

FROM CITY TO FARM

"Ye who listen with credulity to the whisperings of fancy; who pursue with easiness the phantoms of hope; who expect that age will perform the promise of youth, and that the deficiencies of the present day will be supplied by the morrow;—attend to the history of Rosetas, Prince of Abyssinia."

By ERNEST MCGAFFEY

Author of "Poems of Gun and Red," "Outdoors," "Poems of the Town," Etc.

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The Rural Swain

"Zekel crep' up quite unbeknown
An' peeked in thru' the window,
An' thar sat Huddy all alone
'Ith no one nigh to hinder."

Cupid works overtime in the country. A hard-worked little god he is indeed in the rural districts. If it be true or false that it is "love that makes the world go round," it is certainly a fact that the main world for the boy between 17 and 21 in the farm lands, is that delectable land of Heart's Desire, bounded on the east, west, north and south by the vision of his "best girl," and festooned by dreams of various circuses, band concerts, dances, Sunday school gatherings, "fish fry," picnics, barbecues, and buggy rides.

To see a boy emerge from the chrysalis stage of 16 or thereabouts, into the full-grown butterfly of 17 or 18, is something marvelous to behold, and instructive to contemplate. The transformation is invariably accomplished by means of a red-wheeled buggy. This really marks the time when he strikes off the shackles of boyhood and emerges into the fierce white light of country society. He becomes at once a target for the side-splitting witticisms of the country editor with his: "Jake Beaver seems to be driving out pretty regular towards the Osgood farm now, Sunday nights. Hey! Jake! When shall we send our congratulations?" This makes "Jake" feel as though he had drawn a capital prize at some grand lottery.

A boy without a buggy is absolutely not in the "running" at all. A great deal of "sparking" is done while on the road to the various entertainments, and Cupid in the country would be especially appropriate with wings, for the boys usually drive at break-neck pace, just to scare the girls and impress their sweethearts with their prowess as drivers. A boy who is driving "the old man's rig, feels about as important as if he was wearing his elder brother's old clothes, and every one knew it. But with a new buggy, with a heavy near-fur robe for winter, and a fancy blanket for summer, and a new buggy whip, and a "steppy" nag to leave the dust in "the other fellow's" face, the rural swain is in his element, and on the top wave of delight.

We saw a great deal of the evolution of the rustic cavalier at the farm. Saturdays and Sundays especially were his busy days, and the road in front of the house was scalloped with the print of his buggy wheels. You may be sure that the question of dress was a most particular point with him, and to save time and to be strictly en regale, he always wore "patent leather" shoes. Soft hats were the style, black in the fall and winter, and light in the summer and spring. Some of the boys were prone to silk mufflers and elaborate ties, and were really gotten up regardless.

As is usual in such cases, there is always some one boy who is known as "the best dressed fellow in the township," and he is especially careful to live up to the reputation, even if it takes nearly all he can earn to appear with the latest novelties in dress. Some of the boys were variously the best dancers, the best boxers, the best swimmers, skaters, etc., but the most important member of society in the community, the "Ward McAllister" of the district, was the boy who was the best dancer and "caller-off" at the dances; for he could make or unmake either a boy or a girl who wanted to shine at these assemblages.

A curious feature of the "courting" which was carried on, was the gatherings of the young boys and girls who played games among themselves, but who did not dance. These embryo society events would often be attended by eager crowds of as many as 30 or 40 couples, most of them girls and boys of about 14 to 16, and they always went home early, and it was as if Cupid was merely making tentative arrangements for more serious affairs. Sometimes at these little "parties," as they were called, there would be an attempt to have a quadrille or two before the party broke up, some of the more ambitious of the girls wanting to try their wings before "budding" out at the regulation dances.

Then after a year or more you would see some of the boys and girls who attended these "parties" at dances, and you would know that nevermore would they be seen with the youngsters, but that they had fairly entered the arena of society, and were now escorted by the boys who owned their own buggies, and who were preparing to enter the doubtful state of matrimony in the immediate future.

Boys and girls marry early on the farms. A great many of them are married, the boys at 21, the girls at 18 or younger. A good many are married, boys before they are 20, girls at 16. This makes for early grandparentage, and extensive families. Courtship, therefore, is confined to a period of from two to three years, to five at the furthest. A year's courtship is a fairly long time and marriage and giving in marriage occupies

but a brief space, all things considered, in a rural community.

