

CURING THE COWARD

Teacher Engaged in Real Character-Making When She Taught William to Fight His Battles

In response to a summons, Johnny and William stood in the office of the school principal.

Johnny was a fighter. Russian, Indian and Canadian blood flowed in his veins and he was the adopted son of a Greek. This combination of race and environment could scarcely produce a tame temperament. So little Johnny loved the thumping of fists and the rolling of his antagonist and himself in the dirt.

William was not even a self-defender. When attacked at school he usually ran to shelter under his teacher's authority; when not in school, to any convenient protection. Pure Swedish blood coursed through William's arterial system, but any Augustus Adolphus instincts which were his by right of racial inheritance were being crushed out by the discipline of an unduly pious father.

Johnny, under-sized, alert, faced his school principal with the assurance that comes from fighting for self in life's struggles. William, overgrown, phlegmatic, stood in the attitude of one accustomed to dodging blows rather than to parrying them or striking back.

Miss Farrar sat looking at the two concrete factors in a problem which had been troubling her for some time. She had thought out a solution based on a theory which she believed sound and which she also believed would give a true result that would be lasting. An event, in which the two boys were the principal actors, seen by her at the noon recess, had given her the conditions for testing her solution.

"William," she apostrophized mentally, "you have always been a baby but you are getting the look of a coward. I don't like the change in your eyes and your hands have sneaking movements. You will be striking in the back next."

"Johnny, you are a funny little bully! You are becoming insolent. I fear you are even getting brutal. You need to be conquered by one of your own victims. What you need, William, you baby elephant, is to be taught that God helps him who helps himself. And it seems to be up to me to give you both what you need."

The principal stood up and gave the little boys a long look. Miss Farrar's long looks had a reputation among the pupils in the school. "Come with me," she said quietly.

Johnny went with a swagger, winking knowingly at shuffling William but the silent order in the office had been trying. William's tears were ready to trickle down his freckled face and even Johnny's dark cheeks showed red.

Entering an empty recreation room Miss Farrar said suddenly, "Who licked in the scrap to-day?"

"Me," piped Johnny striking a bantam-cock attitude.

"Is that so, William?" asked Miss Farrar, turning to the lad.

"Yes, Miss Farrar," blubbered William. "I never touched him and I told him it was on the school grounds and he must not fight but he hit like a steam roller."

"Why didn't you pitch in and kick him?" You are bigger than he is, said the principal.

"Why," stammered the astonished William, "my father he says he will lick me awful if I fight. He always says that it is only bad and wicked boys like Johnny as fights."

Pride illumined Johnny's little dark face at this tribute to his fame and prowess.

"Then you are going to keep on letting Johnny tease you and knock you around, are you?" queried the principal.

"O Miss Farrar!" sniffed William. "My father he all time says do as the Bible says about soft answers. When Johnny calls me cry baby, I say soft, 'Go chase yourself' up around a tree once. And to-day when he called me 'Swede,' I say soft to him. 'You're one by-gosh Indian like what lives down on the beach and eats rotten fish.' Then Johnny runs after me and swats me."

"Did he hit back, Johnny?" asked Miss Farrar.

"Naw," answered Johnny. "He just belteded, 'I'll tell teacher!'"

"Boys," said the principal, "the only way that I see to square things up between you two is a real fight. So far, Johnny, you have done the fighting and, William, you have done the crying. Sometimes the only way for boys to settle their quarrels is to fight it out. I believe in fair fight where both take part. The reason I have brought you here is that you may have plenty of room. You are to fight until one of you is whipped. I am going to be umpire to see that there is fair play."

It is the overflowing fountain, not the one that is half full or just full, that makes the valley below green and glad. It is abundant health, health that is bubbling over, superabundant energy, that counts. This is the health that makes mere living a joy.

"Johnny, you stand on this side of the line and William on that side."

Johnny, eager for a fray, threw the look of hair out of his left eye with a toss of his head, stepped into the "ring" and assumed an attitude both offensive and defensive.

William, fear in his eyes, shrank back. "O Miss Farrar!" he boo-hooed. "My father he all time says do—"

"Stop!" said the principal sternly. "Your father has nothing to do with this."

