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OLD FRIENDS.

We love them very dearly, the old familiar places,
The road where every turn we know, the trees that o'er it bend;
The meadow grasses waving, and the little flower faces,
And the lifted hills, benignant, each one a steadfast friend.

We love the soft and springing sod, oft as our footsteps press it—
The little wayside briars that reach their clinging fingers out;
The lowly nest half hidden in the dusky hedge—God bless it!
And all the common things that gird the common day about.

There's one wide branching maple that was tall when we were tending
The baby lambs beneath it in the years of long ago.
There's one great shadowy oak that stood, its friendly shelter lending
To our parents, when they courted, its tenting shade below.

The trees, the hills, the pastures, the lanes we oft have trodden,
Of us they are a part, our blood has caught a thrill from them.
We may walk to-day in purple, where once we walked in hodden,
But the selrf-same soul is in us; we are theirs in root and stem.

We love them very dearly, the old familiar places;
In Heaven I think the road will wear a look like ours at home;
The fields of living green recall the pleasant beckoning faces
Of the meadow-lands that hold us fast, how far soe'er we roam.
—Youth's Companion.

ROOM-CLERK BROWN

PERSONS who are naturally bright and observant, and who give their whole attention to some particular pursuit or branch of business, often develop wonderful powers of observation and memory. Thus with the teacher whose life is given to the mental growth of innumerable pupils, the physician with his recurring army of patients, the successful merchant, the commander of an army.

And so, in a way, was it with Brown, room clerk of the Ridgewood. He had accepted the position as a distinct rise in his fortunes, and had taken to it a naturally good memory and a genial disposition. Guests came to look upon him as a rather pleasant feature of the house, and the proprietor realized that to him was owing much of his own growing reputation as host of a select family hotel. Transients who stopped for a few days, and then went away for years, came back to be surprised and warmed by the cordial recognition of Room-clerk Brown. And not only were they recognized, but their preferences and peculiarities were remembered. This guest was assigned a sunny room, and that a quiet one on the back, and very likely at the end of a passage; the man who loved checkers was unobtrusively made acquainted with others of like tendency, and the golfers and fishermen and confirmed trampists were not forced to wait for slow circumstances to bring them into contact with congenial associates, but were being introduced to them within an hour or two after their arrival. And it was all through the watchfulness of Brown.

Hecker, the misanthrope and wanderer, who did not have a tie in the world, and who rarely remained at a place more than a week at a time, was one of these. He had once spent three days at the Ridgewood, and ten years later, happening to be crossing that section of the country, had again gone there.

It was during the height of winter travel, and as he stood behind the group that was pushing eagerly forward to register, he wondered if he would be able to obtain accommodation.

But at that moment he caught a glance from room-clerk Brown, cordial, reassuring; and a few moments later, when he had edged his own way forward to the desk, he was accosted with: "Glad to see you back, Mr. Hecker. Your old room, 37, is all ready; and we will have the evening papers sent up, as usual. I suppose you will want a carriage in the morning? Yes, well, we will have it round at the same hour, and the same driver, too—the one you said knew how to keep still, you remember? He is still driving."

Mr. Hecker actually smiled as he went up to his room. He did not have a home in the world, and scarcely a friend; but this, he was pleased to think, seemed very much like both.

He had come with the intention of staying two or three days, or perhaps a week; but he had no place planned for the week following. So he spent that at the Ridgewood, and the succeeding week, and month, and then did not go. Two years had slipped away, and he was still in his old room, 37, to which the evening papers were sent up, as usual. And every pleasant morning the same carriage and driver came round at the same hour and took him for a drive somewhere out into the country.

Of course, Mr. Hecker was rather an extreme case, and one to which the proprietor was fond of alluding when speaking of his room-clerk, Brown; but there were others who came for a day or week or month, and who lingered on indefinitely. In time the permanent and regular guests of the Ridgewood became so numerous that transients were often forced to seek accommodation elsewhere; and so the name of Room Clerk Brown went abroad.

