SOME AMERICAN TEAPOTS.

THEIR ORIGIN IS TO BE LOOKED FOR IN THE ORIENT.

Imported Teapots in the United States—American Examples of the Last Century—Some Curious Modern Forms.

History does not record the name of the original inventor of the teapot, but tradition assigns its birthplace to China and Japan. Certain it is that among the earliest spouted and handled utensils of clay that were made in England, many were fashioned after Oriental models. The low cylindrical teapots of "red porcelain," made by the Elers brothers in Staffordshire toward the latter part of the seventeenth century, revealed unmistakably an Eastern influence, and this may be said to be true, to a certain extent, of similar vessels produced in all parts of Great Britain for a century afterward.

We are accustomed to think of the Orient as the land of fans and teapots, and numerous collections have been made of Chinese and Japanese patterns. At least two extensive collections of the latter are known to be owned in this country, one of which consists of upward of six hundred specimens, while the other numbers about fourteen hundred designs of almost every conceivable form and character—grotesque, curious, artistic, and ingenious. We are told that in Japan particularly teapots abound on every hand, which can be purchased at almost any price, from a few cents up to many dollars.

A naval officer who recently returned from China informed me that he was constantly being importuned by the natives to buy. One day a Chinese vender came aboard the ship with a heavy load of these wares and offered them to the Americans at $1.50 each. After he had been the rounds without success, the officer, in a spirit of fun, proposed to the merchant to take the lot off his hands for $2. What was his astonishment when the offer was promptly accepted, and he found himself the possessor of half a hundred teapots enough for all his acquaintances, with plenty to spare. And to this day, it is said, he has teapots to give away.

Has any one ever thought of forming a collection of American teapots? I do not know, yet the field is a fertile one and worthy of the attention of any china collector. What is dearer to the feminine heart than the dainty little receptacles for brewing the social beverage? And what is more fascinating than the unearthing of curious old pieces made in this country which we know must be in existence?

The American tea services were imported for a long time before they were manufactured here. Every one is familiar with the old English china of our grandmothers, which included tea caddies and pots of quaint shapes and curious ornamentation—perhaps a "Jackfield," in glossy black, a cauliflower pattern in green, a piece of old Wedgwood in blue and white, a Lowestoft in hard white paste with pink roses, an example of lustred ware resembling burnished silver, or dark blue Staffordshire pottery with printed designs, mayhap with American views. Then there were French, India, Persian, Delft, Dresden, Crown Derby, Spode, Chelsea, and Bristol pieces, but for a long time not a single piece of native American ware, except it might be the commonest earthenware, no record of which has been preserved.

Early in the last century tea began to be used to a considerable extent, and toward the end of the century tea drinking had become general. Not until then do our potters seem to have turned a thought to the manufacture of vessels for use in connection with the Chinese shrub. In 1769 "Tortoise-Shell" and "Green Colour" teapots were made in Boston, as set forth in a newspaper advertisement of the day, but who can identify one of these at the present time? Doubtless some of them survive and are now prized as early English productions with the Wileidon ware which has been found throughout the New England States.

Teapots may also have been produced at the Philadelphia china works about 1772, and probably were, but no examples have yet been brought to light. Soon after the opening of this century, however, several firms in Philadelphia were making them, in imitation of the English wares. In 1808 Messrs. Binney & Ronalds were making red and yellow tea services and two years later black, yellow, and red coffee and tea pots were advertised by the Washington pottery in the same city. Even to this day there is an old pottery still in operation in Second street, where some of the old teapot moulds, used previous to 1810, are yet in existence. By that time various establishments were regularly producing them, particularly the Tucker hard porcelain works in Philadelphia. The patterns were low and graceful and original in design, embellished with rudely painted landscapes in brown.

Later the American potters commenced to originate new forms in teapots, and the manufacture became general.

In THE SUN of April 26 the true history of the "Rebekah at the Well" teapot was given. No teapot design ever produced, it is safe to say, has been so extensively copied or retained its popularity for so long a period. For forty-five years it has been a standard pattern in a hundred or more of the potteries of this country, yet it is a remarkable fact that few of the potters who make it can tell where or how it originated. Nine-tenths of them will perhaps claim that it was first produced by them, while others state that it is an old English or German design, and a few will more truthfully tell you that they know nothing about it. Only last week I asked a manufacturer who had just drawn a kiln of "Rebekahs" where the form originally came from. His reply was, "I am not sure, but I think my grandfather first made it here," and when he was informed that Mr. Edwin Bennett designed it at Baltimore in 1851, he remembered that "there was a Bennett working at this pottery many years ago, and I guess he is the man that got it up for my grandfather."