Miss Farrar's blue eyes grew steely. "William," she said, "you are a big baby! For two years your teachers and I have taken your part against other boys smaller than you. We will do this no longer. You must learn to take your own part, fight your own battles. Stop crying. If you do not know how to fight, I'll show you how."

"Brace up. Be a man. Take your place. I'm going to make special rules for this fight. One is, Johnny, you are not to hit William until he hits you a pretty hard blow. Then you can pitch in. Neither of you must hit below the belt or on the face. All ready. Your first blow, William."

"I can't!" howled William.

The fighting blood of Scottish ancestors began to revolt in the principal's heart. Conquering a desire to shake the coward, she said:

"Shut your fists this way. No, tight. It's your knuckles that hurt. Now think that you are driving a stake in the ground or splitting wood and draw back and hit Johnny as hard as you can on the chest."

William wiped away the tears on his left coat sleeve and holding out his right arm limply, approached Johnny as though he were a sleeping bulldog or a stick of dynamite and touched him on the chest with the back of his hand.

Johnny giggled.

"Good!" exclaimed the self-appointed pugilist trainer. "But keep your fist doubled up and hit very hard—like this." The principal struck a sample blow on William's broad chest.

"Just to stir him up," she thought.

It worked. With a last gasping sob, William adjusted his fist and warily approached the indifferent, amused Johnny and planted something like a blow on the small area of the fighter's chest. The young pugilist, taken by surprise, staggered.

This was first blood to brawny William. His eye brightened, his big hulking shoulders straightened, the primal man began to waken. Then the battle was on. Fists flew out with more rapidity than skill. Johnny, the experienced, kept his head, used his eyes and made his blows count. William, drunk with the joy of his new-found power, struck blindly but each blow increased in force. Perspiration instead of tears soon streamed down his face.

At the end of eight minutes just as Johnny seemed to be getting the worst of it, the umpire called, "Time!"

"Rest a few minutes," she said.

William, now a young animal, with something of the man's sense of power of defence and offence awakened, was restive under the enforced interruption. Johnny looked with some fear and considerable respect at the aroused Swede, but as yet his thin dark face showed no sign of yielding.

"I'm willing to lay a stake of a month's salary that my solution will turn out to be correct," thought the principal as she noted the changes in the two human factors in her problem.

"Well, William," she said, "you can fight for yourself."

"Yes, Miss Farrar, I think I can lick him if I try once again," William almost grinned.

The next round was a battle royal. Step by step the Swede backed the Russian-Indian into a corner until at last he panted, "Let's stop!" His eyes told the story.

"Time!" called the umpire.

"Are you beaten, Johnny?" she asked.

"Well, William, he has learned to fight some and I'm kind of tired," he gasped.

His backward trail across the room was marked by drops of blood from his skinned knuckles.

The umpire ached to bind up the hands so pitifully small and to bathe the dripping faces of both boys. Hers must be the Spartan's part, so the kindly impulses were trampled down. The laughter that had been dangerously near the surface more than once during the active solution of her problem was choked back and Miss Farrar looked seriously at the steaming little primitives who with heaving chests stood eyeing each other.

"How is it, William? Have you had enough?"

"He ain't said I've licked him yet," answered the lad.

The third round was soon over. William closed with his antagonist clumsily but effectively. There was a short, fierce struggle, then down they both went on the floor, William on top, pinning his old tormentor flat. "Say you're licked once!" Holler "nough!" he panted.

No answer from Johnny but a claw-like hand wriggled loose and got hold of William's hair.

"Shame!" called the umpire.

The son of Sweden bore hard on

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his fallen foe, showing no sign of mercy to his enemy.

"Make him let me up," at last gasped the under lad.

"Holler 'nough!' Holler you're licked already yet!" grunted William, pressing a little harder on Johnny's breathing apparatus.

"Aw, go on! Ain't you got me down?" The defiance was in Johnny's words. There was little in his voice.

"Has William whipped you, Johnny?" asked the principal.

"Y-e-s," came in broken tones from the conquered tyrant and bully of the primary grades.

"Very well," said the umpire. "The fight is ended. Rise, William the Conqueror."