When the staring and glaring circus advertisements first made their appearance on the dingy bill-boards in the neighboring towns, there was immediately great excitement in the community, and much talk about who was going with who, and what the girls were going to wear. There was quite as much heart-burning among the girls as there would be at any fancy-dress ball at Newport, and the amount of crisp sarcasm indulged in by the girls was as usual in such cases made and provided. If the boys were short of money, there was the usual scramble to get some, and any chance to get out and do a little extra work was always snapped up in a hurry.

Circuses were always a long ways off, at some one of the larger towns, but such an event drew on the neighborhoods for 30 miles around. Those who went from the smaller towns usually could go by rail, but the main body of the circus goes west in buggies.

As we had seen a tiger or two in our time, these events did not excite us beyond our control, but we rather lost caste, I imagine, by our staying away from where "the monarch of the jungle" and the corrugated-hid rhinoceros disported themselves, and the bareback riders contorted. A long line of buggies, with a joyously anticipatory couple in each vehicle would pass the house in the early dawn, and if we happen to be up, we would be greeted always with "ain't you going to the circus?" A "liberal spender" among the swains was sure to make a hit, as it was supposed a "line" could be gotten on his liberality as a husband in that way. Red lemonade, peanuts, taffy, the concert after the show, dinner, the "flying dutchman," the side-shows, the fortune tellers—well, there were several ways in which the "nimble shilling" could be induced to change hands, and along about midnight the rigs would come trooping back, an occasional yell from some jolly Lothario notifying us of the passing of a home-bound couple.

The "band concerts" were always given at the towns where they boasted of a town band; and they were attended by the boys and girls for miles around. Those in our section were held invariably on Saturday nights. The band gathered at a little plank pavilion on one side of the public square opposite the courthouse, and there discoursed sweet music from about eight to ten p. m. The rural swains came in great droves, buggies laden, and from all points of the county. They bought the girls supper at the hotels or restaurants, ice cream at the drug stores, and lemonade, peanuts and popcorn wherever these necessities could be found. There was visiting among the various neighborhoods, and a pernicious amount of reckless driving about at racing speed around the dusty streets and corners of the town.

Sometimes a boy who had been bitten with a desire to be "a bad man" would get into an argument with the police force, one in number, and he escorted to the town jail, there to ruminate until the next Monday morning, but usually there was very little trouble at the concerts. The music was the best they had, and if you did not like it, you could go home. We attended at least one "band concert" that I remember. The music was of the "catch-as-catch-can" order, Queensbury rules, classic holds barred, and every fellow for himself until the finale, when they were all supposed to unite for the end of the piece.

At the country dances the swains appeared in full force, dancing until daybreak, and with their best "bibs and tuckers." The dances were the most important of all rural functions, and by the time a fellow began to take a girl regularly to these events, there was no doubt but that he had been "hooked, played and landed," and that there was something shortly to be heard of in the matrimonial line. And yet, as everywhere, the course of true love went awry, and we would see some one of the boys driving swiftly past with a new girl on the seat beside him, and the girl he used to drive with appearing in public with another cavalier, and by those "presents" we knew that the silken cord had been loosed, and that Cupid had received another "back set."

The "fish fries" were where old and young congregated, but the boys and girls never missed these exciting occasions. They were usually held in some grove near a river or lake, and the men went early to catch enough fish to supply the dinner for all. The women brought huge baskets loaded down with everything possible in the way of good things to eat, and sometimes an organ would be brought along, a platform built, and to the music of fiddle and organ a dance would wind up the entertainment.

All boats in the vicinity would be pressed into service, and the woods would ring with the good times the folks were having. Impromptu swings would be installed, and the shrieks of the girls who were being hoisted heav-

enward shook the leaves in the branches above.
"Oh! George, tell them to stop,
This was the cry of Marlar,
But the louder she hollered
The harder they pushed.
And the swing went a little bit higher."
"Fish fries" broke up about dark, and the grind of wheels on the gravelly spots and the shouts of the returning couples soon died away along the road.