One day, as Mr. Hecker was going down a side street near the railroad station, he saw the Ridgewood porter grasping a shrinking figure which seemed too frightened to protest or even to attempt escape. The porter was hurrying him toward the hotel, and appeared to be both exultant and angry. As they came opposite, Mr. Hecker looked at the porter inquiringly.

"What's up?" he asked.

"It's a thief I've catched, sir," the man explained; "he was stealing a ride on the south-bound train, and the conductor put him off. I knew the fellow soon's I set eyes on him. Stand up, you?" to the prisoner, "don't go to falling down now. Wait till you get into jail for that. You see, sir, he came here twelve years ago and said he lived ten or fifteen miles back in the woods somewhere, and that his children were starving and he must have work. I felt sorry for him, and went to Mr. Brown, who got a job for him as assistant porter. And, sir, would you believe it," shaking the prisoner violently and becoming red in the face as he did so, "the villain worked just three hours, and then stole Mr. Brown's watch. He said his wife was sick and needed medicine, and that his children were starving; but they always say that. Why, sir, he was so obstinate that he wouldn't even give up the watch at first; he said if they'd only let him sell it and send the money home, they could put him in jail for all the rest of his life. Just think," contemptuously, "nobody but a fool would ever say a thing like that. But then, the fellow ain't over and above sensible, as anybody can see."

"Perhaps you have made a mistake," suggested Mr. Hecker, mildly. He was looking at the pitiful, shrinking figure before him, and not at the porter. "You know people often do. It was twelve years ago, you say, and the man only worked a few hours. Perhaps this is not the one. He has not acknowledged it, has he?"

"Not he, sir; he ain't opened his mouth yet. But I know. He escaped the very first night after stealing the watch, and slipped up north somewhere. We've heard of his sending a few dollars home now and again, in a roundabout way. I suppose he wanted to see his folks, and tried this way to get to them. Maybe he didn't have any money. No, sir, there ain't any manner of doubt it's him. But if you'd like to feel sure, you can come along with me. You know, Mr. Brown's way; if he says it's him, it's him; and if he says it ain't, why then I've been mistaken, that's all. I'm not putting my memory up against Mr. Brown's—and then, it was Mr. Brown's watch."

Mr. Hecker looked at them and hesitated. He disliked to be mixed up in anything of this sort. But there was something irresistibly pitiful and appealing about the prisoner, and he was interested in the room-clerk's memory; so he turned and accompanied them.

Mr. Brown was behind his desk, but looked up as they entered.

"Now you just go right up to him and ask for a job," whispered the porter hurriedly; "Mr. Hecker and I will look the other way and pretend we've got business of our own. Now do just what I say!"

Obediently the prisoner shuffled forward.

"Have ye got any work for me, sir?" he mumbled.

Not a muscle of Mr. Brown's face changed.

"Well, no, I don't think we have anything just now," he answered pleasantly; "but let me see, though, can you chop wood?"

Slowly the wavering eyes were lifted to his face; but the man seemed dazed.

"Yes, sir; hit's what I've allers did," he answered mechanically; "I have done lived——" then he stopped suddenly.

"Well," reflectively, "we could use about fifty cords of pine and oak wood for our winter fireplaces. If you're willing to do the work we'll pay you market wages."

"But look here, Mr. Brown!" exploded the porter excitedly, "don't you know that man? He's the fellow who stole your watch twelve years ago."

The room-clerk's eyebrows rose a trifle.

"I don't think you were cut out for a detective, Thomas," was all he said.

The porter stared and changed color.

"Then it ain't him after all," he ejaculated wonderingly; "or—or Mr. Brown's falling off some. Oh, I—I beg your pardon, sir; I——" and overwhelmed by his confusion and chagrin the porter turned and rushed away.

Mr. Hecker rubbed his hands understandingly, for the room-clerk had stepped from behind his desk and whispered a few words to the shrinking figure, at the same time slipping something into his hand. Then he said aloud:

"There, now you run down home for a few weeks and see your folks. When you are ready to begin on the wood, let me know."

As the man shuffled out, Mr. Hecker went forward to the desk.

"I would like to shake hands with you, Mr. Brown," he said quietly; "and at the same time express my opinion that the porter was mistaken about your 'falling off.'"—Frank H. Sweet.