Mr. Bennett also produced, at the Baltimore factory, as early as 1847, a majolica design with relief ornamentation of rose vines

MAJOLICA TEAPOT.
Edwin Bennett, Baltimore, 1847.

on a yellow and green mottled ground, with lid surmounted by a knob in the form of a strawberry. This pattern is still being produced in a modified form, but the earlier examples, as shown in the illustration, were by far the best in quality and finish.

In 1875 Prof. Isaac Broome designed and modelled for the Etruria potteries, Trenton, a tea service ornamented with relief medallion portraits of George and Martha Washington. The sculpturing of these heads was particularly good, and the likenesses were excellent.

MARTHA WASHINGTON TEAPOT.
Trenton, 1875.

Some of these were made in white biscuit on a dark colored body, somewhat resembling the fine jasper ware of Josiah Wedgwood.

Majolica ware was manufactured quite extensively at Phoenixville, Pa., between 1880 and 1890, and among the numerous patterns were cauliflower and seashell designs brightly colored after nature.

CAULIFLOWER TEAPOT.
Phoenixville, Pa., 1880.

The former was modelled in the form of a cauliflower head surrounded by green foliage, a design evidently suggested by a quaint old form very popular with English potters a century or so ago, but now quite rare and consequently in great request with china collectors.

Among the most original designs in American tea sets is one in hard porcelain, which was made at the Union Porcelain Works at Greenpoint, N. Y., some years ago. All of the pieces of this service are different in modelling, but are decorated to harmonize in color and treatment. The cream pitcher has for a handle the head of a goat. The sugar bowl is surmounted by a knob in the semblance of a negro's head, while on the lid of the teapot is the modelled head of a Chinaman, approximate details suggestive of the sources from which the contents of the several pieces are obtained. The last mentioned is here figured, showing other relief designs, such as a monkey beneath the spout, squirrels on the handles, and reclining deer which serve for feet, while the body of the pot is ornamented with floral devices and birds in colors and gold. Another odd design from the same works is a rectangular teapot with conventionalized spout and embossed gold and jewel work.

HARD PASTE TEAPOT.
Greenpoint, N. Y.

RECTANGULAR TEAPOT.
Greenpoint, N. Y.

BELLEEK TEAPOT, SHELL PATTERN.
Trenton.

In Belleek or egg-shell ware the Trenton potteries have produced many artistic shapes. Some of these are particularly graceful and light, and thoroughly original in conception. Two are especially worthy of notice, one being of globular form, in imitation of a fluted or reticulated shell, with coral handle; the other a tall piece with dragon handle. Trenton is, in fact, the centre of the teapot trade in the United States, and hundreds of beautiful conceits in this line have been turned out by the various establishments in that "American Staffordshire" city. A collection of Trenton patterns alone would present a most interesting object lesson. Among the most curious, perhaps, is the "Santa Maria," which originated during the year of the Chicago Fair, a combination, in form, of a bird and a Spanish caravel. A beautiful example of this design, decorated on the panels with paintings of wild roses and raised gold work surrounded with a frame of underglaze blue, finished with coat gold on the relief ornaments, has recently been presented by the manufacturers to the Pennsylvania Museum at Philadelphia. Somewhat similar to this in appearance is a dainty swan teapot of egg-shell thinness, light, graceful, and beautifully tinted in various delicate shades of color.

SWAN TEAPOT.
Trenton.

The teapots of the Rockwood Pottery are justly famed for their originality of form and beauty of coloring and underglaze decoration. No two of them are exactly alike, though they may be classified into groups according to their general shape. Some of them are furnished with detachable bamboo handles, which add to their Japanese effect, and, in reality, some of these are painted by a native Japanese artist who does some of the most artistic work at this establishment.

ROCKWOOD TEAPOTS.

DRAGON HANDLED EGGSHELL POT.
Trenton.

It is no longer necessary for the good housewife to seek among imported wares for pleasing patterns to grace her afternoon tea table or to use at the morning or evening meal. From the variety of forms produced by our own potteries may be selected examples as beautiful as any which come from abroad. Fastidious, indeed, must be the taste which cannot be satisfied by some of the quaint concepts which are now being offered in such bewildering profusion. And if any should take exception to my selection of examples for the illustration of this paper, it can be truthfully said that there are scores of others that are more beautiful than anything here shown, which can be seen in the potteries at Trenton, East Liverpool, Wheeling, Cincinnati, and other places. The pieces here figured are generally plain; their beauty is greatly enhanced by the artistic decorations that are placed upon them.