Barbecues were rather infrequent affairs, sometimes occurring when a noted political speaker was to make an address. They were held usually at the county fair grounds, or out in the woods somewhere, and whole heaves, sheep and hogs were roasted, and literally tons of eatables consumed. There was always something to spend money over, and while the boys and girls seldom enthused over the oratory, they did over the good things to eat. Picnics were also infrequent happenings.

The buggy ride is at present the piece de resistance of country courtship. It takes the couple away from the prying eyes of little "Bub" and "Sis," and it usually loosens the tongue of many a bashful swain. There is something for a boy's hands to do, and his feet are under cover. The awkwardness of hanging on to a chair and trying to think of something to say is gotten rid of, and the motion of the flying buggy cheers, but does not inebriate him. He is therefore more at an advantage, as to carrying on a conversation, and many a proposal is jolted out on a buggy-ride which otherwise might remain unspoken.

The fashion mainly in our neighborhood was for the girls to go bareheaded on these drives, and Sunday afternoon and evening the dull reverberation of wheels along the road, and the distant rumble over nearby bridges, told that Cupid's cohorts were bestirring themselves. In the winter time there was of course the shifting from buggies to sleighs and cutters, and even the old-time bob-sleds, when parties went out. Skating parties were also popular, and at all seasons they held the dances.

"Bridge what," needless to say, was unknown. "Progressive euchre" an unknown quantity. "Receptions" there were none, and as for "tea-pouring" or any such lack-a-daisical performances, they were unheard of. Cupid depended mostly on the red-wheeled buggies and the country dances, and his success justified his selections. Of course the time-honored institution of "sparking" was not done away with. This interesting process, however, is mostly confined to Sunday nights, and may be, and usually is protracted until around Monday morning early, say close to one o'clock a. m. Sunday nights the lights in many a farm house shone out over the fields, and inside the houses the various couples talked over their dances, and parties, their neighborhood topics and matters of local interest, and scanned the family album, and gossiped and bantered one another.

And here, too, Cupid appeared behind the scenes, and matrimonially inclined, wove the webs of mutual trust and confidence between the couples, and aided in unfolding the mystery of his divine art. Outside the stars gleamed, and the trees waved by still fields. Inside, perhaps the organ sounded softly, or a fire glowed in an old-fashioned fireplace or in a more modern stove.

After the "old folks" went to bed and there was nothing to disturb the quiet of indoors but the monotone of the two responding voices, Cupid betook himself to other times and spaces, confident that his spell was already progressing bravely.

In the country papers the "correspondents" from the various quarters of the township regularly reported all these different courting "bees," and the usual jokes were leveled at the swain when the paper made its appearance. Indeed, he would be somewhat disappointed if he thought that his comings and goings were to pass unrecorded, and generally had a retort ready for the greetings which he may be sure will follow his appearance in public.

And how quickly marriage follows on in the country! And be sure that whoever are invited to the wedding, all the country round knows of it. And the thoughtful groom, knowing the custom of the country, provides himself with various boxes of cigars, and the newly-made bride cooks plentiful quantities of toothsome viands, and together they sit down in their darkened home, awaiting with pleased expectancy the arrival of the band of neighbors intent on "shivareeing" them.

With a fearsome blast from shot-guns, dinner-horns, sleigh-bells, cow-horns, dinner-bells, cow-bells, etc., and a terrific din made by beating a suspended circular saw with a sledge-hammer, the entertainment opens, and the "reluctant" couple are finally driven to open the doors and welcome "all hands." Cigars are passed around, and pies, sandwiches, doughnuts, cakes and other eatables disappear as if by magic, there is a great deal of hand-shaking and hearty good wishes from all assembled, to the bride and groom, and at last, with a parting salute from all artillery and noise-producing instruments, the serenaders file out and fade in the surrounding darkness.

And then the happy couple come out and sit on the porch and discuss those matters and things over which no one has special interests but themselves, and the katy-dids strike up while the stars shine down in an entirely friendly and disinterested manner, having seen these things before.

As usual, Cupid has won again.
ERNEST MCGAFFEY.

Washington Whisperings

Interesting Bits of News Gathered at the National Capital.