As She Is Spoke in China.

The Chinese, if they have mastered the mysteries of the laundry, have not yet surmounted the more serious difficulties presented by the English tongue. The following neat little circular has been sent round to prospective English customers in Hongkong by a firm just starting business: "Ladies and Gentlemen: We, the washer of every kind of clothes, blankets, and so on; newly established the company and engaged the business. Contrary to our opposite company we will most cleanly and carefully wash our customers with possible cheap prices. With your wages we will work the business."

Every mother of a spoiled child says proudly, as she "fixes" its clothes, "It's a wonder it isn't spoiled."

FOR LITTLE FOLKS.

A COLUMN OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO THEM.

Something that Will Interest the Juvenile Members of Every Household—Quaint Actions and Bright Sayings of Many Cute and Cunning Children.

All the children were begging for a story. Uncle Hal had told so many tales that there was scarcely a new subject left.

"I will tell you a sad story about a cat," he said at last. "It was a kitten and it belonged to a little girl named Rose. Now, this kitten was black and had long fur, but during the winter it felt the cold, especially nights, so the kind cook used to leave the oven door open and there it slept all night."

"On the oven door?" asked Charlie, seriously.

"Oh, no. In the oven, the lower oven, where the wood was kept to dry. The fires were out, and with the doors open the oven was just comfortably warm. Then in the early morning the cook would call the kitten out and shut the door before she started the fire.

"One morning she came down and found the oven door shut. She was very busy and did not even think of the kitten. Of course if the door had been open she would have remembered, but she started the fire, and a good hot fire it was. When Rose came down she ran into the kitchen and looked around eagerly.

"'Where is Kitty?' she asked.

"The cook dropped a pan. 'Goodness gracious,' she cried. She knew that the beer she had drunk before going to bed had made her head a little muddled, and now she wished she had not touched it, for then the oven door would not be found shut. She ran to the stove, which was nearly red hot by that time, and when she opened the door and looked in, she found that the poor, little kitten——"

"Was all burned up," cried May with tears in her eyes.

"Oh, Uncle Hal!" exclaimed Charlie.

"The poor little thing!" wailed Edna.

Uncle Hal looked gravely around the circle of sorrowful faces.

"She found that the poor, little kitten," he repeated slowly, "hadn't slept in the oven at all, for the door had been shut all night. She was out in the wood shed in a basket of chips."

"Oh!" cried all the children in chorus, and then they laughed together, and Uncle Hal laughed with them.

Optimism vs. Pessimism.

1. Two girls examined a bush. One observed that it had a rose, the other that it had a thorn.

2. Two children were gathering flowers. One said that the flowers were plentiful, the other that the sun was hot.

3. Two friends were scaling the Alps. One exclaimed at the grandeur of the scenery, the other at the steepness of the ascent.

4. Two children looked through colored glasses. One said, "The world is bright," the other said, "The world is blue."

5. Two people were out on the sea in a boat. One admired the beauty of the waves, the other complained that they rocked the boat.

