

less familiar to me, as from the thoughts which kept welling up in my child-mind,—those marvels of expectancy that have made the warnings of other days so impressive in all our lives. Never laugh a child's fancies to scorn. Encourage him even to give them the embodiment of speech. Correct them as you may, but correct them with that reverence with which you would rectify the language of the Bible, or modify the ethics of the old dispensation. They are the weavings of an innocence that is intuitive and of the eternities, the whisperings that come from the life that precedes birth,—murmurings as solemn to contemplate as the whisperings within us of the life beyond death.

And the centre-piece of all these elemental marvellings of mine, as I trotted alongside of my mother over these two miles, what was it, who was it? The schoolhouse? Well, no; the schoolhouse I had seen everytime I had been in the village. It was a plain square frame building, with nothing of the mysterious or undefinable about it. Situated in the heart of unkempt surroundings, weather-stained and neglected, it had always been pointed out to me as a place with which in time I might become better acquainted; and though I used to wonder why it should be so often unoccupied, I never seemed to think that its being unoccupied was other than a blessing to the boys and girls of the village. Even in face of the ominous regrets of my elders, when the school happened to be closed, that the children of the district should grow up neglected, I found it impossible to believe that there was any disadvantage to me or to any boy or girl in the neighbourhood that there was no school to go to. How the notion had found its way into my little head is more than I can say. The repugnance to school can hardly be intuitional, though Shakespeare seems to have thought so, and yet I remember distinctly that there was something of a dread about me as I hastened to the village with my mother to enter the school for the first time; and unless this dread is to be explained as arising from the previous intercourse I had had with some of the village children who had been to school, or on account of the floating gossipings about the school when it had been in operation, its origin must remain shrouded in all the mystery of an intuition. Of one thing I am sure, I was not afraid of the schoolhouse as an objective-point, hardly thinking of its comforts or discomforts as I passed along the road with my mother. And as little was I exercised over those who were likely to be my schoolmates. It is not easy for young or old to escape recognition in a village. Everybody knows everybody. And the distance at which our homestead was situated from the