They were two grimy, sweaty, gory boys that stood up. Black hair and ash-colored hair were dripping wet. Shirts were torn open at the neck, ties were off and coats were ripped. But William, a new light on his face, had never looked so manly; and Johnny's bragged insolence had disappeared. The tears that were running down his face the principal pretended not to see.

"Now boys," she announced, "this should end your quarrelling. Everything is all square and settled, so shake hands like men, for you are friends now." This conventional act was performed with some reluctance, due to shyness perhaps, but it was done with solemnity if not with dignity.

After buttoning their collars and arranging their ties, Miss Farrar said cheerfully, "Go wash your faces and comb your hair and make yourselves look like nice third-grade boys."

It was just before dismissal. The third graders, with hands clasped in a devout attitude on the desks in front of them and with a Raphael-angel expression on their faces, sat waiting for the welcome signal, when the principal came into the room with two damp-haired, red-faced, sheepish-looking boys.

"Miss Huntley," she said to the teacher, "William will be able to fight his own battles hereafter. He will come to you with no more complaints about being teased."

When the jubilant third graders had fled into the freedom of outdoors, Miss Huntley turned to the principal with a look of curiosity.

"Do tell me, what were you doing in room nine this afternoon? You're looking utterly fagged, but I know you don't believe in using the rod and I think you wouldn't use the thumb-screws or the water cure. What were you doing with Johnny and William?"

"Making character," answered the principal.

Children of Armenia.

Thousands of Armenian children are homeless and starving, waiting for us to decide whether they are to live or die.

I wonder. I have the right To let myself forget to care How children shiver in the night Where all is dark and cold and bare.

My little ones are freed from dread And sheltered safely from the storm; Their eyes are bright, their cheeks are red, Their laughter glad, their clothing warm.

But other little ones must weep, And face new dread with each new day. Where Hunger's fangs bite very deep And Want sits like a ghost in gray.

If children who are hungry sigh; If others who are cold complain; No guilt lies on my conscience—I Have never wronged them for my gain.

But, knowing how they weep at night, Where all is dark and cold and bare, I wonder if I have the right To let myself forget to care?

—S. E. Kiser.

\$60 a year, \$5 a month, will keep an Armenian child from starvation. If you do not feel like adopting an orphan for yourself, get some of your friends to join you in the financial undertaking.

Send contributions to Treasurer Canadian Armenian Relief, Mr. D. A. Cameron, Canadian Bank of Commerce, Toronto.

Disinfect Dairy Barns.

The spring renovation in the dairy barn should include a good spraying with disinfectant after the dust and cobwebs have been removed if such things are present. Let as much sunshine in as possible as it helps to clean up the stanchions. Dark and damp corners are good disease-breeding places and where the sunshine cannot reach, the spray dose should be used most liberally.

A well-kept wood lot or a plantation of forest trees on the hilly portions of the farm will make the place more attractive.

Clipping the queen's wings is advantageous in the control of swarming and it is advisable to clip the queen's wings at the beginning of the first honey flow.

As the season advances and the queen is laying to her full capacity, a single brood chamber will not have sufficient space for maximum production of brood. As soon as the hive becomes well populated with bees, the brood chamber should be enlarged by adding a second storey without a queen excluder.

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Spraying Recipes.

Spraying apples: Four or five sprayings are necessary, depending on the season and how badly the orchard is infested with insects and disease.

First spray: Apply just after leaf-buds burst but before blossoms open. Use either Bordeaux mixture 4-4-50, or commercial lime-sulphur testing 32 degrees or 33 degrees Baume diluted 1 to 40. Add two pounds of lead-arsenate to each fifty gallons of the spray mixture. This spray is for control of scab, curculio and canker-worm.

Second spray: Just after the blossoms fall use same materials as for first spray. This is for control of the codling-moth, and must be applied with a great deal of force. A power sprayer is best.

Third spray: Two or three weeks later than second spray. Same materials as for first spray. If blotch is bad in the orchard, use Bordeaux mixture 4-6-50 instead of lime-sulphur; add two pounds of lead for each fifty gallons of spray material.