EDWARD ATLEE BARBER.

Elastic Band Music.

"Pop," said little Caleb Penquin, "what sort of music does an elastic band play?"

"Why, I don't know of any particularly distinguishing characteristic that it would have, Caleb," said Mr. Penquin, "except that it might be rather long drawn out."

"Right!" said little Caleb.

OUR MUSICAL DEGENERACY.

Jerome Hopkins Complains that the Music Now Taught in Public Schools Is a Mere Sham, and Suggests Remedies.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN: Sir: The great Rossini once said that there were only two kinds of music, the good and the bad, but I think we may say that there are at least three kinds of musicians, the good, the bad, and the hermaphrodite; or, in other words, those that grew, those that have been stuffed, and those that grew first and were stuffed afterwards, and the stuffed ones always overshadow those that merely grew. Thus it is that the pedagogy of man presumes to tinker the sacred handiwork of God, trying to reduce to one level and to shape in one fashion the countless varieties of poetic fancy, ethereal imaginings, and infinite degrees of artistic receptivity of American children, and to force them to conform to the microscopic rule of thumb laid down by School Boards. I have studied this question, not as a dilettante, but as an expert, in nearly 400 towns and cities in America and in 43 in Europe, and have come to the conclusion that nowhere to-day have the greatest musical professors the faintest idea of the amazing capacity of musical children for finished and artistic work in the declamatory school of vocal technics.

It is a notable fact, nevertheless, that in no other art can artistic work be turned out by mere children. The world never yet knew of a child's painting, poem, or statue being artistic. Such attempts by children (even the most talented) have been always inchoate, rudimental, and immature. But music is quite an exception, for Mozart at 4 not only played, but composed like a mature artist. Adelina Patti was a prima donna at 8. Meyerbeer, at 9 years of age, was called the finest pianist in Berlin, and Mendelssohn astonished the world as composer and pianist at the age of 16. Now, what do you or I know about equal talents playing in our streets, screaming and serving apprenticeships for jails and the gallows? As for the average children of our own race, day, and generation, let me say that when a five-act opera can be put on the stage with street children in the space of ten days (excepting only a part for one adult) and so perfectly rendered that in Liverpool the critics called it the trick of a Yankee who had picked his troupe out of the Covent Garden pantomime (as was my experience), I ask whether I have not reason for my faith in musical children?

I may point to the curious fact of the invariable loss sustained by the greatest productions of the finest music in this country, even in our biggest cities, as a proof that our young people are not taught to love music for its own sake, as they are taught to love literature. I have visited four Episcopal churches in Boston where there were boy choirs, and only in one of them could I hear an alto voice. That was in the Church of the Advent, where the music was a real "bath of harmony" (to use Berlioz's expression in a letter to me years ago). In Philadelphia, the once noble Harmonic Society and the Händel and Haydn Society have both fizzled out. The attempted grand opera by the 400 of that city the past season was a comical fiasco. The old and sluggish Musical Fund Society concerts are superbly entertainish, and not one cent is expended for music in the public schools. Think of it! That is the Centennial city's valuation of the "art of arts" as a civilizer! And $22,000,000 are spent on a City Hall! In Boston the once eulogized Boylston Club and Harvard Musical Society's orchestral concerts, as well as yearly series of classical piano recitals, have all evaporated, and the octogenarian Händel and Haydn Society still limps along with such spasmodic activities as Händel's "Messiah" and Bach's Passion music. Not the difficult one according to St. John, however, but the easy one, according to St. Matthew. Of course, Boston has her great Higginson "Symphony Orchestra," as we all know, but so have several of the 400 their yachts, race horses, and diamond tiaras, and one benefits the million about as much as the other. Barnum & Bailey's animals are stabled at Bridgeport, and Bridgeport never yet bragged of minding the great circus.