6. Two boys went out to fly a kite. One thought the kite mounted finely, the other grumbled that the string tangled.

7. Two people listened to the song of a bird. One said, "How beautiful the notes," the other said, "How short the song."

8. Two maidens by a stream. One said, "How clear the water," the other, "How damp the ground."—Fulton Sun.

New people movin' in right next door!
So now I won't fret and fuss no more.
For I can see just all they do,
An' maybe in summer bear 'em, too!
For we allus open winders wide
So's to get the air on ev'ry side.
Course there'll be talkin' an' lots of noise,
That is, if the children's only boys.
Hope there is children, for, oh! dear me!
How tough an' miserable 'twould be
If only old folks should move in there!
Oh, I'd be so mad! Well, I don't care—
They've a dog, I know, for I saw him
And I heard the woman call him Jim.
(I'd call him over here if I dared,
An' didn't suppose the woman cared).
There's a baby carriage, and that shows
That they have a baby, I suppose.
And there's another one for a doll!
I'll bet there isn't a boy at all.
Oh, yes, there is, for there goes his wheel.
My, but I'm glad! I'd just like to squeal!
An' now I can see him ev'ry day
Mountin' his wheel and ridin' away.
Maybe he'll holler an' say "Hullo!
Old fellow, look down an' see me go."
He plays baseball, for there is his bat,
An' maybe he'll talk to me of that,
An' tell me of the nines, their runs and all.
I do hope he loves to talk of ball.
An' some day the dog will come in, too,
An' we can teac him a trick or two—
To speak for his food or lie down dead,
Jump through a hoop or stand on his head.
Guess 'twould take that boy a good long while
To read all through the books in that pile.
There goes his sled, an' I s'pose he skates
An' cuts pigeon wings an' figure eights.
There's a fishing rod, doubled up fine;
That box, I s'pose, holds his hooks an' line.
Oh, there he comes! An' my! he can jump—
Clear from the steps way down to the pump.
His back is straight as a soldier's gun
An' his big brown eyes are full of fun.
I wonder now if he'll notice me,
If I sit right here where he can see,
And kinder whistle soft and yet clear,
But loud enough so he'd have to hear.
He did! An' what d'ye s'pose he did?
Why, winked and hollered, "Hullo there, kid!
Can you catch?" An' the first thing I knew
A big red apple came sailin' through
The winder, right square into my lap,
An' he turned away, liftin' his cap.
So now I shan't fret an' fuss no more,
For now I've a neighbor boy next door,
An' I'm sure my back and ugly crutch
Won't bother me now—so very much.
—Chicago Record.

"He'll Do."

"He'll do," said a gentleman, decisively, speaking of an office boy who had been in his employ but a single day.

"What makes you think so?"

"Because he gives himself up so entirely to the task in hand. I watched him while he swept the office, and although a procession, with three or four brass bands in it, went by the office while he was at work, he paid no attention to it, but swept on as if the sweeping of that room was the only thing of any consequence on this earth at that time. Then I set him to addressing some envelopes, and although there were a lot of picture-papers and other papers on the desk at which he sat, he paid no attention at all to them, but kept right on addressing those envelopes until the last one of them was done. He'll do, because he is thorough and dead in earnest about everything."

You may be naturally a very smart person; you may be so gifted that you can do almost anything; but all that you do will lack perfection, if you do not do it with all of your heart and strength.

MARVELS OF MECHANISM.

Automatons that Have Excited the Wonder of European Travelers.

Some years ago a jeweler of Boulogne, France, constructed a wonderful automatic conjurer. This figure, correctly dressed in black, performed various sleight-of-hand tricks with remarkable dexterity, and when it was applauded gracefully saluted the spectators to the right and left. One of its tricks was the following: It struck a table several times, and made an egg come out of it. It then blew upon the latter, when out of it came a bird that flapped its wings and sang, and afterward entered the egg again.

This, however, was nothing as compared with the automatic fly manufactured by John Miller and which flew around the table during a dinner and alighted upon the hand of its owner and manufacturer, to the great astonishment of the guests.

Another wonderful piece of mechanism was a minute coach, to which were harnessed several horses, and which rolled over the table. Upon starting the coachman cracked his whip and the horses began to prance, and then became quiet and started off on a trot. The coach stopped, and the lackey jumped from his seat, and, opening the door, handed out a handsomely dressed lady, who saluted and then reentered the coach. The lackey closed the door and jumped upon the box, the whip snapped and the horses galloped off.

The famous mechanical flute player was a life-long figure, standing by the side of a broken column, upon which it slightly leaned. It was capable of playing a dozen different airs with remarkable ease. To effect this result there was a system of weights that actuated a bellows placed in the interior of the automaton, and through an invisible tube forced air to the flute, where it acted in the usual way upon the stopple of the opening. In order to obtain the modulations, and consequently a complete air, the fingers of the automaton were movable and closed the holes of the flute hermetically when at rest. The fingers were moved by wires and cords that were tautened and relaxed by the play of a toothed cylinder.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

The Dog Laughed.

The proprietor of a Third avenue store owns a little black kitten that cultivates a habit of squatting on its haunches, like a bear or a kangaroo, and then sparring with its forepaws as if it had taken lessons from a pugilist.

