

us. The roads through city and valley are good. Had I gone to Bassein, my work would have been pleasant and no doubt comparatively easy.

Here, I am the only white woman within two hundred miles, and the work will be slow and difficult. But though there are many hard and annoying things, the blessings and privilege of beginning the work in this large, important field, far outweigh them.

### The Study of the Dandelion

(By C. B. Scott.)

Does the dandelion have any relations to man, or any higher relations? To our practical, matter-of-fact reader may come visions—or nightmares—of the intensely bitter dandelion tea administered in childhood by mother or grandmother as a 'spring medicine.' Perhaps we remember with more pleasure the dandelion greens made from the young leaves. So the dandelion is of some use to man.

It may be that we recall the persistent but often vain efforts to eradicate the dandelion from our lawn. Now that we understand better the resources of the plant, we are not much surprised that we were defeated in our struggle with it. Perhaps we have noticed how the dandelion accompanies man in his conquest over nature; seems to thrive best in the vicinity of man. It is, in some degree, dependent on or affected by man.

Are we still young enough, in heart, to enjoy telling time as we did in childhood, by seeing how many 'blows' it takes to scatter all the seeds in a head; or, by a similar process trying to discover 'whether mother wants us?' Perhaps we have not forgotten how to make dandelion curls and dandelion chains. The dandelions were close to us and dear to us in our childhood days.

Has the thought come to us that the despised wayside weed is more to man than medicine or food or a plant-pest or a plaything; that it may have a higher function or use for man? Have we appreciated the beauty of its contrasting green and gold, and the exquisite delicacy of its cluster of seeds? Why is it, like hosts of other weeds, so pretty? Its beauty is not essential for seed-making. Why is it that—

'Dandelion through the meadow makes  
A royal road with seals of gold?'

Why is it that among the flowers, the

'Stars that in earth's firmament do shine,'  
we find most frequently about our homes

'the dandelions, bright

As if night had split her stars?'

Is it not because they are related to something higher in man than his physical or material nature? Have we really studied the dandelion with our children until we have helped them to appreciate its beauty; not only the beauty of color and form, but, far higher than these, its beauty of function and adaptation, the way in which it is fitted for and performs its work? The dandelion ministers to the aesthetic nature of the child. Indeed, unless the study leads to a fuller enjoyment of the beauty of nature, we have gained little from our nature study. Lowell has said—

'In all places, then, and in all seasons,  
Flowers expand their light and soul-like wings,

Teaching us, by most persuasive reasons,  
How akin they are to human things.'

As we study the mutual dependence and mutual helpfulness of all parts of the plant, as we discover how they help by insects and wind and rain and sun, do no lessons come to us, and even more strongly to our children, concerning our relations to the world about us? How akin to the child are the dandelion and the violet, of which Lowell writes—

'For the whole year long I see  
All the wonders of faithful Nature  
Still worked for the love of me;  
Winds wander, and dews drip earthward,  
Rain falls, suns rise and set,  
Earth whirls, and all but to prosper  
A poor little violet.'

The dandelion is a symbol of man. Its life is full of symbolism for the children. From the study of the plant, from what comes to the child through his eyes, the gateways to his soul, our boys and girls can better appreciate what they receive from their environment, and what they owe to it. Hans Andersen brings out these ethical lessons in 'The Apple Branch,' and in many other tales. Thus the dandelion may minister to the ethical nature of the child—and of his teacher.

We cannot stop with the aesthetic beauty or any friend of temperance, as they are our wayside friend. Everything about it points to its Source. It is one of 'these living pages of God's book,' a leaf in the 'manuscript of God.' Its form and structure and plan, and, much more, its life and adaptation or fitness for its place, points to its Maker. Unless we, and our boys and girls, look from nature's God, our study of the dandelion or of nature has missed its highest value. In this highest spiritual relation we discover that which illumines and relates and unifies all else.

Perhaps we can now better understand and appreciate the thought from Tennyson with which we began—

'Flower in the crannied wall,  
I pluck you out of the crannies;  
Hold you here, root and all, in my hand,  
Little flower—but if I could understand  
What you are, root and all, and all in all,  
I should know what God and man is.'  
—From 'Nature Studies and the Child.'

### Teach Your Scholars to Think

Someone has said, 'One of the first elements of good teaching is good "thinking."'  
Is it not also true that a thinking teacher will have thinking scholars? A teacher is successful, in the best sense of the word, as he makes his scholars 'finders' of the truth rather than 'receivers.' A sponge will receive water readily when immersed in it, and will almost as readily part with it when removed. A successful teacher will not consent to have his scholars become sponges in the reception of religious truth, but will so impress them that they will be urged to mental activity in seeking and finding the truth for themselves.

How can scholars be taught to think? One of the best methods to teach them to think is to draw from them their opinion of any part of the lesson. Let each scholar go digging for thought in the lesson.

In this way three very desirable things will be accomplished:

1. Your scholars will learn to think.
2. They will learn to have opinions about God's word.
3. They will learn to express their opinion about God's word.

Teach your scholars to think.—'Living Epistle.'

### Fruitful Labor

A well-known Wesleyan minister, in a public address on home mission work, delivered recently, related the following anecdote of the Rev. Charles Garrett and the late Lord Derby, which incident, the speaker said, he had from Mr. Garrett's own lips not long ago. Lord Derby on one occasion questioned Mr. Garrett as to the actual value of his work in Liverpool among the 'gutter children.'

'Can you give me, Mr. Garrett,' said Lord Derby, 'any indisputable evidence that your efforts for these outcast boys and girls are really not in vain?'

'Well,' said Mr. Garrett, in reply, 'I think I can. You know Mr. —, who is at present music-teacher to your son?'

'Oh, yes,' answered Lord Derby, 'I know him quite well.'

'That gentleman,' continued Mr. Garrett, 'was once one of my "gutter boys."'

Needless to say Lord Derby did not require any more convincing proof of the sterling value of Mr. Garrett's work.—'Sunday Companion.'

### Teachers and Parents.

Parents and teachers in Sunday-school work, as in day school work, should have a sympathetic acquaintance. In both there is a growing tendency to get them together occasionally at the school. 'Mothers' day' in public schools bids fair to become a custom, invitations being sent out by the teachers, and the day's programme varied with a few special exercises. So, in recent celebrations of a 'parents' day' in several Sunday-schools, it is noticeable that the invitations sent out were signed by the teachers, and issued to the members of their classes. While the celebration was by the whole school, the point of contact, the personal element, was in the teachers' greeting to the parents of their scholars. And whether the exercises of 'parents' day' were simple, and very little changed from the ordinary programme, or were more varied and complex, the real impression was made by the mutual acquaintance of parents and teachers, and their mutual sense of obligation to the children under their care.—'Sunday-School Times.'

### While I am Here.

If you have gentle words and looks, my friends,

To spare for me—if you have tears to shed  
That I have suffered—keep them not, I pray,  
Until I hear not, see not, being dead.

If you have flowers to give—fair lily buds,  
Pink roses, daisies (meadow stars that be  
Mine own dear namesakes)—let them bloom  
and make

The air, while I yet breathe it, sweet for me;

For loving looks, though fraught with tenderness,

And kindly tears, though they fall thick and fast,

And words of praise, alas! can naught avail  
To lift the shadows from a life that's past.

And rarest blossoms, what can they suffice,  
Offered to one who can no longer gaze  
Upon their beauty? Flowers in coffins laid  
Impart no sweetness to departed days.

—'Waif.'

You would get as much food in a penny-worth of oatmeal as in a shilling's worth of alcohol.—Dr. Edmunds.