House Remembers Cannon's Birthday



WASHINGTON.—Speaker Cannon was 72 years old the other day, but being a presidential candidate, he was not aware of the fact until the anniversary was half over and then reminders came thick and fast, and brought tears of emotion from him. The first hint was contained in a telegram from a constituent in Danville, Ill., who is the family Bible expert for that part of the country.

"What day of the month is this, Busbey?" he asked of his secretary. "Here is a fellow who has the nerve to say I have turned another milestone."

A calendar was consulted, and "Uncle Joe" acknowledged that the boys back home had one on him. In a few minutes Mr. Busbey was called out to the corridor and notified that about the biggest floral piece ever seen in the capitol would arrive at four o'clock, and that there would be big doings in the speaker's room.

"Uncle Joe" was kept in ignorance of the arrangements, and when, at the

appointed time, he was summoned from the floor of the house by the entire Illinois delegation, he was genuinely surprised.

Representatives Graff and Rainey, one a Republican and the other a Democrat, spoke felicitously and presented the floral piece, which was six feet high, of dogwood blossoms and American Beauty roses. As the speaker started to reply, a tear trickled as he said:

"The sweetest flowers of all
Bloom above the parting wall."

He then spoke of his long career in congress, thanked his 27 colleagues individually and collectively, and a few minutes later was called back to the floor of the house. A roll call was being taken on a motion to recess until the following day, but when it was half over Champ Clark jumped to his feet and said:

"It seems to me this is the speaker's birthday."

This was the signal for general applause, and the speaker blushed, smiled and bowed like a schoolgirl as he waited for it to subside. Then he gave voice to his appreciation.

"I move that in honor of the occasion the roll call be suspended," said Representative Macon of Arkansas. This motion was passed with a whoop and the Democratic filibuster was relaxed for a few minutes at least.

Tattooing Very Popular in the Navy



AN INTERESTING report on tattooing in the navy has been made to Secretary Metcalf by Surgeon Ammon Farnholt as a result of his observations while serving on the receiving ship Independence at the Mare Island navy yard in California.

The enlistment records of 3,572 men were examined by Dr. Farnholt, this being the enlistments on the Independence for eight and a half years. These records show that the percentage found tattooed on examination for second and subsequent enlistments was 53.61, and the percentage found tattooed on examination for first enlistment was 23.01. The opinion is expressed that about 60 per cent. of the sailors who have served over ten years in the navy are tattooed.

Dr. Farnholt says it is not fair to assume from the figures that 23 per cent. of the male citizens are tattooed, as a considerable proportion of applicants for enlistment are sea-faring men. He was surprised to find so many, probably eight per cent. of the recruits, who are tattooed and who denied having been at sea or even having lived in seaport towns. In Dr.

Farnholt's opinion, the custom is more common in camps and in places where men are collected in large numbers than is imagined.

The report contains statistics regarding the location of tattoo marks and the frequency of various designs. Letters, mottoes, initials and allied devices lead the list and constitute about 26 per cent. of all ink marks. Coats of arms and national emblems follow with about 25 per cent., then flags, anchors, etc. Female figures are shown in 18 per cent. of all tattooing.

The usual types were found among them, such as "Holdfast" (a letter on the back of each finger); apprentice knot; pig on dorsum of foot, which, among the older men, was supposed to shield its possessor from death by drowning; crucifix, which in case of death would insure burial in a Christian country, and "Jerusalem cross," which would answer the same purpose on Moslem shores. Of the latter Dr. Farnholt found 14, all in re-enlisted men. One man was adorned with a sock covering each foot and extending above the ankle; another with a fox hunting scene. In one case the entire back was covered by a large Masonic column and globe. "Little Egypt" figured in two cases and a copy of a beer trademark in one. Designs showing the Goddess of Liberty, ships, eagles, pigs and apprentice knots were found to be more popular on re-enlistment than among those who came directly from civil life.

Big Weekly Pay Roll of Wage Earners



WHEN the bureau of the census took the census of manufactures in 1905 it also undertook the task of classifying the weekly earnings of the employes in all kinds of manufacturing establishments. Questions as to the actual earnings of all employes were asked of each manufacturer in the country and the surprising number of 123,307 establishments replied. This number of establishments is 62.9 per cent. of all enumerated in the census and they employ more than one-half of all the wage earners engaged in the factory industries in the country.

