

I have sometimes heard her called Miss Crow. What an outrage to address such a note to such a girl! No words of denunciation of the school and its teacher seemed too severe. I feared Miss B. had found the true interpretation of the note. The neighbourhood was aroused. My best friends advised me to expel the Fox boy from the school. At length I yielded to the pressure. Mr. Fox, the father of the boy, believed, of course, in the innocence of his son. He was very indignant at my treatment of him, and determined to seek redress. I was brought before a justice of the peace.

Of my trial, suffice it to say that my case proved a bad one. Mr. Fox brought forward, as a witness a boy who presented a book of fables, belonging to his father, in which was found the very note signed "Fox." It was a mere fable about "The fox and the crow." It was designed to show the danger of flattery and the character of the flatterer, and had no reference to the Fox boy or the Crowell girl. It had been, for no special purpose, copied out by a little brother of the witness, who threw it, for a joke, upon the desk of the Fox boy, and was too cowardly to tell the truth when he saw the mischief he had done.

The magistrate evidently sympathized with me. He required me to pay but little more than the costs of court, and gave me some sound advice about punishing without sufficient evidence.

And here judge of my surprise, when Mr. W., my trustee, and late august visitor, arose and claimed the privilege of paying, in my stead, all the costs of my trial. He remarked that he had observed my course and had visited my school, and was persuaded that, while I exhibited too much sensitiveness and self-distrust, I possessed ability, scholarship, fidelity, and aptness to teach, and should, therefore, be sustained. He took me by the hand, assured me that matters would yet all turn out well, and invited me to take tea at his house on my way home. At tea, Mr. W. incidentally made the (to me) astounding remark, that on his visit to my school he was gratified, and saw no occasion for my apology for the unusual noise and confusion.

That night I returned to my boarding place with a light heart. Before going to bed, I wrote in my diary, (for I kept a diary in those sentimental days), the following reflections concerning teachers:—

"Don't treat school trustees as your natural enemies."

"Don't believe you are judged, as a teacher, by the accidents of your school-room, but by what you are and what you do."

"Don't make apologies; sensible men use their own eyes."

"Don't be influenced by external pressure to act unjustly."

"Don't punish a boy till you know his motives are bad."

My "lawsuit," to my surprise, seemed to inure to my benefit. The generous course of Mr. W., or my own spirit and bearing at the trial, or some unexplained cause, gained for me the sympathy of the people of the district. In truth, I suspect that the mortification they felt at the result of the affair of the Fox boy, in which they had almost compelled me to take the course I had taken, served to make them more inclined to favour me during the rest of the term.

They were much like the people of some other places, greatly inclined to be severe upon the conduct of the school in general, but very feeble in support of a teacher who might undertake to correct the evil complained of by punishing any particular offender. The unfortunate experience of my immediate predecessor afforded a fine illustration of this characteristic of the people about my school.

His pupils, like mine, were wont to stay at noon; and precisely the same reports were circulated of their disorderly and improper conduct. My predecessor was a somewhat rash as well as sensitive man, and was excessively anxious to show to the community that he was sufficiently prompt and vigilant in correcting an evil which all so much deplored. Detecting a marked example of improper behaviour in one of the girls, he expelled her from the school. He expected to be complimented for his prompt and efficient action; but he counted without his host. The whole community was aroused against him. His mistake was, that he had taken as an example an actual, live, concrete child of somebody in particular. He should have expelled the abstract daughter of somebody in general; and this was all that the good people ever really expected or desired. But this actual severity of punishment they could not endure. "Why," said they all, "seize upon this one poor girl? Why degrade her for life? Why disgrace her family? Why outrage the feelings of the community? Children must be children, and a childish gambol should not be punished as a crime."

So talked the good people. In vain did my unfortunate predecessor retort that the very persons who condemned him, had, by their censoriousness, compelled him to take the very course he had taken. His error was fatal. He had taken an actual case. He had unfeelingly and brutally wounded and ruined the daughter of an actual living voter. He quitted the school in the middle of the term, and never since has been seen or heard of in the town.

