

For the REVIEW.]

S. P. C. A.—THE BANDS OF MERCY.

It is said that "man is the only animal that sheds tears," yet we frequently meet in literature with incidents in which the lower animals are represented as manifesting their grief in this way. The steeds of Achilles are said by Homer to have wept at the death of Patroclus:

"Immovable

Beneath the splendid car they stood, their heads
Down, drooping to the ground, while scalding tears
Dropped earthward from their eyelids, as they mourn'd
Their charioteer."

Matthew Arnold also relates in his "Sohrab and Rustum," that the horse of the mighty hero shed tears as he beheld his master dead upon the sea shore. And there are other references of a similar character. This may be a poet's fancy, but it is certain that the relationship between man and the lower animals has always been very close; and those who have come under domestication have developed, through man's instruction, a wonderful intelligence, and become his worthy companions. We know that through all time animals have been objects of reverence and sometimes of worship; and among the Egyptians, for instance, the slayer of certain animals was punished by death. This being the case, it seems somewhat of a reflection upon our more enlightened civilization that it has been found necessary to form societies all over the world to prevent cruelty to animals, who in such great measure are dependent upon man's kindness. It seems almost impossible that a man should ill-use his horse, for instance, when self-interest, if nothing else, should lead him to treat him kindly and keep him in good condition.

But the fact that there are constant and innumerable cases of the most inhuman treatment of animals reveals a state of things not at all flattering to our ideas and hopes of mankind as it ought to be after so many years of civilization. Yet there can be no doubt that the S. P. C. A., beside preventing cruelty to animals, will have a good effect in a reactionary way upon those who practice such cruelty. Especially will this be the case in the Bands of Mercy, since they have to do almost entirely with the children, who have not in any way become hardened in cruelty and can be taught to be humane in their treatment of all the animals.

To many this seems the most hopeful and promising branch of the Society; for it is more and more becoming the conviction of mankind that to work a reform of any kind, or to further the progress of the nations in all that may be called true civilization, it is necessary to begin with the little children. This,

the "Ladies' Humane Education Auxiliary of the S. P. C. A." have undertaken as their part of the work, and the results already attained by the Bands of Mercy in St. John are in every way commendatory and promising. No one who has attended the several gatherings in the St. John Mechanics' Institute of the united Bands can fail to have been impressed with the importance and quality of the work done. It is an inspiration in itself to see these hundreds of little ones gathered together for the express purpose of hearing and singing about kindness to animals, which must of necessity lead up to kindness to each other and lessen very materially the sum total of those debasing influences to which so many little children are constantly exposed. Depend upon it, this is the surest way to *prevent* cruelty to animals. To be sure the parent Society can keep ever her vigilant eye upon those who abuse their beasts of burden, but if the Bands of Mercy became sufficiently extended there would cease to be this necessity, for the lessons of kindness learned by the children would rarely be forgotten.

For all these considerations I would heartily recommend the formation of Bands of Mercy in the common schools, Sabbath-schools, etc., not forgetting the annual gathering in the Institute, with its pretty songs, bright banners and happy children's faces.

F.

St. John, N. B.

For the REVIEW.]

THE KINDERGARTEN.**FRÖBEL'S CLAIMS TO CONSIDERATION ON THE PART OF EDUCATIONISTS.**

Some considerations drawn from a survey of Fröbel's career inspire the careful thinker with great confidence in his principles and praxis.

His lonely childhood, with its marvellous powers of introspection and self-analysis, gave him an insight into the thoughts and feelings and desires of childhood from the earliest stage of consciousness, which stands, we think, unique in human experience. He may fairly claim the title, "Discoverer of the laws of childhood." Again, the deep religious tone of his whole nature, the key-note of which was, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness," joined with the fact that this Kingdom was not, in his thought, a dominion restricted to the spiritual sphere, but was to exert its supremacy over mind and matter in all their relations, add weight to his teachings. Fröbel's idea stood thus: Man in conscious harmony with himself, with nature, with humanity as a whole, and, finally, in unity through the ripened powers of his complex nature, with the Divine