Fourth spray: Nine weeks after the third spray. Use same material as for first spray. This is for control of scab, brown rot and second brood codling-moth.

Fifth spray: This is necessary only where blotch, black rot, bitter rot and other fungus diseases are troublesome. Use same materials as for third spray and apply two weeks after fourth spray.

Pears and quinces need the same general treatment as apples, except that when lime-sulphur is used it should not be quite so strong.

Spraying peaches: For control of San Jose scale and leaf-curl, peaches should be sprayed in March with lime-sulphur. The summer sprays are as follows:

First spray: Use arsenate of lead, two pounds to fifty gallons of water, when the shucks are beginning to fall from the little peaches. This is for the control of curculio.

Second spray: Use self-boiled lime-sulphur 8-8-50, two or three weeks after the first spray. Add two pounds of lead-arsenate for each fifty gallons of the spray mixture. Never use commercial lime-sulphur as a summer spray for peaches or Japan plums.

The second spray is for control of brown rot and curculio.

Third spray: Same as second, applied three or four weeks later.

Fourth spray: Same as third, applied to late varieties of peaches one month before ripening, if brown rot is troublesome on the trees.

Spraying plums: A dormant spray of lime-sulphur is applied for San Jose scale any time during the dormant season. During the growing season several sprays are necessary.

First spray: Just before blossoms open apply Bordeaux mixture 4-4-50. Add two pounds of lead-arsenate to each fifty gallons of spray material. This is for control of brown rot and curculio.

Second spray: Just after blossoms fall use same materials as for first spray.

Third spray: Same materials as second spray, three weeks after petals fall.

Cherries need the same general treatment as plums.

Sprouting and Planting Potatoes for Earliness and Yield.

When the margin of profit in potato growing is narrow, as it was in some places during the past year, it is important to adopt any method which will increase the profits, and the sprouting of potatoes before planting, particularly where it is intended to dig potatoes for an early market, should be much more general in Canada than it has been.

In 1920, Irish Cobbler potatoes not sprouted yielded at the rate of 418 bushels per acre, while those which had been sprouted yielded 506 bushels per acre, or a difference of 88 bushels. In this case potatoes were laid out for sprouting on April 21st and planted on May 19th, or for but four weeks. It is usually best to allow six weeks for sprouting. Not only is the yield greater when potatoes are sprouted, but the crop reaches a marketable size earlier in the season. The sooner early potatoes are on the market after they are marketable the more money will be made out of them as a rule.

To "sprout" potatoes, medium sized tubers are selected before they have sprouted to any extent in the cellar, and are either placed in shallow boxes or trays, preferably with the seed end up, or spread shallow on the floor of a room where there is bright light. Either method will give almost equally good results. At first the temperature should be cool enough to prevent sprouting. The skin will soon turn green and become rather tough. The temperature is now raised enough for the tubers to sprout, and when treated as described two or three strong sprouts will develop from the seed end, the other eyes remaining dormant. Growth will thus be concentrated in these few shoots and, as a rule, there will be a larger proportion of marketable potatoes where there are a few good shoots than where there are many. If the potatoes are given plenty of light and the place where they are kept is fairly cool, the sprouts will become very sturdy and strongly attached to the tuber, will be green in color, and will not be broken off in handling unless very carelessly used. Thus given a start before planting they will usually come along rapidly and tubers will develop more quickly from sprouts which have grown slowly in a bright, cool place than from sprouts which have grown in a dark place. The latter, moreover, usually breaking off at the time of planting. Sprouts should be about two inches in length at the time of planting.

The warmest and best drained soil that is available should be used for extra early potatoes, and the seed should be planted shallower than for the main crop so that they will get the advantage of the heat from the surface soil. In Great Britain the potatoes are planted whole when sprouted, growth being more vigorous when this method is followed, but this is not necessary in order to get an increase in yield. It has been found that, taking one year with another, the earlier potatoes are planted in most places in Canada after the ground is dry enough to work and danger of very severe frosts are over the larger the crop will be.

The following is given as a general rule of guidance for planting potatoes in Canada for highest yields. Where the spring is early and autumn frosts early, plant early; where the spring is early and autumn frosts late, early planting is not so important; where the spring is late and autumn frosts are early, plant as soon as soil is dry enough.

