

LET THE BOY CHOOSE HIS CAREER

Should Settle for Himself the Question of Trade or Profession—The Round Peg in the Square Hole—Cases of Foolish Parents and Disappointed Boys—A Good Farmer Who Made a Poor Business Man. "Each Boy, in a Sense, Under Sealed Orders."

By Margaret E. Sangster.

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NO MORE important hour comes to your boy or girl than that in which he decides what he is going to be. The hour is critical, momentous, and fraught with issues that affect his whole future.

A boy arrives at fifteen or sixteen is sufficiently developed to be aware of individual tastes and tendencies. I am not alluding to lazy boys who are without ambition or to irresponsible ones who are content to drift aimlessly ahead. Plenty of such fellows there are, who have been badly started or in whom the ordinary well-raised lad, son of a typical American home when he reaches college days be of what career or profession to adopt, the boy should settle it for himself.

A young man under twenty was the son of a very successful merchant. His father, shrewd, pushing, energetic, and confident, had built up a flourishing business and naturally desired his son to enter it and carry on what was well begun. To a youth with business aptitudes it was a golden opportunity. But this boy did not inherit the peculiar talents of his father. He was of different fiber, molded in a different shape. An artist to his fingers' tips, he lived in a beautiful dream-world, a world, however, of severe study and jealous exactions. Before a canvas he would sit and work, unconscious of fatigue. Buying and selling were not in his line.

He pleaded to be allowed to go to Paris to study. The request was denied. Forced into the warehouse and tied to un congenial toil, he made a sorry figure, and in less than four years, suddenly

broke down, and after a short illness died. The round peg could not fit into the square hole. Over the grave of his first-born, too late, the hard-headed parent realized that he had made a mistake, one of those irrevocable mistakes that E. K. Still has branded in his poem, "The Fool's Prayer." Alas! how often obstinate fathers and ambitious mothers make blunders when they force by their insistence of harsh commands into places for which the boys are unfit.

Another case was of a lad who, strange to say, wanted to be a farmer. So many farmers' sons rush away from the farm and hurry the night into the city, that an exception to the general rule. He loved the soil, the smell of the earth turned up by the plough and the look of the things growing. He loved the farm animals and they loved him. But his father said, "Ned must go away and make a fortune. There is no money should be glad to get out into the world. I would have gone had I had the chance."

The boy went, started long enough to prove that he had no fitness for the eager life of the town, and no adaptability to its requirements, and, worn out and homeless, returned to the place which nature meant for him. A daughter of the same house went out from its doors, and made a financial success, but her brother settled down contentedly in the simple life that suited him.

Ah, friends, money is not the only thing worth having, nor is the ability to accumulate it the only ability you should crave for a son.

A quiet lad of nineteen, a young man of fine promise, was talking with me the other day, and told me frankly that he was dissatisfied with the work he was doing in a wholesale grocery. He had known that he was giving the best and most conscientious service he could, and that his employers found no fault, also that his salary had been raised.

"We can't always do the work we like, Hugh," I said. "I know that, but I know, too, that a man should not spend his life doing what he dislikes, if there is other work he could do that he would love. I want to be a surgeon. Why must I put all my strength into keeping tally of sales of goods, and doing a thousand and one things that mean nothing? Father opposes me, but I believe I've reached a place where it is right for me to oppose him."

"This boy had always been able to look after hurt animals, bandage broken limbs and coax poor lame dogs back to health. I am hopeful that he may be permitted to try work in the grove he is fitted for, that he may not have to rattle round in the square hole when there is a niche that will be right for him."

I have seen, and so have you, men in the pulpits who were conspicuous failures there, although they would have made excellent grocers, competent engineers or admirable builders. Mistaken parental vanity, thinking little about concentration had encouraged these men to choose the ministry when it was not their vocation.

So very wide is the range of employments and so easily may boys discover to what their bent inclines them that every boy should be helped to the place in life where he can do and do his best. "The labor we delight in physics pain." Especially is it almost wicked to select for a boy an occupation on the score that it is gentlemanly or respectable while some other employment is the reverse. Any honest labor well and worthily done is respectable. No calling is beneath a gentleman if the man be gentleman enough to adorn it.

Ruskin, who had great insight, said in a lecture to workmen: "There must be work done by the hands, or the soul could live. There must be work done by the brains, or the life we get would not be worth having. Whichever variety of work your boy put concentration have the chance to master its technique; let him do it with skill as well as with love."

Be sure that most boys who have character and perseverance will find their level and show what is in them. If there is nothing in themselves they will never amount to much. A boy who successfully tries and successively abandons a half-dozen kinds of work is probably a dawdler and indolent, and there is little hope for him.

In our country both rich and poor men work and their sons work. At times a boy must take the first opening. The son of a widow who is worn out with caring must help his mother. Fortunate lads may elect what they will do. He must do something at once; the first thing at once. But when all the circumstances favor and are propitious let the boy decide. Round pegs need round holes. The mathematical boy may become a mining engineer. The poetical boy may be a future playwright. The boy who longs for the sea may find his career in the navy. Each boy is, in a sense, under sealed orders now. Let us prepare him to obey them when the books are opened.

