

words; and they may be a preparation for greater things. I make no apology for calling your attention once more down to these minor matters at the conclusion of my remarks. The love of our neighbours, individually and collectively—that indeed it is with which we desire to imbue our pupils; and that is the very altar of morality. But one goes up to an altar by steps. And, as a first step toward's loving one's neighbour, it is not amiss sometimes for a child to learn not to make himself a nuisance to his neighbour.

I have only one other suggestion to make. It has always seemed to me Moses was truly wise and inspired in instituting national holidays to commemorate national deliverances. We have sacred holidays, with more or less trace of sacred associations; and we have "bank holidays." Our cousins on the other side of the Atlantic have followed in the path of Moses. They think, and rightly, that they have much to be thankful for, and they have instituted days to ex-

press their thankfulness. But have we not also, we who join hands in a family circle of freedom round the world, much reason for being thankful? If one day in the year were set apart as Thanksgiving Day for the English-speaking races throughout our Empire, I should not indeed expect that the millions of toiling fathers would on that day resort much to church or chapel; but, on the eve of Thanksgiving Day, I should feel sure that every teacher worthy of the name would welcome the opportunity of declaring to the children to whom he stands in this respect as a parent, the "noble works" that God has done for our nation in our days and in the old time before us, and would not omit some reference to the "noble works" that are still in store for us, if we follow in His path of righteousness. Such lessons, so given, would greatly stimulate the minds of children, and might in time become a perceptible power working in our country for unity, and strength, and civic morality.

NOTES ON THE HISTORY OF ARITHMETIC—ITS SYMBOLS.

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THE first visible signs of number were probably the fingers of the hand. The fingers furnished a ready passing signal for the indication of small numbers to the eye; but they offered no means for the equally important step of making a permanent note of them. To do this some tally or sign was needed. The Romans marked the years by the annual nail driven into the temple of Minerva. The Babylonians expressed all numbers by the repetition of a single pair of symbols. The Egyptians used hieroglyphics, *e.g.*, a frog stood for 100,000. The Greeks, the Hebrews and the Romans used letters of the

alphabet. The advantage in the use of the above-named methods for the expression of number was mainly in their brevity; they furnished no assistance to calculation.

There is another system of notation, the Arabic, so far superior to the rest, as to have superseded them all. Equally short with the others, it suggests by its very form those striking analogies which are so valuable as aids to computation. It contains two features that distinguish it, and on which its superiority depends place-value and the use of the zero.

Omitting the symbols of obsolete systems, it will be the aim of the pre-