



A QUEER OLD CHURCH.

This picture of the Sod Church says the *Christian Intelligencer*, shows the House of Worship of the Van Raalte Congregation in South Dakota, which they have occupied since their organization. It is the last of the sod churches belonging to the Reformed Church, and it about to be replaced by a frame building. It was built by the congregation with their own hands. It has served a good purpose, and will long be remembered by a little company of devout worshippers as having been to them many times "the house of God and the gate of heaven."

THE ALL-ROUND BOY

BY CHARLES BARNARD.

There are many ways of learning a thing. You want to know how many pints there may be in a quart. There are the "tables of weights and measures" in the arithmetic, and you can read and remember that "two pints make one quart." And when you repeat it correctly, and go to the head of the class, you may not be able to prove it, or even be able to remember it for more than a week. That is one way to learn. There is another and a far better way now used in many schools. You borrow a pint measure and a quart measure, and then fill the pint measure with water and pour it into the quart. The big measure is not full. It will hold more. Fill the pint measure again, and add it to the water in the quart measure. Two, as plain as can be, and not a drop to spare. Two pints are equal to one quart; in other words, one quart measure will hold twice as much as one pint. So it seems there are two ways of learning the "tables."

There are many young folks who think going to school a dull business. How much better it would be if school kept out-of-doors, and the teacher was a good stroke oar, and knew how to get up sail and steer in a stiff breeze, and other clever things like that! School would be vacation all the year round, and every one would be at the head of the class.

If you took the cars on Sixth Avenue in New York and went uptown, you would find a school on West Fifty-Fourth street, that is much like this—a school where the boys and girls learn the "tables" by using real pints and quarts, foot-rulers and yard-sticks, and where the teachers can do more clever things than steering a boat or landing a pickerel. It is a play-school where a jack-knife is as good as a book, and where the scholars write exercises in their writing-books, and then turn the lessons into real things they can carry home in their pockets.

Suppose you were a small man or a little woman, and you were so lucky as to go to this school on West Fifty-Fourth street. Being very young, you would enter the handsome school-house, that seemed to look more like a large house where pleasant people may live, and go to the Kindergarten. Everybody knows that would not be going to school at all. Such very little folks only play in the Kindergarten. They do indeed. It is play, but somehow, when they have played every day for a year or more, these little fellows can tell you many things that "grown-ups" never learned.

Being too old for Kindergarten, you go to the next older classes. There is for the first hour nothing wonderful. Lessons to learn, just as in any school. Arithmetic,

perhaps. The book says that "four and two make six," and that "four times one is four." You commit these things to memory from the book, and can say them correctly. Suddenly study stops, and the whole class troops upstairs in a procession to another room. Such a strange school! In place of desks there are tables, and instead of books there are a pencil, a ruler, some pieces of brown paper, a knife, a square, and a lump of white clay. You take the pencil and paper, and the teacher says every one is to make a dot on one corner of the sheet. Then another dot on the opposite corner. Now join the dots with a straight line with the pencil and ruler. Why, this is not school. It's play. On the lesson goes, and pretty soon a square figure is made on the paper. How many lines are there? Four, one on each side. How much is four times one? Why, how plain that is! The four-sided figure is made of one line on each side, and there are just four. Now for the lump of clay and the knife. Set up the drawing on the desk and copy it with the knife on the clay. Then cut the clay away outside of the lines. Why, that makes a solid square. Let us count the sides. There are four—one on each side—and there is the top and the bottom. Four and two are six. Count them. Yes, just six. Why, this is the lesson from the book.

You may be older still, and go to the class-room to study grammar and history and other matters. Not more than ninety minutes over the books, and then comes work in the shop. More pencil and paper, for, of all things, drawing is the most important. The drawing lesson over, there is wet clay to be fashioned into the shapes we have been drawing. So the school day goes on, books and tools, writing lessons and drawing lessons, study, and then beautiful work in clay, copying lovely figures of animals.

