

And we, looking on sadly, thought that bed-time should be the happiest hour of the day. Let it be stated that we are altogether in favor of punishments for faults, but we also believe in even-handed justice where children are concerned. Injustice will commence with advancing years. The world will mete out often harsh measures for small offences, but spare the child. If a whipping is earned give it promptly, with a full understanding of the reason for its infliction; and, oh, by all paternal love, let the rod be the last resort; try all milder punishments first.

Above all, take any time but bed-time. Let the weary feet, the busy brain rest in bed happily. Let the evening prayers be said in loving tones to a Saviour who calls little children to Himself. Let the father's caresses, the mother's kiss, be the last link between the day's pain or pleasure and the night's sleep. Send the children to bed happy. If there is sorrow, punishment or disgrace, let them meet it in the day-time, and have hours of play or thought in which to recover the happiness which is childhood's right. When night comes let only tender thoughts, loving care, whispered blessings, prayer and caresses hover over the pillow where the children's heads rest.

Fireside Department.

How We Elected Our School Board.

"There's gaun tae be a Schule Board in oor pairish, Elsie."

"And what's a Schule Board, guidman?"

"Ow, do ye no ken what a Schule Board is?"

"Maybe a new black-board for the maister, or maybe a board at the roadside telling fowk the road to the schule."

"Gae wa' wi' yer haivers, wife—a Schule Board is a lot o' men."

"Hoo div they ca' them a Board, then?"

"That's mair than I ken, ooman."

"Will it be that they have thick wooden heids, and sae they ca' them Boards just the same way as the maister used to ca' us blockheids?"

"Ooman, hae ye ony rummel gumption in ye at a'?"

"What's wrang?"

"Wrang, say ye! There's muckle wrang. The Schule Board'll be the best men i' the pairish."

"But what's tae be dune wi' them?"

"Dune wi' them! Od ye ding a' wi' yer ignorance. Dune wi' them. Nae thing tae be dune wi' them; it's only them that's tae dae things."

"Eh me! oh, ay! An' what are they gaun tae dae, if it be fair to speer? Are they gaun back tae the schule again?"

"Ooman, wull ye ever learn sense? Hoo cud the minister gang tae the schule again?"

"What wull they dae, then?"

"Dae? They're gaun to look aifter schules, an' keep a' thing richt."

"But isna there twa schules i' the pairish a'-ready?"

"That's the pint, now. Od, I thoct there was somethin' in you, aifter a'. There's twa schules i' the pairish, but there's nae love lost atween them. An's better aff than the ither, an' they're demonational, sae we're gaun tae mak' them equal."

"Od, but that's fair eneuch. Jeems; but wull they agree till't?"

"Agree till't? Od, they maun agree till't. The Board'll hae meetin's, an' gar them agree till't."

"An' whaur wull the meetin's be?"

"Ow, they'll likely be i' the best room i' the inn. Ye ken, that's whaur a' the gaun meetin's are."

"An' wull ye a' sit room' yon table like lawyers?"

"Ow, ay, of course."

"That's the way ca't a Schule Board then—because they sit room' a board? But it wud hae been mair genteel tae hae ca'ed it a Schule Table."

"Hoot awa'; gin ye hae ony sense, ye aye mis-mogrify't wi' nonsense; but I've nae doot you're right in the main."

"An' ye sae ye're tae be ane!"

"Weel, sae they tell me. Ye ken, there's tae be seven o' us, an' we maun be a' men o' possishun. Sae there's tae be John Black o' the Lowes, Tammas Saunders o' Myreside, Stevens o' Deukdub, Sampson o' Glenshee, Rab Nisbet o' the Glen, Geordie Anderson o' Mucklenouse, an' mysel'."

"But, dear me, Jeems, what are ye gaun tae dae wi' the minister?"

"Weel, ye see, ooman, we think they hae eneuch tae dae without that, so we're gaun tae mak' them prapsticks tae fa' back on for advice."

"But what div ye ken aboot Schule, Jeems? Ye haena buik larnin'."

"Weesht, ooman, and diuna tell naeboddy. Wha's t' tin' that oot? I'll read some pages o' the dictionar' ilki nicht till election time."

So Jeems Robertson, postmaster and general merchant in the parish of Whimynknowes, eagerly pursued his own royal road to learning, although at times he removed the spectacles from his nose and said, with a sigh—

"Hech, but this is dry work, Elsie, ooman. Gin it werena for the honor o' the thing, I'd lay't by a' thegither."

To which she would reply, encouragingly—

"Never mind, Jeems, ye'll may be the best o' the lot yet."

The long looked for day of election came at last; but before it came Elsie had asked one day—

"Jeems, ma man, what gars ye crack sae muckle tae Soor Jock, the auld carrier, the noo?"

"Oh, ye ken, he's Returnin' Offisher, and may speak a good word for us as he tak's the census."

"Oh, I thoct the 'senses' was ta'en?"

"Ay, but ye ken, this is hairns 'senses' for the Schule Board."

"Ow, ay, then we maun be kin' till him. Ye micht bid him stap in and tak' a cup o' tea wi' us."

So Soor Jock was waylaid more than once to take tea wi' Jeems Robertson and enjoy a pinch o' snuff or pipe o' baccy.

When the day came, James studied the papers with the air of a man who knew all about it, but he was sorely displeased at the voting by ballot, which kept him from seeing and rewarding his upholders.

"It looks sic a hidden way o' daein' anything—writin' on a paper, hidn't in a box, and wastin' sae muckle red tape and guid wax."

When, however, he was announced as being second in the order of election, he immediately mounted his chair, and conceiving that it was his duty to make a speech, began—

"Leddies and gentlemen—Onaccustomed as I am tae public speakin'—

"Sit doon, Jeems, ait doon," whispered a friend

"I winna sit doon—leddies an' gentlemen—it behoves me tae thank you."