—W. T. Macoun, Dominion Horticulturist.

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Shall Joseph Attend Sunday School?

In this day of lowered standards, of prevalent crime, or vicious forms of entertainment of which the average movie is a type, we need to subject our children to every uplifting influence that makes for clean, honest, strong character. We need to seek a permanent remedy for selfishness which is causing the strife between labor and capital as well as all other strife. The Sunday School is one medium for this valuable training.

In many homes there comes a day when the question "Shall Joseph go to Sunday School?" is raised in all seriousness by Joseph's parents. Perhaps they themselves are members of a church, perhaps they are not even church attendants. There is, however, a desire on the part of all genuinely earnest fathers and mothers to secure for their children not only the best in education, but whatever blessing the church may have to bestow. They often express this ambition as did one little mother when she brought her Joseph to Sunday School, "I want my boy to be a good boy," she said.

While going to Sunday School is not synonymous with being "a good boy" any more than going to church insures honesty in business, yet the church has been and is a fundamental agency in creating the ideals, the aspirations, the attitudes that serve as the motive power for right action. The Bible story is a potent factor to this end. Theodore who had listened eagerly to the story of David and Goliath told by a Sunday School teacher who was an artist in making this old story live in the imagination, remarked "Gee, but that David was a wiz!" and then wistfully, "Do you s'pose I could ever be like him?"

Not alone the creating of ideas of service but the carrying out of such ideas is a prominent feature of Sunday School work to-day. A class of ten-year-olds had heard with deep concern an account of the starving children of Armenia. They longed to help and decided to solicit doughnuts, cookies and canned fruit from their mothers. They held a sale with the aid of the Sunday School teacher and realized sixty dollars with which to support starving children.

The teaching of the Sunday School is not restricted to establishing a right relation to one's fellows but it includes acquainting the child with God as the Creator of all things, thus answering the eternal question of Genesis satisfactorily. It also includes the presentation of God as the Greater Father and hence the friend, protector and guide of every child. "Thank you, God," said a tiny child, "for keeping care of me." The atmosphere of reverence and devotion makes a deep impression upon the child. John's father, a man who never attended any church, consented to his boy's attendance at Sunday School. One morning a few weeks after John had entered the Sunday School, the father became irritated at a refractory collar button and "took the name of the Lord in vain." John, who apparently had been asleep, sat up and in a tone of grievous reproach said, "Daddy, if you went to our Sunday School you wouldn't speak of God like that."

"Shall Joseph go to Sunday School?" Well, let us at least try the experiment and watch the result. It may do for Joseph what it has done for many another lad. It may give him a faith in the unseen, a vision of worthy manhood, a love for all life which will make his own life more satisfying and a greater blessing to his fellowmen.

Topics in Season.

A set of good tools will often pay for itself in one job on the farm. If you must use locks, use good ones. Not much protection in a cheap lock.

Plenty of water internally, externally and eternally—all possible if you heed the slogan: "Running water and a bathroom in every farm home."

A remedy for erosion: To prevent erosion on sandy hillsides, throw up ridges of earth running across the hillside, when plowing. A few simple ridges, erected at intervals of twelve or fifteen yards, will help to prevent the soil from being washed down the hill by heavy rains.

Steep slopes, poor soil, sandy land, unusual corners, gullied and wooded tract—all these afford opportunity for growing timber profitably. Certain kinds of trees, like the locust, build up poor soil through the nitrogen-gathering bacteria in the root nodules. Small gullies can be stopped up by closely packed brush and tree-tops. Large, open gullies are checked off by planting over the entire gully basin, supplemented by low brush dams across the large units of the gully.

A suggestion box was placed at the entrance to a farm, and a board was put up inviting criticism of methods, stock and business. The idea of having a suggestion box inside a store is not new, but this was. Many novel ideas were dropped in the box; not the least helpful was one reading: "Why don't you advertise and hold a sale of potatoes?" The idea was a good one, and the farmer used it, with the result that many potatoes were sold. The person who made the suggestion told his friends, with the result that many became purchasers.

When a weed's roots face the sun You have got him on the run.