

Empire Building.

Children's letters may strike some people as being too unimportant to have any share in the great scheme of Empire building. The great concourse of nations which form the British Empire and live under the protection of the Union Jack must surely be held together by the bonds of knowledge and friendship; and among these bonds should be counted the thousands of letters which pass between the children of the Empire through the Comrades' Correspondence Branch of the League of the Empire. Nearly ten years ago the idea was first started of bringing the children of the Overseas Dominions, and the United Kingdom into touch with each other by letter writing. The scheme has grown and prospered, and through its agency over 20,000 comrades have been introduced to each other, most of whom keep up an active correspondence. Think what pleasure it must be to a boy or girl living on a lonely farm, or upcountry station to receive a letter from England, the land their parents speak of as "Home:" a letter written by one like themselves, but living under other skies and other conditions. On the other hand how interesting for a boy or girl, used perhaps to crowded London, to hear of real adventures in the backwoods from the actors in them, or of city life by southern seas. School teachers are the most enthusiastic supporters of this correspondence. They find it adds greatly to the interest of geography and history lessons if the pupils have a personal connection with a school, perhaps of the same name, in a distant part of the Empire. Nature study and kindred subjects are keenly taken up in friendly rivalry with the linked school. Many teachers have found it useful to have a correspondent of similar tastes, with whom to exchange ideas and experiences. One adult comrade writes, "Isn't it lovely just to be able to fill in a small form, and then get linked on to someone in a far country; almost as good as having telephones all over the world." Families have sometimes been re-united by a chance linking of comrades. A child from New Zealand who had asked for a comrade in her father's birthplace says, "Let me thank you very much indeed for what you have done for us. You have not only pleased us all, but you have given my father hopes of corresponding with his brother, perhaps of seeing him again. My comrade's father

and Dad used to be playmates at school together, and they were neighbors."

The subjects chosen by the correspondents are too numerous to mention; they range from astronomy, geology, history, to the collection of stamps. The writers themselves are of all ages and all classes of society. If you know any child who would like a comrade, write to the Hon. Secretary, League of the Empire, Caxton Hall, Westminster, who will send you a form to fill in; on returning it you will be supplied with the name and address of a correspondent. All information will be gladly given, and correspondents welcomed.

Study and Recitation.

I presume most of us will agree that one of the prime purposes of a school is to teach pupils to study, and yet very little is done to guide the child in the use of his time in the study period. He is sent to his seat and told to study his lesson, but seldom told how he is to go about the work of studying his lesson. He gets plenty of instruction as to how he is to recite, but very little as to how he is to study, and yet, all will agree that the studying is more important than the reciting. Just what use should the child make of the study period? Just what should he do when he is told to study his lesson?

I presume the answer to this question will depend upon the answer to the other question, what should the lesson be? What is the lesson which he is set to study? The legitimate use of the study period will depend upon the legitimate use of the recitation period.

The school exists for the purpose of helping the children learn to think. But the latest psychology declares that we never think except in the presence of a problem which is personally of interest to us. Then one part of the round of studying and reciting should consist of discovering and developing problems which touch the life of the child. Manifestly this should come in the recitation period. The child should not be sent to his seat with simply so many lines to commit, so many pages to read, or so many arithmetical problems to "work". He should go from the recitation with a question in his mind, which he is to investigate, think about, read up on. Each pupil should give the recitation hour to an attempt to solve that problem. He