

## Primary Department.

## CLEANLINESS.

BY ARNOLD ALCOTT.

"THOSE that wish to be clean, clean they will be." So spake the old Irishwoman in that charming fairy tale by the Reverend Charles Kingsley, *The Water Babies*.

Many of our teachers have pupils who come from homes where poverty, with its too frequent attendant dirt, exists. These children are in somewhat the same predicament as was "Topsy," in Uncle Tom's Cabin. They grow in spite of circumstances.

Our surroundings, or, as the philosopher would say, our environments, educate us more effectually than we think. The eye is one of the most definite, and one of the clearest of the perceptive faculties. Psychologists tell us that distinct, vivid impressions form the basis for future elaboration into thought. In poetry we find the same idea. If you will refer with me to Goldsmith's Traveller, we shall find that in speaking of the influence of country, soil and climate on a people, he says:

"Turn we to survey,  
Where rougher climes, a nobler race, display;  
Where the bleak Swiss, their stormy mansions tread,  
And force a churlish soil for scanty bread."

As a consequence of the barrenness and sterility of the Highlands we have a thrifty, industrious, conscientious race produced. Those who dwell in country places have a fondness for and communication with Nature, with the works of God, which those residing in towns and in cities, have in but a superficial and artificial sort of way.

Since it is an axiom then that we are influenced largely by what we see, we believe it to be an absolute necessity, in order to have pure pupils, physically, that the school-rooms and school-yards be tidy and clean. Let us make the schoolroom bright and cheery, for indeed, it is the only pleasant place for those scholars who have not been blessed with neat homes.

Having surrounded our children with good, the next step is to devote our attention to them.

How are we to secure personal cleanliness?

It gives me much pleasure to give to you the following methods, which I have tested, and have found satisfactory:—

1st. *Private Talks*.—By talking privately with individual pupils beneficial effects have been produced, because this mode of treatment does not lessen the respect of a scholar in the eyes of his fellows.

2nd. *Pictorial Illustrations*.—It is a well-known fact that children are fond of praise, that they like to be noticed.

Many teachers make mistakes just here. For example, they put the names of the talkers on the board, or the names of the bad writers, or of the bad spellers, or they bring out before the class those who came with dirty boots.

Present gratification is a natural instinct, if I may so call it, with children. Therefore, this notoriety pleases them to a certain extent. In other words, a wrong spirit is inculcated.

And such procedure is not likely to be productive of the best results as regards abolishing talking, improving the writing and the spelling, and getting the boots clean. To take the latter case, let the teacher make much of those who have clean boots. Thus we reward the good and ignore, seemingly, that which is otherwise.

Again, we may talk about those birds which are fond of water, about the purity of white flowers, and may draw suitable pictures on the board, and write thereon the names of our clean, tidy pupils. Various little devices of this sort may be used by the ingenious teacher with much advantage.

3rd. *Stories*.—In the junior course of the Chautauqua Young Folks' Reading Union, the *Water Babies*, by Canon Kingsley, is prescribed. This course is for children under twelve. We should lead our scholars to read the book, or if they are too young, we should tell them the salient points of the story. By vividly portraying little Tom's dirty condition, and by dwelling on his wish to be clean, we have been able to so impress our pupils with the desire to be clean that the results have been gratifying.

It has been said that the best way to civilize Russia would be by the judicious use of soft soap in that country.

However we do it, we must see to it that our scholars are neat and clean, if we would begin work aright. We should train them to be tidy in the most trivial matters, even in so insignificant a one as that of cleaning slates. Water should be used always, and every pupil should have his or her cloth or sponge. This is very important.

With the older pupils, and even with the juniors, we should show how necessary personal cleanliness is with reference to the preservation of good health.

Charles Kingsley says that "People's souls make their bodies, just as a snail makes it shell." This is undoubtedly true, but the reverse is also true, in so far as that if a boy be clean, tidy, and neat in appearance, it will be the easier for him to be morally pure and true. It will be easier for such an one to be upright and honest, than for him to be slouching and sneakish.

We have offered a few suggestions, knowing that to the wide-awake teacher, these will serve as a stimulus to greater efforts.

Indirectly, and directly, we must be diligent in this work, until we have found our *El Dorado* of bliss, in the sunlight of the bright, clean faces of our boys and girls.

We must steer carefully but surely, between the Scylla and Charybdis of dirt and ignorance, keeping a sharp outlook, and doing all we can to encourage the free use of soap and water.

Let us by our personal magnetism infuse into our pupils the desire to be clean; let us send into their hearts sparks of electric fire from our own souls; let us, in the words of the noble English statesman, William Ewart Gladstone, "make it easy for them to do right, and hard for them to do wrong."

We have given you no sky-scraping theories, but proved realities. Nevertheless we ask you not to accept them, but, in the words of the apostle, we say, "prove all things, hold fast to that which is good."

