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AMERICAN TEACHER.

VOL. XI.

Devoted to the Methods and Principles of Teaching.

No. 8.

EASTER.

BY ANNIE M. LIBBY.

O Saviour, who for us didst faint and bleed,
For sinners, suffering in their hour of need,
While we remember Thou for us hast died,
Upon the cross wast foully crucified,—
To-day around the world the glad news goes,
'Tis Easter morn! This day our Lord arose!

Ring out, O bells, your happiest chime
To usher in this blessed Easter time;
O fair, white lilies tell with sweetest breath,
This day the Christ has triumphed over death,
And echoing round the world the glad news goes,
Rejoice, O earth, to-day thy Lord arose!

DAFFYDOWNDILLY.

BY ANNIE M. LIBBY.

The hoarse wind cried loud in the dark fir wood,
The fields looked sere and dead,
But daffodil lighted her golden lamp,—
"Spring's almost here," she said.

The sleepy pansies saw the yellow gleam
Shine down the garden aisle,
And hastened to open their velvet eyes,
To catch the spring's first smile.

And the crimson peonies came up red,
Blushing that they were late;
And the buds pushed out on the lilac tree,
Down by the orchard gate.

And the grass grew green, and the little creek
Sang forth so clear and strong,
The violet sisters came trooping out,
A purple-hooded throng.

And robin and sparrow began to build,
And daffy's lamp went out;
"For there's no use burning it now," she said,
"Since all have got about."

But they quite forgot they were loth to start,
"And I was first,"—"No, I,"
The birds and flowers quarrelling said,
But in a field hard by,

A dancing daisy for a moment stopped,
And shook her pretty head,—
"If 'twas not for daffodil's golden lamp,
Where would you be?" she said.

So maid of honor is daffy to spring,
And famed in song and rhyme,
For she set her golden lamp aflame
As soon as it was time.

KIP.

BY HELEN M. WINSLOW.

[A story the Schoolmaster told me.]

KIP was a troublesome scholar. He was dirty and brown and ragged. He had probably never been perfectly quiet for five consecutive minutes in his life; and his teacher had no end of trials with him.

She sent him up one day, I remember, to me. He came shambling into the office in a shame-faced way,—for, in spite of his many offences, he had never been up to the master's office before. His offence was a confirmed habit of stealing flowers. He stole them from the other children, from the teachers, through the palings of the neighboring fences, even from the blooming pots in the schoolroom windows.

It was in vain that his teacher had talked with him, had punished him, had bribed him. The boy uttered no word in self-defence or explanation, but yielded to temptation at every opportunity.

I talked kindly to Kip, and although his face kept its usual stolid reserve, I noticed that his brown, wizened hands moved uneasily in his ragged pockets.

"Why do you persist in doing so?" I asked, finally, in persuasive tones.

Kip looked me straight in the eye a moment.

"I does it for Mag, sir," he said, shifting uneasily from one foot to the other. "I *have* to."

"And who is Mag?" said I.

"She's my little sister," he went on in a low voice. "She's lame. We're poor, and Mag cries an' cries an' cries when I don't bring her no flowers. An' when I do, sir, she takes 'em in her thin white hands, an' kisses 'em an' holds 'em up close to her, like a baby, sir, an' then she goes to sleep an' forgits the pain. An' I'd rather take a dozen whippings, sir," he added, straightening his small body and looking me fearlessly in the face, "than see Mag cry 'cause I don't bring 'em."

"Why, my boy,"—it was all I could say,— "you should have told us before."

And then I promised to see that Mag should have her flower every day. And nearly every morning, before school, Kip came to me with "Mag's thanks," or "Mag's blessin'," and, at last, with Mag's hope that "the Heavenly Father would be as kind to the master as he had been to her."

This last message was delivered with some stumbling

and much awkwardness by Kip. Boys, especially boys of his stamp, do not enjoy such repetitions.

I meant to go and see Mag and find out what could be done for her lameness. But the school-year came to an end, and though I never, thank God, forgot her flowers, I had never seen her when I started away on my summer vacation. I was gone a month, and after my return some days elapsed before I heard from Kip. They had moved from one shabby tenement house into another; and I was disinclined, in those hot days, to hunt them up.

One morning, however, the door-bell was rung violently. I answered it myself, and saw one of Kip's mates standing on the door-steps.

