

The next day he went to each room and gave a sensible lecture on order. He talked well; his face was new; all listened with profound attention. I have made a good impression, thought he: shall see a change to-morrow. The next day he was disappointed. The confusion was about the same. After being confined an hour and a half, how could Peter help kicking John as he went down stairs; or Jane help screaming and jumping up and down as soon as she entered the hall! He was not wrong, however, in supposing that he had gained *personal* influence. Whenever an unruly spirit caught his presence, as he stood in the hall, he *thought* of what the principal had said, but not before. The teacher had not yet learned that *actions*, not *words*, make upon children *permanent* impressions. He had talked too much.

A meeting of teachers was immediately called. He pointed out the evil; all admitted it. "I must hold you each responsible for the good order of your rooms at dismissal," he continued. "In case of disobedience, refer to me." The next day there was not so much tumult, but the order did not meet his expectations. The machine worked as though the screws were loose. The wheels wobbled. He found that different teachers had very different ideas of what order was. From some rooms the pupils came out talking, from others silent; from some running, from others on tiptoe. After school he thought "I have committed an error. There must be unity of action. If I am placed at the head of this school, I must assume that position to its full extent. While my assistants should work out their own individuality, by making certain regulations for their own rooms, a few general rules must emanate from me alone. There must be a strong central power. The pernicious doctrine of state rights will prove as disastrous to my school as it has to the Union.

The next day there came from the principal this distinct and ringing order: "Teachers in the several departments will observe the following regulations at dismissal strictly:—1. Pupils will leave the rooms and the hall without talking; 2. without touching heels to the floor; 3. at least six feet apart. Make your own arrangement in regard to what sections in your rooms shall go first, but have *uniformity daily*." A great advance was made this time. There was a *positiveness* here, wanting in all former action; but still new difficulties presented themselves. As the files poured from the different doors, current met current, as waves dash around broken rocks, and, as one jostled another, ejaculations of petulance or of fun burst forth, till the hum as of many waters again filled the hall. The principal again set his brain at work. Massing of forces may do well for Grant or Lee, thought he, but not for me. School-strategy evidently consists in dispersion.

The janitor was again placed at the bell, and ordered to strike as follows: At six strokes the 6th grade was to file out; at five, the 5th, and so on. Interval between bells three minutes. This worked admirably. The little ones were in the middle of the town before the larger ones left the house, and but one single file was in the hall at the same time. Still the thing was not perfect. Children are as gregarious as sheep and ducks. Knots would cluster in the halls, and squads gather around the doors. Each girl had to tell the other something; boys would form platoons, and see who could get the door first. One thing was wanting in the whole plan thus far. *There was no penalty for violated law.* Laws without penalties are useless. On the subject of penalties he reasoned thus: with children a slight one, *invariably* enforced, will produce about the same effect as a severe one. Here, however, was a difficulty. He could not be omnipresent; how could he detect the guilty? To depend upon inquiries was impracticable; upon self-reporting, dangerous; upon watching, impossible. I will resort to delegated power, thought he; it will not destroy the unity of action which I seek, if I keep the reins in my own hands.

The next day he called to his room three reliable boys from each grade. Positions were designated them in the hall, and at the outside door. Each boy of his respective grade was required to send back to their own rooms all violators of the three rules above mentioned. Penalty, detention at the discretion of teacher, not exceeding fifteen minutes. If any refused to return, they were sent next day to the principal's room. Only one more improvement was made. As boys always wish to run faster, and sometimes run over girls on returning from school, they were dismissed first in each grade. The machine was now complete. The school appeared to dismiss itself. A department glided out so silently that the others knew not when it was gone. The six clothed with delegated authority were called Marshalls of the Hall; were selected weekly for meritorious conduct: they had some special privileges, always went out first. The position was considered one of honor, and a paper star indicated their rank. The dismissal of that school soon became the admiration of the town. People visited it expecting to see some grand exhibition of power; but, to their surprise, they generally found the principal at that hour quietly seated at his desk, making out records, or seemingly doing nothing at all. Little did they know

the brain-work and solicitude that this very thing had cost him. The good influence of this discipline seemed to extend beyond the school-precincts, and to reform street-manners. The causes attributed for these results were various. The children were naturally good; the principal was a natural teacher; the pupils greatly loved and feared him: while the truth was, the moral status of the young there was about the same as in other towns; the teacher had no peculiar aptitude to govern; and the feeling extended towards him seldom exceeded that of sincere respect.

