

the resident working men, who gather around to cultivate the social feature in a similar manner; local news and town topics being thoroughly discussed.

When the village first rose magic like on the prairie, there were but few others to lend competition, everything glowed with the richest prospects and the founders looked forward to the day when "their town" should be the metropolis of the State. Under such auspices Jean Sans-delai made his advent upon the scene. Born of good parents, his father a crafty tradesman, his mother a beautiful, industrious woman that justly made the husband one of the proudest men in the town; tenderly cared for by both, Jean soon grew into a great fine curly haired boy, the pet and pick of the town. With indulgent parents he was allowed the freedom of the town and with remarkable observation and extreme thoughtfulness he soon developed into a lad of unusual precocity. He roamed the town and greedily drank in tales of the war, exploits of cowboys and hardy pioneers. He learned to be attentive at street corner political and religious debates, and took little interest in the childish sports of his companions. He eagerly took in the speculations as to the future greatness of the town and with a lively imagination enlarged them many fold. He wandered among the fields, then into the pastures and wondered at the mystery of nature. Many times he would pluck a handful of flowers, admire their beauty, the secret of which lay in unfathomable depths; then he would scornfully throw them away and gaze off into the blue sky above; here was another mystery, "how far did the sky go?" Dowe by the stream he would sit for hours, meditating like a philosopher, then he would rise and walk restlessly homeward, impatient that he could not go forward into the great exploits of life. While he was at times so thoughtful and earnest, he enjoyed and was quick to reply to the jokes of the village loungers and generally wore a cheerful smiling face. Withal, everybody liked him, everyone seemed to take an interest in him and gave him a kind word or made a cheerful remark. The old men used to pat him on the head and say, "This boy will make his mark some day," and indeed