

JULY 21, 1910

rated with delicately carved Kharsathi inscriptions and Buddhistic figures. The most important inscription runs, "Homage of the teachers of the Sarvasivadin Sect"—the sect which is known to have conveyed one portion of the remains of Gautama to the north. In a corner is the signature of the Greek maker of the casket, one Agesilaus, who describes himself as the "superintending engineer" of the monastery. The contents of the reliquary consist of three small fragments of bone packed tightly together, and originally covered by a clay sealing bearing an impress of what is doubtless the Royal signet. As the Pioneer observes, the fact that the loftiest and most magnificent monument of ancient India should have been deemed necessary for the worthy preservation of these tiny fragments of bone is striking evidence of the sanctity in which they were held, and strongly confirms the assertion of Hieun Tsang, that they are relics of Gautama.

In the Little Ugly Brick Building.

Is the quality of the teacher to be engaged for the rural school a matter of importance at all? How far does our school and the manner in which it is conducted lie from the ideal? What is the bias of mind which is being given our children day by day in that little, stiff, and very ugly brick building down the road?

Doubtless, the world has advanced marvellously, prodigiously, during the past nineteen hundred years or more, yet it is a question if, in some things, even the ancients have not something to teach us mortals of a later day. Socrates and Epictetus taught "school." Men of experience, and culture, and great wisdom were they,—philosophers; and the young men came and sat at their feet, learning, not only knowledge, but also that which should form in them character, resolution, the power to take up life and make the best of it.

Were not those ideal schools? And will they not stand contrast with many a school of to-day over which presides, perhaps, a young girl of eighteen or nineteen, her own character unformed, her mind possibly taken up much more with her gentlemen friends and her new dresses than with the little humans whose lives she may have so great an influence in moulding? A girl at such an age can and usually does teach considerable "knowledge." In exceptional cases she may do much more—for occasionally a girl at eighteen possesses more character and more insight than the ordinary woman of thirty;—but, as a rule, her personality makes no decided impression; or, perhaps, with the best intentions in the world, she directs along very mistaken lines. We hold that every teacher's personality should make a decided impression, and, at that, along right lines.

A paragraph from a bulletin issued by the State Board of Agriculture of Columbia, Missouri, University, has awakened a train of reflections as to what trend the personality of the rural teacher should give the rural school. This paragraph is as follows:

"The time is rapidly coming, if it be not already here, when country people will demand of their teachers that they be men and women who are in full sympathy with country life—men and women capable of appreciating the problems and possibilities of farming as a profession. That education which is supposed to fit our boys and girls so that they will not have to work is worse than worthless. The education that is worth while is that which trains how to work. That teacher who advises his pupils to study hard so that they may be able to leave the farm, go to town, and amount to something should have no place in a rural school-room."

There is a great and important truth here. Would that it might sink deep into the mind of every

parent and every teacher. Work is the best thing in the world; work of hands and work of mind, and the ideal life is that which combines the two.

Coming more specifically to the subject of the teaching of agriculture in the rural schools: It is only reasonable to start with the premise that the great majority of the children who attend these schools will remain permanently on the farms. The only reasonable course, then, is to fill these children with such a love for and such an interest in the rural life as will cause them to live happily, usefully, and enthusiastically; and to give them such a start on the principles of agriculture as will inspire them to farm scientifically, and so to the greatest profit. Such a love for and interest in the old farm home will not in the least disqualify those who elect to follow a professional or business life in the city.

Of course, no sane person can expect that "farming" can be taught in the public schools. All that can ever be satisfactorily attempted is to impart a love for it through opening the eyes of the children to see the wonders of plant, insect and bird life that are a part of every farm, and an interest for the work itself through the teaching of a few important principles. As the French Minister of Education, in giving instructions to teachers of agriculture in the French Provinces has said: "Instruction in the elementary principles of agriculture, such as can be properly included in the programme of common schools, ought to be addressed less to the memory than to the intelligence of the children. It should be based on observation of the every-day facts of rural life, and of a system of simple experiments appropriate to the resources of the school, and calculated to bring out clearly the fundamental scientific principles underlying the most important agricultural operations."

To our bulletin again: "The teacher of agriculture in the rural school will very naturally deal more with the 'why' than the 'how.' Most farmers would, perhaps, resent the idea of the average country-school teacher presuming to instruct them or their sons as to how they should plow their ground or cultivate their crops, yet the 'why' of cultivation is almost certain to prove of interest to both pupil and patron. The boy who does not understand the 'why,' and who is sent to the cornfield to plow when the ground is free of weeds, may go in a complaining mood, and may think that his father 'just wants to keep him at work all the time, even when there isn't any use in it.' On the other hand, if he has been taught the principles of conserving moisture, and understands how the 'dry blanket'—the soil mulch—prevents the rapid evaporation of water from the soil, the chances are that while he may not plow better he will work more willingly. The boy who loves nature, and who is able to learn her secrets, is not the one who is dreaming of the time when he will be able to get away from the farm. Fortunate is the country child who has as teacher one who will encourage investigation and promote the spirit of enquiry, ever keeping in mind the story of 'Eyes and No Eyes.' A dozen 'whys' and 'hows' are better than a hundred memorized and perhaps little understood statements."

"What a wonderfully interesting story is that of corn! How eagerly will the boys—yes, and the girls, too—listen as the teacher tells of how corn, or maize, was found by Columbus in the Island of Hayti, where it was known as 'mahiz,' and of how it is to-day so extensively cultivated! Not less fascinating is the story of a grain of wheat, to which might be added the story of a loaf of bread. And there are other stories, numberless, almost, but none dull unless we make them so. All country children are eager for such stories. The only question is, Is the teacher capable of properly presenting them?"

(To be continued.)

Our English Letter.

XV.