Boston's once famous *Dwight's Journal of Music* has long since expired, and no musical periodical takes its place as an authority. Boston's $75,000 organ has been boxed up in a cellar for many years, and the fine Frank E. Perkins's gift of the Beethoven statue has been moved close to the wall at the back of Music Hall stage, doubtless to give more room to the sluggers to whose manly exhibitions that once sacred place is now largely devoted, and there seems to be no one to protest, and no one to weep! Could they not at least place poor Beethoven in a glass case, and honor him as much as they do the rusty hinges and kitchen pans of Revolutionary days so carefully protected at the old State House and in the old Old South Church, I wonder? Who can deny the musical degeneration of the Hub? But the hub is the slowest part of a wheel. In Southampton, England, a woman rushed into the theatre where I was rehearsing and hysterically pulled her daughter out of the chorus, saying that a friend had just told her that "singing would bring on the consumption."

In Bath, England, the wife of Vicar Wilmot assured me that if I came to England to open schools for boons sereats, it would only do good, could to aid the cause, but as for music! bah! who cares for it?

In Brighton, England, the Rev. Dr. Wagner, who has paid for erecting five churches from his own private means, remarked to me (when I expressed astonishment at finding so low a standard of musical instruction among English children), "Oh, what matters it whether they are educated or not?" Contrast this with the great Ruskin, who demanded that peasants shall be taught to sing.

In Boston a bright girl of 14 came to me lately to join my chorus, but she could not tell a second from a third in the gamut. Astonished at her ignorance, I asked how long she had attended school, and she replied seven years.

Now, why but that the graduates from our public schools do know how to read music as a rule? The proof of the pudding is said to be in the eating, and travelling from town to town performing all manner music with amateur singers prepared in a limited number of rehearsals, as I have been doing on both sides of the Atlantic for nearly twenty years, I have found everywhere musical incapacity.

Händel is said to have grown very angry in Dublin on one occasion because his chorus of men and women were such bad readers of music, and took the agent who had furnished the voices severely to task for their inconsistency. Said Mr. Händel: "Sir, did you not assure me that these people could read at sight?" "Oh, yes, your honor; indeed, I did, but I never could see that they could read at sight." Children who come to me can seldom read at any sight.

I am constantly met by teachers and school committemen who deny this, but so far I have not had the pleasure of meeting one of these gentlemen who would himself submit to an examination as composer, conductor, librarian of the art, impresario, technician, or philosopher (with the positive pitch). In other words, one who had intellectual virtuosity enough to be called a "critic of music."

Now, my corollary from this is that there is a screw loose somewhere. The whole system of American and English public school music is a fraud on the taxpayers. It is a process of gulling to herd children together and spend public money upon their musical development when God Almighty has denied to a large number the very first conditions of a singer, namely, ear and voice. We might as well try to make a plum pudding out of cobblestones. It is cruelty to the children who are not musical; it is a drawback to those who are; it is a wicked waste of public money, and a torture to the teachers.

My view of this question is that no children should be punished with music if they don't like it in or outside of our schools, and they as well as their parents, should be made clearly to understand that such a deprivation would work no hardship. Carpenters and house painters must have good materials or they can't turn out good work, yet here are our school committees all over both England and America forcing teachers to try to make singers out of dunderheads and musicians out of puddingheads, and when experienced and unprejudiced musicians complain of the failures, the indignant officials turn upon them in a high dudgeon, contradict them, and trumpet through the newspapers that they are "not failures." I ask how is it then that the rank and file of our people know and care so little for music dissociated from fashion and snobbery?

Now the parent of an unmusical child rejected by the music master would have no more cause of complaint than the parent of a one-legged child would have because his little cripple was rejected by a dancing master. While time, money, and temper are wasted in trying to make musical those whom God Almighty has made unmusical, neither time, money, nor labor enough are expended on making more musical those who have been created musical. The talented children get no chance to show what they can do, unhampered by the others. If "one dead fly will spoil a pudding," one bad voice can spoil a chorus, and whoever denies it simply has no ears, that's all! There is as much difference in our ears as in our noses.

The reform I advocate in our schools, therefore, is to separate the naturally unmusical children from the singing classes, introduce declamatory works or school operas which are attractive to the young, give public performances every few weeks or months, sugar the pill of technics, encourage the creatures to exert themselves in art, as they now do in sports. "Children's musical congresses" in the three leading cities of the Eastern States, designed to direct public attention to the question of reform in the beginning of music, not for the few, nor for the rich, but for the million who are not rich. These three cities set the fashions for the rest of the country, and their educational responsibilities are very heavy. It is hoped, therefore, that no apology is needed for inviting my fellow countrymen, the thinkers and the patriots, to join once a year in a movement to add to the credit, the honor, the respect, and the supremacy, artistic as well as practical, refining and elevating as well as political and commercial, of our beloved country, in whose greatness we all have a common interest. JEROME HOPKINS.