YE DISTRICT SCHOOL.

Pretty Girls and Students Give a Comical Entertainment.

(Special to The Times-Dispatch.)
ASHLAND, Va., December 3.—"Ye District School," a well known monologue burlesque was rendered in very amusing and interesting manner by the young ladies of the town and the young men of the college and town in the main hall of the college chapel to-night.

It was the nearest approach to theatricals that the projectors of the entertainings would permit, and was thoroughly enjoyed.

Such well known pretty girls as Miss McCullen, Miss Wright, Miss Blanton and Miss Potts presented a highly comical appearance attired in short calico skirts and Sts Hopkins curls. As the different ones were recognized on the platform in their various make-ups, they were vigorously applauded. Mr. Robert Nixon acted as schoolmaster.

The following took part in the performance: Miss Lancaster, Miss Blincoe, Miss Baldwin, Miss McCullen, Miss Midyette, Miss Blanton, Miss Rice, Miss Vandiver, Miss Potts, Miss Wright, Miss Hunter, Miss Pettit, Mr. Blakey, Mr. Howard, Mr. Barnhardt, Mr. Wallace, Mr. Ellis, Mr. Cameron, Mr. Nixon, Mr. Harrell, Mr. Daniel, Mr. Conley, and Mr. Hartsbrook. Refreshments were served, and altogether nearly \$100 was realized for the Ladies' Aid Society of the Duncan Memorial.

The Business Men's Association, of Ashland, last night decided to co-operate with the Ashland Musical Association and the town of Ashland in building the new town hall. A much larger building is now under consideration, one affording school room facilities. By the enlarged scheme the building is to cost about \$5,000, and plans will be called for at once.

Mr. A. Coulter, of Richmond, who is now living here, directed the last rehearsal of the Ashland "Wednesday Club" Assembly.

Mrs. A. V. Welsh and Miss J. Brennan, who have been stopping at the Henry Clay Inn will leave to-morrow for Florida for the winter.

Mr. R. Ashby Taylor and family, of Richmond, will visit the family of Mr. Charles E. Potts here to-morrow.

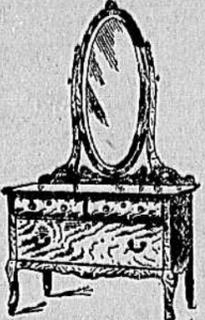
The young men of Ashland gave a special german at the Henry Clay Inn to-night for the young ladies of Ashland and their visiting friends.

Cutting the Timber Away.

(Special to The Times-Dispatch.)
GREEN BAY, Va., Dec. 3.—There are within a radius of five or six miles of this point eight or ten stave heading and saw-mills, which are rapidly cutting up every particle of available timber which can be had at a reasonable price. The stave mills are using large quantities of pine which can be used for other purposes, and the mills are turning out large bulks every day, the greatest trouble experienced is getting enough laborers.

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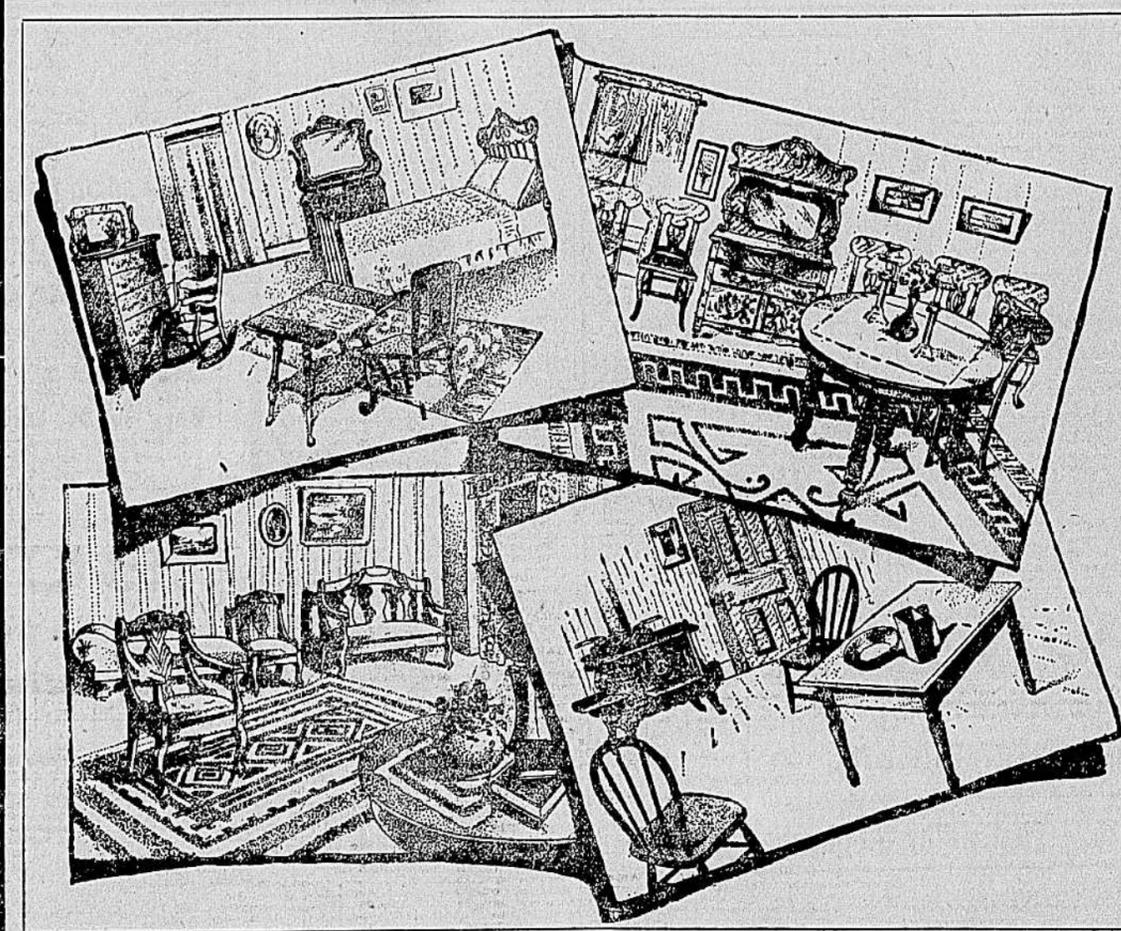
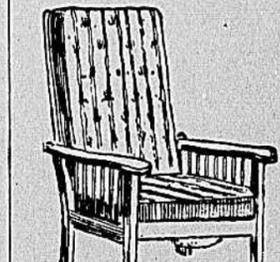
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A Lady's Handsome Desk, golden oak or mahogany finish, regular value \$7.00, for **\$3.95**



