

Opportunities of Country Teachers.

One of the advantages of the position of a country teacher lies in her opportunity to be a central light in her little town. In an esthetic sense the little school-house by the road-side may be an illumination. The teacher here, ever so young or timid, has a halo of admiration surrounding her, in the eyes of the young people of the neighborhood at least, which is not discoverable in the atmosphere of the city teacher. This brings an obligation with it, and the influence of this teacher may extend over the whole locality. A single picture of good quality in her school-room will slowly educate the tastes of the children and visitors, till cheap, poor prints that have been an admiration are finally seen in their true light. The eye once trained to see true beauty in art or nature will never again return to a low standard. A striking illustration of the power of a silent influence on a community is found in that of a young Southern girl of wealthy parents, "before the war," who found herself in a little shanty on a broken down plantation with a few children, as their teacher. With no training or experience her case seemed hopeless. But she did the best thing she could have done, which was to induce the children to improve the school-house and the yard. Whitewash soon covered the bare planks, rose bushes and vines were brought for decoration, a few books and pictures saved from her old home were placed about the school-room, and the simplest drapery found its way to the two or three little windows. With the best helps she had, she began her work, keeping up the idea of beauty and adornment everywhere. The children's clothes began to improve, and with it their manners; and a growing love of school began to appear. Parents came to see what the children talked about, and finding a bower of roses and tasteful things everywhere, went home to begin an improvement.

Some Northern capitalists found the spot after a year or two, and judging that the indications of pride and thrift seen in many directions would be a good foundation to build upon, began operations for new industries; and to-day a large and flourishing business centre is in the place of the little hovel where the young girl built up character, by planting a love of the beautiful when she planted her roses.

Is there a country teacher, no matter how far away from other teachers or teaching helps she may be, who cannot do as much as her Southern sister? Beginning with the first thing nearest that can be improved by cleanliness or taste within limited means, the way to larger opportunities opens step by step and a desert place can be transformed to a garden of beauty, where

children involuntarily come a little cleaner, a little better, and with a different look upon their faces. Tasteful surroundings go a long way to bring about the refinement of dress and person that is sure to be the beginning of a higher ideal of character and life. Children in isolated districts see little that is best in art, and having no trained eyes to see the phenomena of nature all about them are sadly in need of this kind of teaching.—*N. Y. School Journal*.

Next

What would some teachers do if this word were blotted from their vocabularies?

In the spelling class we hear it from first to last—next, next, next.

During the recitation in reading, it is used wherever a pupil has blundered through a stanza or paragraph, next.

If in grammar Mary fails to define or analyze correctly, the teacher resorts to the inevitable, next. And so it is from morning till night—next, next, next, till it seems to echo from the very walls and is visibly stamped all over the face of the teacher. We heard of one young lady who was so thoroughly impressed with this great educational (?) principle that when a young gentleman invited her to an oyster supper she very promptly and enthusiastically replied, next!

The fact is, that the best teachers do not have the word in their professional vocabularies. There is no call for its use in the school-room. It is the subterfuge of poor teachers to avoid the trouble of giving instruction. It accounts for the fact that so many pupils learn nothing—they get nothing from their teacher but that monotonous, next, next.

Reader, does this hit you? If so, just drop the word entirely and when it comes into your mind in recitation choke it back and in place of using it give your pupils a little instruction. It will be vastly better for them and more professional in you. NEXT.

—*N. W. Journal of Education*.

The common schools are full of these "outline-cranks" who have got a glimpse of the idea which the device embodies, either at his school or at second hand, and are using outlines to teach from. We are glad to have the father of the outlining device come to our assistance in condemning this abominable practice, and sincerely hope that superintendents will interfere, and stop the murder of the innocents that is now going on in many of their schools.—*Public School Journal*.

WE hope at the next meeting of the Board of Education for New Brunswick the question of longer holidays will be brought up.