Here is a portrait of a boy in this school. He began, perhaps, in the Kindergarten and worked up to this high class in clay. He has drawn a big apron over his school suit, and stands with a lump of soft clay in his hand studying the small figure of a lion on the table. Before him on the bench is the larger figure he is building up in clay as a copy of the smaller figure. Behind him in the book-case are the lessons in real things he and other boys have made in other classes. The lion he is making shows he is a splendid workman. Already the head is well shaped out, and one big paw is nearly finished. At the same time, we may be sure that the boy is well advanced in the things you learn from books.

Are there no girls? Many girls in every class, but when they reach a certain stage in the work-shop studies they take up needle-work, as befits a girl, and make designs from flowers and embroider them in silk, or learn to cut and make their own dresses. The older boys go on to other studies, and use lathes, scroll-saws, and the file and hammer in wood and metal work, and will graduate at last with high honors, and make a model steam-engine as a graduating exercise.

In all the studies of this school, books and tools go together. There are lessons to be committed to memory, and things to be made at the work bench. Everywhere work and reading, writing and drawing, from the youngest Kindergarten to the graduates who write reports on the skeletons of birds and fishes, read essays

in history, and perform experiments in chemistry. It would seem to you a play-school. It is really a work-school, and everybody knows that work is only pleasure if you know why you work, and that lessons from a book are never dull if the same lesson is afterward done over again with a knife or a scroll-saw.

This school is called "the working-man's school," yet we must not make the mistake of thinking that the boys and girls who come out of the school will be only working-men. This is not the plan. The school is meant to make "all-round boys." An "all-round boy" is one who can work with his hands as well as with his head, a boy who knows something of many things, and who can do many things—draw as well as write, turn wood or file iron as well as parse a sentence. An "all-round girl" is one who knows how to draw from nature, darn a stocking, and make a pie, as well as write a fair hand, or do aught that any girl can do who has graduated with honors from the grammar school.

[For the Messenger.

WHAT GRANDMOTHERS ARE GOOD FOR.

BY GUSSIE M. WATERMAN.

Alice Maud May sat on the bed, buttoning her shoes, and watching Cousin Eunice, who was taking gowns from the wardrobe and ribbons from the table drawers, and packing them in a big trunk. Alice had greatly enjoyed the past month, during which she and cousin Eunice had roomed together in the pretty spare chamber. She had loved to watch the young lady crimp her hair with hair pins, and plait soft full frills in the necks of her gowns. She had loved to hear Eunice's nice stories of little girls "way off," while the kind cousin brushed out the snarls in the mop of yellow hair, which so sadly tried mother's patience.

"I'm sorry, sorry you're going way off to your house to-day," said Alice, twisting off a button. "I'll be lonesome to death! I'm goin' to sleep up here just the same though; mother said so."

"O now that your grandmother has come to live so near you, you must have good times visiting her, and then you'll not be lonesome," said Eunice pleasantly.

"What in the world are grandmothers good for? I just wish you'd tell me!" suddenly cried Alice, pointing her buttoner at Eunice.

"I know what mine used to be good for when I was a tot like you," said Eunice laughing. "To give me big blue cups full of Indian pudding and milk when I went to see her, and pretty squares of star patch-work for the quilt I was making, and dear little printed pats of butter, and blueberry saucer pies for my very own!"

"O lov-er-ly!" cried Alice, with eyes that shone, then dulled again, "but I guess grandmothers now are just good to tell little girls to keep still 'n sew ole blocks that make their needles get sticky! That's what mine does to me; 'n I mos' wish she hadn't come to live up in that house." Alice nodded toward the north-western corner of the bedroom.

"But you told me she gave you some canaway cake, and a red cotton ball to sew dolls' clothes with, and a piece of cotton for a cradle sheet?"

"Ye-es," admitted Alice, "but I lost the ball, 'n the colt chewed the sheet all up, 'n I do hate to sit still, 'n—Dilly Bliss was here day b'fore yes'day, 'n she said grandmothers was just made to bother little girls, cause her's made her sit awful still 'n wouldn't let her ask her mother what she wanted to."

"Why, Alice! Dilly Bliss is a very noisy girl; and she's always teasing her mother for something. Her grandmother tries to teach her to do what is right. You must love your grandmother, Alice, and have good times with her," said Eunice, as she left the room.