CLOVER HILL HERMITAGE, April 24.

WHAT DEAF MUTES CAN DO.

HOW THEY ARE TRAINED FOR THE PRACTICAL NEEDS OF LIFE.

Orris Benson, Born Deaf, Dumb, and Blind, Lived in Hopeless Helplessness Ten Years—Now He Is Crowding the Average Fourteen-year-old Boy in Education.

The age of miracles is past, so they say, but remarkable things keep on happening just the same. Every day the deaf do hear and the dumb do speak, and, if you have a taste for miracles, there are two to begin with. New Yorkers need not go far to observe these interesting phenomena. On the grassy slopes which overlook the Hudson at 163d street there is a group of buildings where more miracles happen in twenty-four hours than in almost any other space of equal size in the country.

Five hundred people live in this group of buildings, and yet there is a singular quiet about the place. When a SUN reporter entered the grounds the other day there was the sound of birds calling from tree to tree, and of the wind blowing through the branches, and an occasional inarticulate human cry: that was all. Up the driveway marched half a dozen small boys, headed by a young man in blue military uniform. The boys wore suits of cadet blue with brass buttons. They had long rakes, which the first two carried as if they were tall flags, while the other four shouldered theirs as if they were guns.

They marched silently along until they reached a gateway when their leader stopped and threw up one hand with a commanding gesture. The boys came to a halt. Then the leader pointed to the first two, who looked at him expectantly. With the gesture of a general ordering a charge, he pointed to the right of the gateway. The two boys smiled, shouldered the rakes and moved on. The second pair were also directed to the right, but with less vehemence of motion. They, too, smiled and passed on, but not so far. They began to rake the grass immediately to the right of the gateway. Then the leader looked at the third pair of boys and swung both arms to the left. There was a third pair of smiles and the two began to rake the grass on the left of the gateway.

It is hardly necessary to say that the reporter was about to visit a deaf and dumb asylum. It was the New York Institution for the Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb. It is also for the instruction of anybody who visits it, although that is not one of its ends and aims. It is a great miracle manufactory, but accomplishes its wonders very quietly, considering the fact that the production of sound is one of its main objects.

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CLOVER HILL HERMITAGE, April 24.

BENSON READING THE VIBRATIONS OF THE THROAT.

April 29 1896.

Journal.

I got up and dressed my self tis morning. I washed my face and hands and combed my hair. I went to break fast at seven oclock. I ate beef steak, gravy and bread and oat meal and drank coffee. After break fast I put my cap on my head and helped carry a basket to the laundry. I went out doors . . I brushed my teeth and I washed my face and hands before school. I came to school at half past oclock. I talked with miss Montgomery about Mrs Currier gave me some ice cream.

BENSON'S FIRST TYPEWRITTEN LETTER.

Mr Currier and lady came to see me and Miss Nixon. I speak to lady. She said to me. She likes to hear my speech. I came to school at one clock. I write on my typewriter.

BENSON'S WORDS WRITTEN FOR THE REPORTER.

quiet, inarticulate cry to which there was no restorse.

It was uncanny, there was no denying that, and yet the strangeness disappeared when one saw the boys' faces. One might go far and not find a brighter, happier set of children. The deaf mute is almost invariably cheerful, especially when he is with others who have the same affliction. To see them then one would never call them afflicted. They laugh easily; their faces seem to flash thought back and forth; with one twist of the hand and arm they have expressed a whole sentence, and the ordinary human being, with his two extra senses, looks at them almost enviously and tries to excuse himself for his own slowness and dullness of apprehension.

The case of Helen Keller is famous. Every one has read of the sixteen-year-old girl who is deaf, dumb, and blind, and is, nevertheless, the friend, and an interesting friend, of some of the brightest people in the country. She is interesting, not solely because she has overcome, to a great degree, the terrible handicap of nature, but because she actually contributes to the mental enjoyment of people who have an almost infinite advantage over her. There is a boy in the institution at 163d street who, like Helen Keller, is deaf, dumb, and blind. He isn't yet 14, and he has acquired the wonderful advantages which Helen has received; but he has already accomplished such marvels as to make any ordinary boy of his age, with five good senses in his set, bite his face with shame.