And here I find recorded in my diary the following sage and laconic remark: "Gossips are poor backers."

But let me return to my examination at the close of the school. I really believed that my school appeared well. The class in arithmetic, in particular, gained me great credit, and was pronounced the best class in town. I was, I confess, exceedingly gratified at the speeches made by the visiting committee, but experience has taught me that the speakers on such occasions hardly mean all they say. But I was young then, and I felt prodigiously flattered.

That evening I turned the key of the door of the school-house Number 3, with an inexpressible feeling of relief and pride. I took tea at Mr. W.'s, walked back to my boarding-place with an air somewhat more pompous than I should dare to assume now, and made in my diary an entry which shows so much self-conceit, that, though it contains a germ of truth, I am half ashamed of it. It refers to my success in teaching arithmetic, and reads as follows: "Many teachers, I suspect, never find out that their pupils don't really know anything."

And thus ended the most anxious and perplexing experience of my life.

The next morning, leaving behind as a present to the fine little fellow whose unjust punishment I shall always be sorry for, a pretty story book, in red and gold, I turned my steps towards college and home.

And now, let me say, in closing, that, though the lapse of years has doubtless corrected much of my sensitiveness in feeling as well as imprudence in action, yet I have never been ashamed of my career in the school; nor shall time nor change ever efface from my heart a tender sympathy for the griefs of little boys.—JERRY GOOD-FELLOW, in *Massachusetts Teacher*.

## 2. INCIDENTS OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT.

Not long since some teachers returning from a State Teachers' Association were detained a part of the night at a village tavern, waiting for a train. Two were from the city, of mature age and experience; others from rural districts. The conversation naturally turned upon practical school-teaching. The elders chatted on, more to keep themselves awake than because they considered their remarks of any real consequence. "I have attended several associations of teachers," at length replied one of the younger, "for which I have spent some time and money, but have learned here to-night more of what I *really wished to know* than from them all." "The philosophy of education has been written threadbare, and the minute details of the school appear too puerile for an educational journal," said one teacher to another. "You are mistaken, sir," was the reply; "the more minute the better."

These incidents suggest the inquiry whether, in our anxiety to inculcate the correct theory of education, we are valuing too slightly those outward appliances which, after all, must exist in a school which aims at perfection.

A peculiar charm in the writings of Kepler, the great German astronomer, is that, instead of giving conclusions only, as men of science usually do, with the most captivating simplicity he relates all the steps by which he arrived at the discovery of his sublime laws, with all his failures, fears, hopes and successes. A union school may be a small affair compared with the universe; yet, as order reigns in one, so ought it in the other; and to discover the laws by which the forces in the former are controlled may require patience, and labor, as it did to determine the laws of time and motion which govern the planets.

A teacher found himself principal of a union school—four hundred pupils—six grades—six assistants. The house substantial brick, two stories, surmounted by a bell; a hall above and below—one door of egress. He entered upon his duties an entire stranger to assistants and pupils. On the first day, precisely at half-past four, the janitor stood at the rope, and the usual bell was struck for dismissal. As when Æolus struck his crooked spear upon the hollow mountain, the doors of each room flew open, and out rushed a crowd of girls and boys, as did the winds upon the mighty deep. The halls were immediately filled; disorder of course followed. "This will not do," said the teacher; and his reflections, as he remained half an hour after school, were as follows: To empty this house twice a day, with system, order, silence, and beauty, will be no small task, and deserves careful consideration. It is not reckoned among the branches taught, but my reputation as a teacher may depend very much upon the manner in which I do it: it will test my administrative ability, and develop character. It must be a great mistake also to suppose that all useful lessons in school should necessarily be intensely intellectual. Anything that gives the habit of self-control, be it of limb, tongue, or impulse, is disciplining, tends to obedience and good citizenship. This, certainly, is one object of education, and of my teaching. Here shall be my first effort.