"I don't know!" sighed the child as she finished dressing for breakfast.

"How quiet it will be to-morrow mornin' with you away, and your uncle gone up river, hay-making!" said Mrs. May when Eunice came into the dining-room. And it surely did seem very quiet and strange to little Alice when she awoke next mornin' to find herself alone in the chamber. It was very early, the sun was just peeping in through the long white curtain. There were no bows nor collars lying on the

dressing table, and fine gowns hanging over chairs. Cousin Eunice was not standing before the big glass, making frizzes. The wind blew through the entry, making the bedroom door creak a little, which sounded dreadful to Alice.

"I'll go right down stairs 'n find mother," she said, jumping out of bed and trotting swiftly down the back stairs to mother's bed room. There was no mother there, nor yet in the quiet dining-room. Alice peeped into the dark parlor—no mother there. Then the little bare feet pattered out into the kitchen; but there was nothing to show that anybody had been in it since the night before. The cook stove held no fire and no kettle of porridge.

"Everybody's just gone 'n runned away 'n we'll never have a bit of breakfast!" Alice's tears were dropping by this time and she looked very woe-begone.

"O I know just what I'll do!" she cried suddenly brightening. "I'll go up to grandmother's 'n find her. Mos' likely she's so glad grandmother's come, 't she's gone up to see her real early 'thout waitin' for breakfast."

Alice lifted the back door latch and ran out into the narrow, dewy path leading between high walls of timothy clover, and ox-eyed daisies, up to Grandmother May's. She thought not of the six yellow and white kitties in the wood-shed loft, nor the sleek red bossy in the barn. She heeded not the ba-a-a of the few sheep in the pen, nor thought of her bare feet and night gown trailing through the wet grass; she must hurry on to grandmother's to find mother.

"Maybe she's just runned away, 'n then I'll have to live with grandmother 'n sit still all the time?" said the little girl as she swung open the big gate leading into the door yard. Her lip quivered and some more tears dropped.

"What in the world!" said Grandfather May, who was pulling the sweep down at the deep well when he saw the forlorn little figure running up the broad gray plank to the back door. She stood on tip toe to lift the big brass latch, and rushed into the kitchen, where black Hannah was frying griddle cakes for breakfast.

"Massy sakes! Alice Mod!" cried Hannah, throwing up her hands as Alice ran past her into grandmother's bed room. "Grandmother May, where's my mother? She's just lost!" cried a pitiful voice which made somebody turn from the great brass framed bureau glass where she was tying a full bordered cap under her fat chin.

"Why, Alice Maudy! you're all wet and cold, poor little creature! Jump right into my bed 'n get warm!"

Grandmother tucked the clothes around the shivering bedraggled little maiden, and stroked the snarly hair above the flushed, tearful face.

"She's gone, grandmother! The 'aint nobody home a tall 'n I b'lieve I'll have to live 'long o' you, 'f you'll let me," said Alice snuggling down among the warm bed-clothes.

"So you may, dear, if you like; but I see your mother's sun bonnet coming up the path; so I think she's found, and will want her little girl," said grandmother, smiling. "I suppose she was out milking the cow, as your father is away. You didn't look round the barn to find her, did you?"

"Well! I never did think!" exclaimed Alice with a merry laugh.

"O fie! what a naughty girl to run away here in your night gown and bare feet!" said Mrs. May when she came. "I was just going to the house with the milk pail when I saw you going up the path. Now, we must go right home."

"O no!" said dear old grandmother, bringing a flannel sacque from her clothes-press. "Alice may put on this jacket and a pair of my stockings, and you shall both stay for breakfast and have some of Hannah's nice buckwheat cakes."

"I think you're just the beautifullest grandmother that ever was made!" cried happy Alice, as she sat between her grandparents at the table in the cheerful breakfast room.

"I'm sorry I ran off 'n gave you a trouble, mother," said she on her way home, "'n I just wish you'd write 'n tell Eunice 't I've found out that grandmothers are good to love 'n help little girls, 'n let 'em stay to breakfast, when they're all cold 'n wet, cause they've run through the wet grass huntin' for their mothers!"