Orris Benson is the son of poor parents who live in the wilds of Sullivan county, as the principal of the school puts it, "fifteen miles from a lemon." In that very point of view he had still another drawback. Helen Keller is the daughter of cultivated and well-to-do parents, has been the especial protégée of some of the most inspiring men and women in America, and has had the inestimable advantage of being taught by a woman who is as great a marvel in her own way as Helen is in hers. Orris Benson, born deaf, dumb, and blind, of poor and uneducated parents, was allowed to live for ten years a life of utter, dead vacuity. In spite of all this he is beginning to crowd the average boy of his own age in point of education, and in a few years will take his place as the prize miracle of this miracle-performing institution.

When Mr. Currier, the principal, took the reporter to see Benson, the boy was with one of his teachers, Miss Nixon. He takes different studies with different teachers, but Miss Nixon is his especial instructor in speech and the makeshifts which take the place of hearing. When Mr. Currier entered the room, Miss Nixon rose, and Benson, who was holding her hand, rose, too.

"Tell him it is Dr. Alexander," said Mr. Currier.

Benson had his left hand loosely over Miss Nixon's right, with which she told him in the sign language what Mr. Currier suggested. Strangely enough, the boy always instinctively turned to one side as if he were listening, and the more difficulty he has in understanding, the more pronounced is this "listening" attitude. It was an interesting peculiarity in a person who himself had never heard and had never watched any one else listen. As soon as Miss Nixon had repeated the principal's remark, the boy turned and said that he was glad the doctor had come. He spoke slowly and indistinctly, but his teachers understood. He put out his right hand to Mr. Currier who, placing his own right hand under the boy's, began to say something in the sign language. He had not spelled a single word when the boy's expression changed like lightning. Like a flash he tightened his fingers on the principal's hand, drew his own hand across Mr. Currier's coat, and then he laughed.

"It is Mr. Currier!" he exclaimed. He had known it at the very first motion of the fingers. "I could never learn to read the sign language in that way, simply by holding the hand, if I should try a lifetime," said Mr. Currier. "But the deaf and dumb do it. That is the way they communicate with each other in the dark."

The most remarkable thing which Benson did was to read the vibrations of the throat. Miss Nixon put his hand under her chin so that the hollow of the palm was pressed closely against the upper throat, and then she spoke in an ordinary tone of voice.

"What do you like to do, Benson," she asked.

"Nothing," answered the boy promptly.

"Oh, you lazy boy!" laughed his teacher. "But he does like to do a great many things. What games do you like to play?"

"Ball," with great readiness, answered Benson.

"No," said Mr. Currier; "we have another boy who is deaf, dumb, and blind, but he is very much duller and slower than Benson."

It was quite a cheerful change from Benson to the ordinary pupils. Not that Benson is depressing. He is full of fun, and is quick to see and laugh at a joke. But to a stranger he is a tax on the sympathies. In each of the regular schoolrooms a teacher sat with a class of eight or ten grouped around her.

"We find that we cannot do justice to the pupils if we have larger classes," said the principal. "We have adopted the system of rotation, also, and every forty minutes the classes change rooms and teachers. This gives them a little exercise, there is a chance to air the rooms, and, what is very important, the scholars are brought into contact with different persons, and in that way learn more perfectly to read the lips. Our great aim is to teach them speech and lip reading so that it may be of practical benefit to them. When pupils reach the point where they can go out into the world and carry on the ordinary occupations of life then we call that a practical result. If they can go into a store and tell what they want, in speech, I mean, not by signs, that is certainly practical. If we kept them constantly under one teacher they would undoubtedly learn to read the motion of her lips, but they might be at sea with anybody else."

The first class which the reporter visited was composed of boys and girls from 12 to 16 years of age. They were having an oral lesson in regard to articles of food in order to familiarize them with the lip motions with which these names are spoken.

"Which do you like best," the teacher asked of one boy, "beef or lamb?"

"Lamb," said the boy.

"Why?"

"Because it tastes better," with a smile.

"That's a pretty good reason," said the teacher. "Well," to the next boy, "which do you like better? Ham or beef?"

"Beef."

"Why?"

"Because—because it is more——"

The boy hesitated. He tried several times, but he could get no further.

"He's forgotten the word," said the teacher, and the boy, in a moment, said the same thing in another way. With his hands he said that he knew the word, but and he drew one hand through the other with a quick motion.

"There!" said Mr. Currier, "isn't that an expressive gesture to show that the word has slipped from his memory? People ask me whether we teach the pupils the sign language; that is to say, the expression of ideas by gestures. We do teach them certain things, but in reality it is the deaf mute who has taught us the sign language. Now, I'm going to have that word," and he did. It was "nutritious."

