

Sending Notes to Parents.

How many woeful mistakes do teachers sometimes commit in the matter of sending notes home to parents? Nine out of ten are unfitted to do such business and will generally say and do the wrong thing, so that what they call an "insulting" note will be sure to come back in reply. And then how foolish to engage in sending back as "good as we get" and at once cause a complaint to be lodged with a director that "that teacher is a crank and utterly unfit to manage children." And, of course, if that teacher will lose sight of her dignity, and will run against the sharp corners of the world, she will get just so many knocks until her common sense asserts itself and shows her that the best way out of such difficulties is to make the acquaintance of the parents face to face, and let them see, by reasoning together, that her whole desire is to do the best for her pupils under all circumstances.

Probably the most potent force in the teacher to win the affection and respect of her pupils, and to make the control of her school easy, is her manners. They exert a silent, unconscious influence far more powerful in moulding the character of the child than the school itself. "Those happy ways of doing things, each one a stroke of genius or of love, now repeated and hardened into usage," that bring sympathy to the dull child and shame to the vicious child, that forbid the use of the sneer, or of sarcasm, that "seeth good in all things," are the strongest weapons of the good teacher in directing the untrained forces of the young.

Indeed, it is seriously charged against the public school that too many of its teachers lack culture and those traits which distinguish the woman of breeding from the woman who has none. Whether this be so or not, it is an undeniable fact that this is given by some as one of the reasons for sending their children to private schools. That the world puts a high value upon manners and high perceptions in the teacher is also apparent in the fact, as Mr. Robert Grant, in a late number of *Scribner's*, points out, that while mental acquirements were once regarded as sufficient for the woman who aspired to be the head of a college or other first-class institution for girls, the first question asked to-day is: "Is she a lady?" That is to say, the world to-day demands of the teacher not only the graces of scholarship and wide culture, but it also demands that she shall, before all, not be loud in voice, dress, or manners, but be ever gracious and kindly in all her ways.—*Sup't. H. C. Missimer, in Erie Report, 1893-94.*

Of most boys the supposed rudeness is only their crudeness. Deal gently with them and you will make gentlemen of them. Deal roughly with them and you will make ruffians of them.

PRIMARY DEPARTMENT.

An Exercise in Mental Arithmetic.

FOR SECOND TERM.

The problems are written on the board to serve as a reading exercise. If they contain new words, these words are taught and the problems read orally. If not, silent reading is deemed sufficient and the pupil is called upon for the arithmetical solution and explanation only.

The pupils are directed to solve the problem mentally, and to put the right hand (or the left—an exercise in listening to commands) on the head when they know the answer.

Wrong answers are dealt with somewhat as follows:

Example.—If 1 yard of lace cost 18 cents, how much lace can I get for 6 cents?

Wrong Answer.— $\frac{1}{2}$ yard.

Teacher.—Draw the yard of lace here on the black-board. (Child draws a line about a yard long.) Cut it into halves. How much is this half? (6 cents). And this half? (6 cents). That makes how much for the whole yard? (12 cents). But how much does the example say the lace is worth? (18 cents). Then you must be wrong. Try again. (Child reads example and perhaps answers $\frac{1}{2}$ yard). Erase your sixes and divide your yard of lace into fourths. How much will this fourth cost? And this? And this? That makes how much for all? (24 cents). Is that right? You have told me about 12-cent ribbon and 24-cent ribbon; now tell me about the 18-cent ribbon.

The class observed had learned halves, thirds, and fourths. The only guess remaining was $\frac{1}{3}$. The child made it. The teacher turned to the class and asked: "Right or wrong?" and, "Why do you think Annie is right this time?" A pupil answered, "Because 6 is $\frac{1}{3}$ of 18."

Then the same test was applied as in the case of the incorrect answers and this time "it proved."

The 6 in the example was changed to a 9, and this made a new example.

When this had been disposed of, the 18 was changed to 27.

Afterward the 1 was changed to 3. Thus, by successive substitutions, examples enough were made to occupy the entire twenty minutes devoted to the work, and the mind was kept on pure number, instead of being partially engaged in picturing different commodities.—*School Journal.*

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