A gentleman took into the store the other evening an enormous black dog, half Newfoundland, half collie, fat, good-natured, and intelligent. The tiny black kitten, instead of bolting at once for shelter, retreated a few paces, sat erect on its hind legs, and "put its fists" in an attitude of defiance. The contrast in size between the two was intensely amusing. It reminded one of Jack the Giant Killer preparing to demolish a giant.

Slowly and without a sign of excitability the huge dog walked as far as his chain would allow him, and gazed intently at the kitten and its odd posture. Then, as the comicality of the situation struck him, he turned his head and shoulders around to the spectators, and if animal ever laughed in the world that dog assuredly did so then and there. He neither barked nor growled, but indulged in a low chuckle, while eyes and mouth beamed with merriment.

Could Take a Joke.

Barber (absently)—Shampoo, sir?

Customer (with shining bald pate)—No; shine!—Puck.

RAM'S HORN BLASTS.

Warning Notes Calling the Wicked to Repentance.

SALT in the sermon may smart, but it will heal.

Success is not in what you have but in what you are.

It is little use lending a hand unless you give a heart.

No coin is current with God without love's stamp on it.

Prayer is a private key to the King's chamber.

The grasping hand cannot grasp God's hand.

The warm-hearted church never has a cold hand.

The violent partisan knows only the big "I" plank.

It is easier far to sow sin-seeds than to uproot them.

A picture-perfection in religion prohibits progress.

It takes more than high price to make a thing highly precious.

If you lose the habit of giving you lose the happiness of living.

The only limit to God's gifts is the bag in which we fetch them.

People who clear away new paths will be bruised by the thorns.

We may need many of life's hardships to cultivate homesickness.

God may break hard hearts, but He will never break into wicked ones.

The perpetual protest of Christianity is the only thing that saves this world from ruin.

There is no danger of conforming to the world without when you have Christ within.

God is as much glorified when He stoops to man as when men bend before Him in worship.

VALUE OF FRUIT AS FOOD.

Not Very Nourishing, Though Exerting a Beneficial Effect.

Recent experiments of the Department of Agriculture show that fruits in general contain remarkably little stuff that is convertible into muscle and blood. Bananas and grapes have 2 per cent, while apples, cherries, strawberries, huckleberries, cranberries, lemons and oranges are able to lay claim to only 1 per cent—this, too, when skins and seeds are put aside. On this account such articles of diet are obviously ill adapted to sustain human life for any length of time, though they possess great medicinal value and contribute much to health.

Fruits are, however, relatively rich in sugar and starch, and hence are useful as fuel to keep the bodily machine going. Bananas have 27 per cent of these materials, grapes 21 per cent, apples 16 per cent, cherries and cranberries 11 per cent, oranges 9 per cent, lemons 8 per cent and strawberries 7 per cent. In this case, as before, only the edible portions are considered. Blackberries and grapes have 2 per cent of fat and the other fruits mentioned contain 1 per cent. Watermelon pulp is 92 per cent water, says the Saturday Evening Post.

Among vegetables lima beans have the highest food value, containing 32 per cent of nutrients. Sweet potatoes come next, with 29 per cent, green peas next with 22 per cent, white potatoes next with 21 per cent and string beans next with 13 per cent. Green sweet corn has 19 per cent of nutrients, beets 12 per cent, turnips 11 per cent, cabbage, cauliflower and spinach 8 per cent, turnips, eggplant and lettuce 7 per cent, tomatoes and asparagus 6 per cent and cucumbers 4 per cent. Dry beans and rice are about the most economical foods one can buy, containing as they do 88 per cent of solid nutriment.

Fish has high food value—in fact, is nearly as nutritious as chicken or turkey. A pound of eggs, on the other hand, yields only half as much nourishment as a pound of lean beef, notwithstanding a well-known popular theory.

Lay Influence in Methodism.

The general conference of the Wesleyan Church in England has taken a step in the same line as the general conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in this country and taken it so quietly that it received very little notice. From the time in which a ministerial conference came into possession of Wesley's autocracy the progressive section of the laity have in various ways been contending for equality in all matters not exclusively pastoral and also a share in the management of the publishing. The ministers have held firmly to their prerogative, but this year they conceded full co-operation to the laity on both these long and bitterly contended points.