"Where is my hat?" suddenly demanded the principal.

Instantly the scholars pointed to the chair where he had put it.

"I asked them that suddenly," explained Mr. Currier, "to show you that they did not read the lips simply by guesswork, knowing what we were talking about."

One of the most interesting classes was a primary grade of little girls. They were beginning at the very rudiments of speech and of lip reading. The children were five or six years old and most of them seemed remarkably quick and bright. The teacher would begin by making some vocal sound, that of "b" for instance. The children would imitate her with astonishing success, and then one of them would go to the blackboard and write the letter corresponding to the sound. In not a single instance did they make a mistake. After this exercise the teacher said to one of the children:

"Open the window."

The child walked immediately to the window and opened it. In the same way they were told to close the window, to walk, to run, to jump, to stand up, and so on. Then she asked them to point to different parts of their bodies, and, finally, had them say short words.

From these beginners to some of the older pupils who were at work in the art class was a long step.

"Well," said Mr. Currier as he went in, "what are you doing this morning?" He spoke as rapidly as he would have spoken to any one. The young woman whom he addressed smiled and answered with as much fluency and modulation as any person would show. It needed repeated assurances to convince the reporter that this girl was a deaf mute.

"I show you the best and the worst," said the principal. "I wish you could have seen one of our graduates who was here yesterday. He was a deaf mute, but he is now the press agent for a prominent theatrical company, and you would never guess that he cannot hear, or that he acquired speech by such hard training. He brought us tickets for the theatre, and some of the older pupils had a very enjoyable evening in consequence. Of course, they are fond of the theatre. That is not so strange. Hearing people often enjoy a play given in a foreign language of which they do not understand a word." Mr. Currier interrupted himself to call attention to a well-grown boy who was making a water-so or design for a plaque.

"This is Morris Marks," he said. "When that boy was brought here they told me that he was an idiot and that we couldn't make anything out of him. To-day he is the best artist we have. He is clever in mechanics, also, but we will make an artist of him and a good one."

There are kilns for firing china in the room adjoining that of the art class, and some very creditable work has been turned out. A new department, that of horticulture, has been added to the schools, and some of the pupils work a certain time each day in the conservatories. Others do the printing, while one or two of the teachers and several of the assistants are graduates of the institution.

"I wish you could see my family at dinner," said Mr. Currier, as he led the way through the clean, big dining room to a great airy play room. There were children here, and as soon as they caught sight of the principal they began throwing kisses and saying "Good morning" with their small fingers.

"Here is where we have our dancing," he explained. "I have been in the institution twenty-five years, and yet I never get over a strange feeling when I come into a room and see all these silent beings whirling round in stiff ones. They dance beautifully. They do not need any one to beat time for them, but will waltz or polka or do a two-step in perfect time. And it isn't only that they keep mechanical time. There is a sort of rhythm in their motion which adds to the excellence of it all. You feel as if there were some strange music played for them, which they hear, but you do not.

"And this is our chapel," added the principal, opening another door. "That screen is for our stereopticon entertainments. We have them twice a month and the pupils delight in them."

"Why do you have a drum?" asked the reporter as they passed through the dining room.

"They march in and out, are seated, rise, and do various things by drum music. They feel the vibrations. Now you must see our gymnasium. We have a physical instructor for both boys and girls. We are especially careful about having plenty of physical training, because deaf mutes are peculiarly liable to phthisis on account of the little use they make of the lungs in speech. We are constantly at work to counteract this tendency."

After the gymnasium, Mr. Currier had something else to show, but the reporter's time was up.

"Why," said the principal, "I've just begun to show you what we do here. You'll have to come again. We could show you something new and interesting every day," a statement which no one who goes there will doubt.

A PICTURESQUE NEWSGIRL.

She Attracts Much Attention—Womanly Pride at the Age of 6 Years.