"As in the elder days of art,  
Builders wrought with greatest care,  
Each minute and unseen part,  
For the gods see everywhere.  
Let us do our work as well,  
Both the unseen and the seen,  
Make the house where gods may dwell  
Beautiful, entire and clean."

## HONOR ROLLS.

BY RHODA LEE.

A GREAT deal has been said for and against honor rolls and it is to be supposed that as long as teachers of different mind and calibre exist there will be some who will abuse but many who will use this simple though effective school-room artifice. In some cases the combination is wrong; in others the plan adopted has not been given a fair trial. By combination I mean the spirit of class and pupil coupled with the honor-roll. The spirit must be right to start with or the efforts will be entirely misdirected. Endeavor by all means to have your children love and do what is right for its own sake and not for the sake of excelling others.

When one of your active, troublesome boys gets into the "fort" described in our last number, as a good soldier, let him feel that it is the record and reward of a "trying" week, and he is now pledged to keep up his reputation as a good soldier. He is not to be contented with his own success but is also to help others, in school and out, to get into this place of safety.

Be careful that your "Busy Bees," referred to in our last paper, never stop to pride themselves on their thriftiness. Guard against your children stooping for the prize before they have gained the victory. Have them scorn the thought of unworthy honor, and undeserved praise. This right spirit is not by any means an easy thing to obtain. Neither is anything else worth having. Nevertheless get it.

This emulation may be applied, either to the intellectual part of school work, or to the moral actions of the pupil, but it is in the latter that we recommend the use of it most strongly.

We think it must be the experience of all who have faithfully used the honor rolls in this connection, that, for the promotion of general good conduct and tidiness especially, they are extremely use-

ful. In some districts more than others it is very difficult to have clean boots throughout your class. A little incentive in the way of a "boot roll" is productive of grand results. Draw a large side-view of a boot on the board and print neatly across it the word "shine." Below the shoe write the names of all who have not once in the week come with muddy boots, wet days excepted. For variety you might give to this lengthy list the name of "The Boot Brigade."

You will find many thoughtless boys, who at one time were blissfully happy in taking the short route through the mud, picking their way and endeavoring to preserve their "shine" in order to gain a place in the "brigade."

Neither do they care now to stop to play on the way, and thus the device has developed into a two-fold blessing, overcoming dilatory as well as untidy habits in your class. We might mention a great many more bad habits which might be subdued in this way, but will leave it to each teacher's own ingenuity to find out what incentive is best suited to aid all little folks in overcoming their "crying evil," and when you have discovered this, with your combination correct, you will assuredly be rewarded by good and encouraging results.

## TACT.

BY RHODA LEE.

MANAGEMENT, viewed from one point, may be said to be of two kinds. Tact, or the natural, instinctive power of management which some teachers possess, and that which may be derived from child-study and the observation of cause and effect in the school-room and home. Yes, home. If there is a child in your home, study him, and you will find much that will aid you in your school work.

"How I wish I had that tact," someone says. Now let me tell you, I think in all probability you have a considerable quantity of it, but instead of trying to use it you have been enforcing your rules with a grand will, certainly, and yet with, perhaps, a sprinkling of harshness and despotism of which you would scarcely deem yourself capable. How much more peaceful, pleasant and profitable the day would have been could you have conquered that idle, "I can't" boy, or that obstinate girl, by a little tact, than by the exercise of your indomitable will and authority. Undoubtedly tact is a very important "wheel" in the school-room work. Let us note the various "spokes" of which it is composed, and their bearing on the other machinery. One of the first and most necessary is praise; and let it be spoken, by all means, not merely thought. A little deserved praise to the right one, in the right way, at the right time, never fails.

If you have had some trouble, as I have, with noisy feet, you will find it advisable to say sometimes, "Tom, I am glad to see you have conquered your feet," or to a row, "The girls in the second row have had good feet during the last lesson." This, to some who have been really trying, will do much towards obtaining steadiness of feet.

In no better way than by a little well-timed praise can neatness of work be obtained. You may give the commendation in a variety of ways. When examining the slates, place on the work some mark, either with white or colored chalk, or change the position of the pencil from its place on the desk to the slate, or, in preference to this, place the slates deserving approbation on a ledge along the wall.

Remember, however, that it is not only the best, but the one on which the greatest effort has been expended, that is deserving of praise. If your children love you as they ought, and have not been satiated with praise, they will value your approbation very highly, and prize it when received.

Children love to be praised, and we, in our love for it also, are reminded that we "are but children of a larger growth." How in our school work we long for a word of commendation, and when we receive it, with what added zest we work!

Let me tell you of a little experiment I made in my class quite recently.

I had been greatly troubled with some harsh, loud voices in my class, and had tried many plans for softening them, but, from forgetfulness more than anything else, these voices would come out at times and influence the whole class. One morning I stopped my scholars in a song, and, turning to the boys, I said, "Boys, I was in the country this