A Good Shot.

Captain (to artilleryman)—Do you see that Chinese general there, about three miles off? Let him have one of those eight-inch shells in the eye.

Artilleryman (equal to the situation)—Aye, aye, sir. Which eye, your honor?—New York World.

In Memory of King Alfred.

The colossal memorial to King Alfred the Great, now in course of preparation, which is to be erected in Winchester, England, will probably be one of the most remarkable pieces of sculpture in the kingdom.

Beet Sugar Industry of Germany.

The best lands of Germany are now devoted to the culture of beet sugar, the greater portion of which is exported.

FARMS AND FARMERS

Making Cheese.

I have made an occasional cheese throughout the year and enough in the spring and summer to go a great way toward paying the grocery bill, says Louise A. Nash in the American Agriculturist. Three milkings may be used in winter and two in summer. Care must be taken to cool the fresh milk before adding it to the other. Place your double boiler on the back of the stove, the inner one resting on something, and put in the milk. Pour warm water into the outer boiler and bring the milk to 82 degrees. For from five to seven gallons of milk add about half a teaspoonful of the coloring fluid and half that quantity of rennet previously mixed with a little water. Stir thoroughly and leave it to coagulate at the same temperature.

When the curd will break off clean from the bottom of your finger, it is time to cut. A long carving knife or anything that will reach down to the bottom of the pan will do. Cut each way, leaving about an inch between the cuts. The heat may now be raised gradually about two degrees every five minutes to 98. Begin in a few minutes by shaking the boiler to help the flying off of the whey, but gently, so that the fat does not escape. Presently stir and repeat the stirring every two or three minutes. In about half an hour the desired temperature ought to be reached. The curd will soon be half its size, and when pressed between the finger and thumb the clots don't stick together. It is now time to take off half of the whey. Leave it covered an inch

HOME-MADE CHEESE PRESS.

or two that it may develop more lactic acid and the curd mat together, after which remove it from the remaining whey.

At this point I take up the inner boiler and place the curd in the two colanders, leaving it there to drip into the large boilers. This, the cheddaring process, goes on at 90 degrees. Occasionally change the bottom of the curd to the top. When cheddared, instead of a tough, spongy mass, the curd is the texture of cooked lean meat, elastic and fibrous. About the same quantity of salt is required for cheese as for butter.

When the heat is lowered to 78 degrees, it is ready for the press. At a higher point the fat is liable to escape, and if too cold the curd particles do not adhere. Bandages are easy to make of cheesecloth. Sew a strip the circumference and height of your tin to a round piece the required size. Another round piece will be needed to lay on the top of the cheese before folding the wall piece down on it.

Commission Dealers.

Farmers would often receive more satisfactory returns from goods shipped to the commission merchants if they would take a little more pains to put them up in a neat and attractive manner and send them so that they would arrive in good order and condition; but the men who do this are apt soon to find regular customers to take their goods and do not need to consign them. The inexperienced man, who does not know how to assort, grade and pack his produce, and the careless one, who will not try to have them look their best, or the dishonest one, whose goods are not of the same quality when they are out of sight as they are on the surface, does not keep a steady customer long and is obliged to accept what prices the commission dealer may obtain or be willing to remit. And if he doubts the quality of the goods he does not offer them to his best customers, or try to get a high price for them. He is ready to dispose of them at the first offer. Delays in transportation are also responsible for low prices many times, because produce of a perishable nature loses quality rapidly and must be sold quickly after decay begins, even if sold at a loss.

To Filter Cider.