"Kip's hurt. He wants to see the master."

I took the address of troublesome Kip, and the boy went away. I was very busy that morning, finishing an important paper on "Education for the Poor," and I waited until I had finished it and could post it on my way to see Kip,—troublesome boy!

It was ten o'clock when I reached the tenement-house, and climbed to the topmost floor. There I found him.

It was too late.

There was nothing left but a slight waxen figure on the miserable bed, with brown, but at last, clean hands, folded under the sheet. He had died an hour before, saying,—

"O, I wish I could see the master!"

"It was all for me," said poor deformed Mag, sitting white and helpless in a rude though comfortable chair. "I've been so selfish about the flowers. He was down to the market last night and saw a rose lying out on the street. He wanted to get it for me, sir. He ran out there, and then a big, heavy team came up, and Kip was found hurt. There is the rose, sir," and she pointed to a miserable, faded, withered flower in a broken teacup.

But to Mag the flower was more precious than the costliest hot-house rose could have been.

A month after, Mag died. Her fragile, half-starved frame gave way, at Kip's death, to the disease that had robbed her of her childhood.

Together, she and Kip have plenty of flowers now, and I think, I feel sure, that Kip—troublesome as he was—has seen the Master.

SCIENTIFIC COLLECTIONS: HOW MADE.

BY JULIA M'NAIR WRIGHT.

BEGIN in a humble way. Interest the children; have a shelf as long and broad as possible, cover it neatly with brown paper, utilize pasteboard boxes with divisions made of pasteboard, cover them with such stray panes of window-glass as can be secured; beguile some generous grocer into the gift of a glass-lidded raisin or honey-box or two, then set the children at work to fill these improvised cases. Teach them the *humanities* of

collecting, so that the nest of the sitting bird shall not be taken, and that only one egg shall be carried off from the nest full. Help the busy hands to make butterfly nets, and beetle-boxes; teach the quick and painless method of killing the specimen. As the collection grows richer weed out the poorer objects. Begin, begin, begin! Despise not the day of small things.

Soon the indifferent will be saying, "Why this is really very nice!" "Wonderful how the children are interested." "Astonishing how observing the youngsters are." "Curious how much they know about what I never thought of!" And the one shelf will grow to two or more; some good grandmother will present to the school her glass-front cupboard, or, the best trustee will take up a little subscription to buy glass cases. Such an enterprise is bound to grow if it is started enthusiastically and continued systematically.

II. In a small reader for children, I had illustrated an observation, by reference to some object of daily occurrence on the seashore.

"Well!" said a Western teacher to me, "that *would* be intelligible to a prairie boy or girl." No doubt the remark was just, and yet why should the prairie boy or girl be expected to be ignorant of the wonders of the shore? And why should the Cape Cod boy or girl be expected to be ignorant of grasses and flowers that are the growth of the prairies?

Is there a western school where neither teacher nor pupil, neither parent nor friend of either, has a correspondent or acquaintance at the seashore who could mail a box of those simplest treasures of the beach,—shells, dried crabs, sea-weeds, bits of coral and sponge?

Why cannot our schools, through the columns of the educational journals, institute a system of exchanges, like that now carried on in a number of magazines and papers, where A offers to give B seeds for roots, patterns for music, or books for scraps for crazy work? What has been efficient in one case no doubt would be in another. Schools might exchange the plants, shells, insects, minerals, and other natural curiosities of one *locale* for those of another. How easy, also, when the teacher or a pupil writes to a distant friend, even in foreign lands, to say, "Can you mail to me such and such an object?" secured, not by pecuniary outlay but by a little taking of thought, which will be a mutual pleasure to sender and receiver.

III. In our large towns and cities, where museums and collections are better understood and appreciated, the work of inaugurating a cabinet of specimens in natural history will be much easier. Some "true yoke-fellow" will be found to come to the aid of the teacher as soon as the subject is broached, and funds to purchase cases will be willingly supplied as soon as the effort is seen to be earnest and based on useful and scientific principles.