AGAIN AT THE JAPAN-BRITISH EXHIBITION—AT THE CONFERENCE HALL.

As the object of my second day's visit to the White City was hardly one of sight-seeing only, I had to postpone my inspection of the several British sections, the exhibits from the army and navy departments, the statuary and the paintings; King Edward's loan collection, with its most interesting historical and other relics; the beautiful work from the Alexandra Technical Schools at Sandringham; the Antarctic photographs; the British Dress Tableaux, illustrating the costumes worn by a lady from infancy to picturesque old age; a "veritable feast of fashion," showing the appropriate gowns for sports and recreation, for evening wear, and for presentation at Court; some or all of which I may, perhaps, be able to see and report upon on another occasion. Neither was I able to get within sight of what I had considered a part of my day's programme, namely, a visit to "The Canadian Toboggan," but what I learnt of the manner in which that distinctly Canadian pastime was presented to the British public I will pass on to you, and let you judge of how true to nature the representation is. Apparently the winter sport of tobogganing both in Switzerland and Canada were shown as in combination, and, as such, have completely ousted the old and greatly patronized "Switchback" of former years. The new development is practically on the same principle as the old, with certain points of difference. The cars are raised by motive power, descending by gravity, and travel not only up and down a series of undulations, running around turns, twists and curves, which so delight the travellers that many of them are actually ready to repeat the exciting journey, with all its shocks and sensations over and over again.

WOMEN AND THE FRANCHISE.

On this day I was anxious to attend, in company with a friend who could secure me a seat in the Conference Hall, a meeting at which the cause of woman's suffrage was to be discussed on non-party lines; suffragists, militant and non-militant, seeking how best to join hands in promoting, if possible, by pacific measures, the passing through Parliament of their Conciliation Bill. All sections of suffragists were "watching and waiting" we were told, a truce being called even by the fighting wing, who were refraining from aggressive measures until the Government should consent to provide facilities for its passing through Parliament this session.

Lady Frances Balfour, who was in the chair, reminded her hearers that it was one of the members of the present Government (now representing his sovereignty in South Africa) who had told them some time ago that they "wanted an overwhelming expression of opinion from women in every part of the country." Seeing that the ballot-box, the only channel through which such an opinion could obtain a recognized hearing, was denied to women, such advice was as illogical as bidding the dumb to speak. However, a reply which should be convincing enough would be given before many days, in the monster demonstration in which it was expected that at least 10,000 women of every profession and trade, of every degree of social status, from the lady of title to the humble mill-worker of the north, would join in token of the unanimity of woman's protest against being absolutely disqualified by sex from having a voice in the affairs of her country.

Here let me say that this prophecy was more than realized—10,000 representative women, 700 banners, a peaceable, well-conducted procession of two miles long, composed of suffragists, militant and non-militant, being their reply to the question, "Do women really want the fran-

chise?" At their subsequent meeting at the Albert Hall, no less a sum than £5,000 was subscribed towards the financial support of the movement.

The principal speaker was Mrs. Fawcett, who was loudly cheered, and was evidently a great favorite with her audience. She said, amongst many other things, that the Conciliation Bill might not give women all they had been working for, but conciliation was in the air, and surely it must come as a presage of hope to their cause, that for the first time in history the Sovereign, on assuming the responsibilities of his high estate, recorded in his first speech that he relied for help and support upon the sympathy and support of a woman—his wife. Mrs. Fawcett claimed that the change asked for would not be a revolutionary one, but simply consistent with changes that had already taken place in the status of women in economic, social, educational, industrial and other positions, so why should not their political status be correspondingly adjusted?

In allusion to Mrs. Humphrey Ward's energetic efforts on behalf of getting her son into Parliament, whilst at the same time posing as an anti-suffragist, Mrs. Fawcett raised a good-humored laugh by saying that whilst sorry so distinguished a writer should be against them, she perhaps did them more good than harm, for she was "so beautifully inconsistent"; and of Miss Correlli she remarked, that seeing that lady had asserted that "all women required was love," we might be devoutly thankful that she was not a suffragist. However, their movement was now so strong that it would survive even if Miss Correlli did join it.

One man sympathizer, amongst other good things said that they had less to dread from "arguments" against the cause than from "objections" which were more frequently heard. It was not people with arguments, but people with "feelings in their bones" who were most difficult to answer, a remark which, I venture to think, applies equally well to many more subjects than that of what is now become a burning question in England, the granting of the suffrage to women. H. A. B.

Hope's Quiet Hour.

The Master's Tenderness.

Jesus saith unto them, Come and break your fast.—St. John xxi: 12. (R. V.)

Last Sunday I was reading a sermon called "The Fire on the Shore," which attempted to explain the mysterious event described in the last chapter of St. John's Gospel. It was considered to be a parable of the life beyond death. The net, which was full of great fishes, was explained to mean the Church, with its harvest of souls. The fish, which Christ had already prepared for the refreshment of the disciples, represent the souls saved in Old Testament days. The fire "was typical of the propitiatory work of the Redeemer, through whom alone the men of any age can be presented as a sacrifice acceptable unto God"—so says the writer of "The Fire on the Shore."

Now, I have no reason to object to this parabolical way of studying the Bible. If our Lord found parables in such everyday duties as sowing seed, sweeping a house, weeding a field, making bread, etc., it is very certain that He intended to teach deep spiritual lessons to the whole Church that spring morning by the Sea of Galilee.

But we must not let our perception of parables blind us to facts. A great deal of the Bible—probably much more of it than we formerly supposed—is intended to convey spiritual truth in allegorical fashion. But the Bible is not only brimming with parables, it is a record of facts. Let us examine the account given in this chapter as if it were a bit of history written in any other book.

Seven men had been fishing all night long and had nothing to show for all their hard work. The morning was