Three lessons can perhaps be derived from this plain article. 1. That successful school management is not generally the result of intuition, but of careful thought, out of the school-room as well as in it. 2. That there is a deep philosophy in studying the minutiae of the school-room, if rightly pursued, not unworthy the attention of all. 3. A good practical method presented for dismissing a large school.—J. G. M., in *Illinois Teacher*.

III Papers on Botany.

1. THE STUDY OF PLANTS AND FLOWERS.

Plants and flowers are wonderful quickeners of some of the most healthy emotions and genial traits of the human character. They are educators in no unimportant degree. Certain elements of character are developed by a familiarity with them, as naturally as the flowers themselves unfold and develop under the influence of sunshine, dew, and rain. What a pity, then, that so few children, comparatively speaking, should be real sharers in the delight and improvement which they furnish. Not only do these sources of happiness and of culture come unasked for, but Nature, in her kindness, seems even to come more than half way to tender us an infinite variety of her objects of beauty, and her emblems of innocence and virtue. No object gives such a sparkle of animation and delight to the eyes of children as flowers. Not even the pet kitten can call forth such exclamations of joy as are heard when children are let out into the blossom-covered fields in spring time. Is it not, then, passing strange that this natural fondness for flowers among children, instead of being encouraged and cultivated, is so often neglected and abused. We often wish it were in our power, or in the power of any human pen, to make parents and friends of children realize, in some degree, the stupendous scale on which the means of culture and development of character are daily wasted in neglecting the study of the works of nature.

Much time and money have been expended in the study of botany to little or no purpose. The study has been too much theoretical. The science of plants is certainly very interesting and attractive to minds of sufficient maturity and culture to comprehend and appreciate it. But young children need facts before reasoning and theory. They do not relish abstractions. The principles of classification and the technical examination of plants and flowers are more suitable for older minds.

We were once present at the public examination of a popular Female Seminary, when a class, just ready for graduation, had an exercise in Botany. The readiness with which the young ladies recited the barren technicalities of the science, would excite the envy of a parrot. They talked fluently of "systematic botany," and of "structural botany," of "morphology," and other "ologies," of "andrias" with prefixes innumerable, and "gynias" set off in like manner. They gave the analysis and botanical names of several plants, and yet there was not a plant nor a flower in the room! Now those young ladies recited just as they had been taught. They had no useful knowledge of the vegetable world and its myriad beauties, which are best understood when approached with the simplicity of a child, and by methods which common sense itself is sufficient to suggest. They were utterly unable to bear questioning outside of the technical routine of the text-book,—and could not point out, in plain language and with precision, the obvious characteristics of the most common plants which daily meet the eye. But, we humbly submit, it was not wholly their fault. We could not help anticipating a few years, when those fair aspirants for the laurels of the Institution would find out how barren and unsatisfactory would appear their knowledge of botany. When young ladies, who have studied the science in such a manner, become mothers and nurses, they can never be satisfied with such misnamed accomplishments. The simple power, exercised with tact, to call the attention of children to flowers and plants, to make them admire them, and to foster in them habits of observation and enquiry, is not a showy accomplishment, but it is a power of infinitely more value than all the attainments in botany with which so many of our young ladies "graduate" at some of the so-called "first institutions of the country," where books and not flowers are studied.

The question is often asked, if botany cannot be studied in schools of the primary grade. Most certainly it can, if text-books are en-