IV. The Brighton Museum of Natural History affords a good illustration of the splendid result of small united individual effort in a certain direction. For instance, it

has one of the finest exhibitions of wasp nests in the world, the fruit of the industry and interest of a single student who bequeathed his treasures to the museum. There is also a lovely collection of Australian moths and butterflies, gathered by a wandering son of Brighton; also a choice case of minerals collected in the immediate vicinity, and of agate, amethyst, pebble, aqua marine, and other stones secured along the south coast and cut and polished by craftsmen of Brighton.

It seems to me impossible that any school which energetically sets itself to secure a cabinet of specimens in natural history can fail of securing, in a very few years, an admirable result.

"MANNERS MAKE MAN."

BY A. N. EVERETT.

A NOTED LECTURER, invited to speak upon the manners and customs of certain savage tribes, began by saying, "Manners they have none, and their customs are beastly," — a wholesale denunciation which admitted of but little argument. If some unbiased and candid philanthropist were to speak upon the "Manners and Customs of American Children," he might easily say that their customs were based on evident conditions of freedom, plenty, and ease, but that among by far the greater number "manners" were conspicuous by their absence. And one need not be a graybeard, who has forgotten his own youth, nor the traditional spinster, nervous and hard of heart, to feel the lack. Under the present conditions of our social life, wherever are gathered a number of children between the ages of five and fifteen, wherever, in public or private, arises a question of their comfort, enjoyment, or ease as against the convenience of their elders, it is inevitably the latter who are to subside. The children sit while their elders stand; they interrupt and their elders keep silence; they confer few favors and return fewer thanks for those received; they use no titles to avoid being menial; they sit and stand in every posture of which the supple frame of youth is capable, and yawn loud and long if the proceedings do not divert them. Hospitality, age, deformity, or misfortune has no rights which they are bound to respect, and yet so complete is the state of subjection to which their elders are at present reduced, that often we hug our chains and applaud the young conquerors as they ride over us. "Boys will be boys!" sagely remarks some indulgent parent in extenuation, who will reap perhaps in his old age a harvest of indifference, neglect, or shame from the son whose inalienable birthright of liberty and free speech he allows to degenerate into license before the manly age of ten.

It is not well, however, to take gloomy views of any situation, and happily there is always, in pondering upon this one, the hope that our increasing wealth, which surrounds so many children from their birth with refining

influences, may gradually induce a gentler code of manners. Happily, also, there are some faint signs of progress already noticeable. If we can assume, then, that in regard to the manners of the young, the criticisms from at home and abroad, the gentle admonitions from the pulpit, essays from caustic pens, and parental wisdom have combined to awaken a revival of interest in the laws of courtesy, an appreciation of our deficiencies and a desire for improvement, is there any field more fertile in which to sow the good seed than the schoolroom? any place where one could better nourish, prune, and incline the growing manner? It is true that by far too many teachers have overlooked what might well be made a normal training course in courtesy of manner, but there are more yet capable of exerting an influence life-long in its refining and elevating tendency. In the public schools it is not merely a question of civility or polish, it is one of ethical value; it concerns the moral tone of a generation or of a community; a reason why no trifle should be overlooked. The law requires cleanliness of person and neatness of dress; let the teacher require also propriety and grace of posture. Compel children to show deference to their elders as you compel them by insistence and assistance to work out a problem in multiplication. Require your boys to lift their caps in passing, and interchange bows with your girls with all the grace and cordiality of which you are capable. Insist on the right of precedence of the girls and of all elders. Let no child loll or eat when talking with you. Encourage small sacrifices, one for the other. "I never made it an infringement of discipline when a child did *any* polite thing, however unconventional in the schoolroom," says the most refined and lovable woman, I know, who ever taught a school. "It is astonishing how easily, if only called forth by a strong will and magnetic power, the innate chivalry of a boy's nature can be awakened and kept alive."

EYES THAT SEE NOT.

BY BELLE P. DRURY, ILLINOIS.

ONE of the gravest defects in the education of country school children grows out of the neglect of the teachers to cultivate in their pupils habits of close observation.

I once took temporary charge of a country school during the illness of the regular teacher. I spent the noon-hour in making botanical researches in the woods surrounding the schoolhouse. Upon returning one day loaded with ferns I was surprised by the question of one of the pupils, who asked me, "How did you gather those leaves in your hands when they grow so high up in the tree?"

"They do not grow on a tree, my child, but very close to the ground. Do you not know our native ferns? What makes you think they grew on a tree?"