Cider is greatly improved by filtering as soon as it comes from the mill. If the very best results are wanted a charcoal filter is necessary. This can be quite easily made from an ordinary cider or whisky barrel. Remove one head and make of it a false bottom two inches above the other head. On the false bottom nail strips of hard wood. Between these strips bore holes. Have a faucet near the bottom of the barrel. Above the false botom place three inches of charcoal broken to the size of birdshot, first laying down a piece of coarse cloth. On top of this charcoal put another layer of cloth and four or five inches of clean, well washed wheat or rye straw. Above the straw put a circular, hard wood grating with openings an inch or so square. Fasten this in place. Turn water into the barrel and keep it running through until it issues entirely tasteless. When this is accomplished, the filter is ready for use. Of course the filter will become clogged, when it must be recharged. When properly filtered, the cider will be free from albuminous and mucilaginous material and will keep much better than when not treated.—American Agriculturist.

Selecting Seed Wheat.

The experiment stations and farmers who have trained themselves to close observation of cause and effect have given evidence many times that the amount and quality of the wheat crop, and of other grain crops, depends largely upon the quality of the seed used. The larger and plumper seed gives the most vigorous growing plant. It stools out more, usually has a stiffer straw, if it is not forced by the use of too rank a fertilizer, by which we mean one too rich in nitrogen, and therefore the better the crop. But there are other things desirable in a good grain crop. One is to secure large heads well filled, and it may also be desirable to have the grain grow rapidly and mature early, either to obtain the best result in a short season, or to escape insect attacks. The best way to secure this would be to select the earliest maturing large heads to be found, and reserve them for seed. The farmer who sows large areas may think this too much trouble to get all the seed he needs, but he should remember that if there is a profit in doing so for one acre, there would be a greater profit in doing so on a hundred. A modification of this plan is to select in this way enough to sow a small plot very thin, so that each plant will have a chance to do its best, and then reserve a piece of the best land to sow that on it to produce seed wheat. A continuation of this process for a few years would result in the production of an extra early, hardy and prolific wheat. Even easier but less effectual would be the selection of heaviest grain for seed when winnowing it. We think the first-named plan the best, because the type of the entire crop might be fixed in that way, so that a permanent improvement would be made.—American Cultivator.

Institute Lectures.

The holding of farmers' institutes has been of great advantage in many localities. Even when the chief speaker or essayist has not been of the best, and sometimes just because he was not the best, he has helped to bring out opinions from local farmers whose ideas, no matter how poorly clothed in language, were adapted to the locality and more valuable there than the opinions of one who had obtained experience upon different soil, in different climates and under different conditions. There is also in many places a disposition on the part of the hearers to ask questions. They are not content to be told the best way to do their work, but they want to know why it is better than some other way, that they may judge if it will be a better way under their conditions, or is only better when conditions are better. Every step taken in this way is a step in advance. Farming is not a railroad where one must follow a certain line of track, but often a route through an unknown territory where one must explore to find the best path for himself.

House Plants.

Many people have poor success with house plants because their houses are too good. They are kept at a uniform heat by hot air furnaces, which furnish a dry heat, and the rooms are so carefully closed against cold in the winter that not a breath of fresh air gets in. Plants need pure air, and they need moisture for their leaves as well as for their roots. The woman who has a few plants in the kitchen where they get the steam from the laundry work, and where the outer door is swinging open often, or windows are opened to let out the heat or odors, will have thrifty plants though she devotes but little time to them, while they may fall to grow well in the bay window of a modern comfortable sitting-room.

Harrowing Wheat.

Often a rain may come after wheat has been sown, and on clay land so beat down the soil that it will crust over or bake when the sun comes out so that many of the plants cannot get through. The use of a light harrow with fine sharp teeth will remedy this very quickly without injury to the plants that are up, or those that are germinating. Nor does it injure wheat to use such a harrow on it in the spring when the clover seed is sown, unless the roots have been thrown out by the frost, in which case a roller is needed to press the plant roots back into the earth.

Hardy Oranges.

The Department of Agriculture is trying to produce an orange which will endure frost, by crossing our native orange with the hardy, trifoliate orange of Japan. They do not expect success at the first trial, and may get a bitter or heavily seeded fruit, but from even such fruit it may be possible to produce better and still retain the hardiness. It is well worth the trial.

Too Much Salt.

Too much salt is used by many butter makers. The whole tendency among consumers is toward fresher butter. In England and on the continent butter made in those countries is served particularly fresh and white. In the best restaurants and hotels in the larger cities of this country the butter contains very little salt.