In a bulletin just issued by the census bureau, containing compilations of these statistics it is shown that of the 3,297,819 wage earners covered by the investigation, 2,619,053 were men; 588,

599 were women and 90,167, or 2.7 per cent., were children. The pay rolls of the 123,307 establishments for one week aggregated \$33,185,791, and of this amount the men received \$29,240,287, or 88.1 per cent. of the whole; the women received \$3,633,481 or 11 per cent., and the children \$312,023, or 1 per cent.

More than half of all the wage earners included in the bulletin earned \$9 and over during the week. The earnings are classified for totals of states and of industries, while 23 industries are shown in detail by states and territories and 25 states by leading industries. Average earnings are also computed for all the states and industries shown.

The figures show that in 1904 the average wage earner employed in manufacturing received \$10.06 per week. The average man received \$11.16, the average woman \$6.17 and the average child under 16 years of age \$3.46.

In the figures showing the average wages by states Illinois is fifteenth with \$11.65. The highest is Montana with \$18.19 and the lowest is South Carolina with \$4.68.

President Roosevelt a Good Churchgoer



THE president is not only a good churchgoer himself, but deserves the thanks of at least two Washington preachers for his aid in boosting the size of their congregations.

With his predilection for having everything reformed it is no more than natural that his church also should bear the magic label. It is Grace Reformed, a rather small, gray stone building on Fifteenth street, not quite a mile from the White House.

Grace Reformed is not a fashionable church. The congregation is unassuming in appearance and would be decidedly modest in size if it were not for the president. He fills cer-

tainly two-thirds of the pews. So far as audiences go the preacher may have to look for lean years after March 4, 1909.

While the president fills dozens of the pews by the mere fact of his expected presence he occupies his own seat in solitary grandeur. Once in a while he goes with his wife and family to St. John's, but they don't seem inclined to reciprocate the attention. St. John's rejoices in the local title of "the church of state," and always reserves a pew for the president of the United States, though it had not been in demand for a good many years when Mrs. Roosevelt became lady of the White House.

Whether he goes to his own church or not, no one but Theodore Roosevelt, unless it is some fiend or guest accompanying him, which rarely happens, is ever seated in the president's pew at Grace Reformed. Two secret service men always accompany him, but do not sit with him.

Not Time's Slave.
A traveler, finding that he had a couple of hours in Dublin, called a cab and told the driver to drive him around for two hours. At first all went well, but soon the driver began to whip up his horse so that they narrowly escaped several collisions.
"What's the matter?" demanded the passenger. "Why are you driving so recklessly? I'm in no hurry."
"Ah, g'wan wid yez," retorted the caddy. "D'ye think I'm goin' to put in the whole day drivin' you around for two hours? Gitap!"

Preparation for Knowledge.
No man can learn what he has not preparation for learning, however near to his eyes is the subject. A chemist may tell his most precious secrets to a carpenter, and he shall be never the wiser—the secrets he would not utter to a chemist for an estate. God screens us evermore from premature ideas. Our eyes are hidden that we can not see things that stare us in the face until the hour arrives when the mind is ripened; then we behold them, and the time when we saw them not is like a dream.—Emerson.



First Girl—What did he do when you told him he mustn't see you any more?

Second Girl—Turned the lights out!

Millionaire Whiners.
Senator La Follette at a recent dinner in Washington said of the millionaires who complain about the harm that they and their affairs have suffered from attacks:

"These whiners, with only themselves to blame, remind me of a bad little Primrose boy."

"He ran howling to his mother:

"Oh, ma, Johnny has hurt me!"

"And how did bad Johnny hurt mother's little darling?"

"Why, I was a-goin' to punch him in the face, and he ducked his head and I hit my knuckles against the wall."

Laundry work at home would be much more satisfactory if the right starch were used. In order to get the desired stiffness, it is usually necessary to use so much starch that the beauty and fineness of the fabric is hidden behind a paste of varying thickness, which not only destroys the appearance, but also affects the wearing quality of the goods. This trouble can be entirely overcome by using Defiance Starch, as it can be applied much more thinly because of its greater strength than other makes.

Belgium Buying Autos.
Belgium is now importing yearly about \$1,500,000 worth of automobiles, motorcycles and bicycles. These imports have quadrupled in four years.

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