taxation. Very often large taxpayers have few children or none at all, but they are compelled to contribute to the support of schools because every citizen of a community is interested in the education of all the members of the community. Life and property are more secure and existence more tolerable in proportion as the people are developed in mind and character.

If the people of Virginia are shortsighted enough to yield to the temptation and abandon their efforts to edu-

cate the black people among them, they will pay a terrible penalty in being compelled to live among people brutalized by ignorance. The amount of money saved would be a small return for the peril which they would bring upon themselves and their children. Jefferson, whose dust makes sacred the soil of Monticello, was a firm believer in a common school system which would place the advantages of education within the reach of every child. Surely Virginia, the home of Jefferson, will not be the first state to enter upon a restrictive policy which would condemn a portion of the people to enforced illiteracy.—From The Commoner of May 10, 1901.

Could Have His Place

Representative John Lamb of Richmond stopped in the house document room yesterday, where he was reminded of a story he heard on his last trip, says the Washington Post. It related to a negro church, whose pastor preaches long sermons.

"The sermon on the particular Sunday in question," said Capt. Lamb, "was with reference to the prophets. The preacher had gone through a long list, and finally came to the minor prophets.

"There was Malachi," said he. "What place shall we give Malachi?" "An irreverent colored worshipper, restless under the long winded sermon, at this rose up. "Give Malachi my place, Brother Jones," said he, "I am tired, and going home."

Addressing House of Commons

It is well not to try to speak too soon. Randolph Churchill only opened his mouth once during his first session, and that was to ask a question. John Morley sat watching and listening for months before he ventured to catch the speaker's eye, and his first performance was by no means successful. We all know the story of Disraeli's early collapse, and a more tragic episode is thus related by Lord North's son, Frederick: "I once attempted to speak in Parliament. I brought out two or three sentences, when a mist seemed to rise before my eyes. I then lost my recollection, and could see nothing but the Speaker's wig, which swelled and swelled till it covered the whole house. I then sat back in my seat and never tried to speak again, and immediately applied for the Children Hundreds, feeling convinced that Parliament was not my vocation."

Physiologists have never tried to explain why people who are loquacious, and even garrulous, as long as they maintain the sweet security of a seat, halt and stutter and perhaps break down hopelessly when they attempt to speak on their legs. Every one of us must some time or other have suffered from one of these sudden lapses of memory. Lord Roseberry not long ago came to a dead halt in the middle of a speech; Lowe's hopeless collapse in the House of Commons is still painfully remembered, and poor Black Rod on his first appearance clean forgot the message from the Lords. Not even Campbell-Bannerman's promptings restored his memory, and the Speaker was obliged to say that he understood that a message was being brought to ask the attendance of the lower house in the lords. And even Jupiter has nodded. Mr. Gladstone himself once lost his cue and stopped abruptly, when Disraeli bent forward and said, "The right honorable gentlemen's last word was so-and-so."—Longman's Magazine.

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