A beautiful mahogany finish Music Cabinet, piano polish; regular \$9 value, for **\$4.95**



SPECIAL.
This Sideboard value, solid oak, large size, well made and nicely finished, for **\$10.95**

Parlor Furnished Complete as low as \$40.00 and up to \$600.00.	Dining Room Furnished Complete \$39.50 and up to \$450.00.	Bed Room Furnished Complete \$42.50 and up to \$500.00.	Kitchen Furnished Complete \$21.50 and up to \$75.00.
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OLD POINT COMFORT.

(Special to The Times-Dispatch.)
OLD POINT COMFORT, Va., December 3.—Real, genuine winter weather has not reached Old Point yet, and the guests at the hotels still spend most of their time out-of-doors. The large game preserves of the Chamberlin on the Chesapeake River are proving very attractive just now, and the guests who are fond of that kind of sport go up for several days at a time.

Admiral William C. Wise, United States navy, retired, and Mrs. Wise have returned from a visit to New York, and are at the Chamberlin for the remainder of the winter.

Major Albert S. Cummings, who has been stationed at Fort Monroe for the past three years, has recently been ordered to Fort Wadsworth, N. Y. Mrs. Cummings and Miss Cummings have been closely identified with the social life of Old Point, and their departure will be greatly regretted.

Congressman Sidney J. Mudd, of Maryland, was a guest at the Chamberlin for several days last week.

Other guests are Mr. and Mrs. Thomas D. Connor, New York; Mrs. S. S. Armstrong, Miss Armstrong, Philadelphia;

Mr. and Mrs. P. P. Wilcox, New York; Dr. and Mrs. Alfred Westney, Atlantic City, N. J.; Mr. and Mrs. Milton L'Eclaire, New York; Mr. and Mrs. Charles A. Chinn, Philadelphia; Mr. and Mrs. P. M. Barr, Englewood, N. J.; Mrs. V. Bertrand, Miss Emma Bertrand, Herbert Bertrand, New York; Mr. and Mrs. R. Weber, New York; Mr. and Mrs. G. B. Martin, Passaic, N. J.; Mr. and Mrs. F. H. Whitlock, New York; Mr. and Mrs. Fred Owen, Philadelphia; Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Osborn, Brooklyn; Mr. and Mrs. F. H. Appleton, Bangor, Me.

German at Pulaski.
(Special to The Times-Dispatch.)
PULASKI, Va., December 3.—The opening german of the season was given at Maple Shade Inn last night by the Pulaski German Club and was a most enjoyable affair.

The first half was beautifully led by Mr. M. D. Bush with Miss Fitzhugh and the second half by Mr. M. D. Langhorne with Mrs. Langhorne. The figures introduced in both halves were exceptionally pretty. The following couples participated: Mr. Calfee with Miss Watson, Mr. Howard with Miss St. Clair, Mr. Leo

Fitzhugh with Miss Ducloux, Mr. Wilson with Miss Jones, Mr. Legrand with Miss Major Watson, Mr. Price with Miss Trolinger, Mr. Richardson with Miss Myra Fitzhugh, Mr. Gillespie with Miss Helen Campbell, Mr. Hieslip with Miss Wilson, Mr. Blandford with Miss Austin, Mr. Hawley with Miss Evans, Mr. Hull with Mrs. Hall, of New York; Mr. and Mrs. D. W. Barnard and Mr. and Mrs. E. Umberger.

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