Despite the occasional vigilance of the Gerry society's agents, one of the most industrious sellers of newspapers in the neighborhood of Broadway and Thirty-third street is a shabby-looking girl who probably hasn't passed her sixth birthday. She wears a red dress that was designed for a larger person, and during the warm weather she doesn't trouble herself to put on stockings. With a bundle of papers under her arm, she dodges under trucks and in front of cable cars with the skill that comes from a lifetime spent in the streets. When business is dull and she crosses Broadway or Sixth avenue her manner changes. She walks mincingly and holds up the ragged ends of her old red dress as carefully as if it had never dragged in the dust. Recently she has cut off the ragged bottom of her dress, thereby shortening it to her knees, and thus improving it. In other little ways she has indicated that the female instinct to make the best of her personal appearance is moving in her, and yesterday afternoon she performed a toilet operation that attracted the attention of half a dozen people. When the significance of it became apparent the people who had been watching her looked at each other and smiled. She had just received her bundle of evening papers, and before offering them for sale she withdrew from the crowd of newsboys that surrounded the delivery wagon and sat down on the curbstone near Thirty-second street and sixth avenue. She carefully tore off the margins of two papers and folded them together in a long thin strip. From a pocket in her old red dress she fished out a hairpin, which she closely inspected with pride. Several people had stopped to see what she was doing, but she was unconscious of their presence. She selected a stiff lock of hair that was about four inches long, and, after dampening it, she rolled it up in the thin strip of folded paper and fastened it with the hairpin. It was intended to be a curl if everything went well. Then she rose, straightened down her skirt, and with this single curl paper over the left ear she trotted down Sixth avenue, calling "Wextra! Wextra!" in a thin, shrill voice.

Biddy Claims the Record.

From The Portland Courant.

Every season brings with it a breaking of records. It may be a new trotting horse with an idiotic name, or an athlete who has thrown a heavy hammer a few inches farther than it has heretofore been thrown, or a bicycle rider who has lowered the record for riding a mile a moment of a second; but all of these performances are only accomplished after severe and fatiguing training, and, however creditable they may be, look insignificant when compared to the efforts of a modest Plymouth Rock hen belonging to E. W. Tillotson of Farmington. This hen, without training or urging on the part of her owner, has just broken the egg-laying record for 1896. It is a monster, and measures 7¼ by 8¼ inches and weighs 4½ ounces.

BROOKLYN CITY FARMERS.

SCENES ON THE VACANT LOTS TILLED BY THE UNEMPLOYED.

Fresh Air, Green Vegetables, and an Education in Gardening for Any Man Who Will Take Them—Several Men Already Graduated from the City Into Farm Life.

A year ago Mayor Schieren in Brooklyn was impressed by the fact that there were many acres of rich, tillable soil lying waste in Brooklyn and its suburbs, which, if properly cultivated, would give numerous families green stuff for soup and vegetable dishes. He talked the subject over with Brooklyn citizens who were conspicuous for their efforts to aid the honest poor, and the result was that Frederick Bremmer and E. F. Linton of the German-American Improvement Company offered for cultivation the fifteen square vacant blocks bounded by Wyona and Pennsylvania avenues, the New Lots road, and Livonia street.

It is a pleasant place to look upon. The other day, when a reporter dismounted from his wheel at the corner of Pennsylvania and Riverdale avenues, after riding over the hot, dusty road of the unfinished Eastern Boulevard, a cool breeze was blowing in from Jamaica Bay over the marshes and the mile of new, growing grass. Down a block farther was the big farmhouse of Mr. McGee, and a little way this side were barns and other outhouses, such as are to be seen about any respectable farm. A neighbor lived down the New Lots road thirty or forty rods in another typical farmhouse, and if one could but have forgotten the well-set paving blocks beneath his feet and the grass-grown stone gutters he might easily have thought that he was forty miles further out on Long Island. Eight or ten men were at work in the garden. A baby was sitting in the dirt, while the father hoed the soil round the hills of corn. Other children from neighboring houses were playing about, girls of 12 or 14 years and baby sisters.

Farmer McGee sat in a wheelbarrow looking on as the men worked. It was noticeable that the men did not have their sleeves rolled up, that some of them handled the brand-new hoes or rakes a little awkwardly, and that there was not the genuine farmer swing in the way they threw out the little stones. Plainly they were city-bred men, who had gone to farming. They were men who had answered Secretary Nichols's questions satisfactorily, and had given proper references. Secretary Nichols is a member of the committee which set out to show what could be done with Brooklyn's vacant lots, and the novices were gardening under the guidance of Farmer McGee and his foreman, John A. Bush. They had had little or no experience in such matters; they were of the unemployed classes of the big city over the ridge.

One of the men when approached rested his chin on the handle of his hoe and answered a few questions. He was stockily built, such a man as one might see before a machine shop at noon or in Canal street on the steps of a corner saloon. His training had been in the ways of the city, and his bearing was that of a man who had been down in his luck and was just getting back his courage.

"What have you been planting here?" was asked.

"Some potatoes, a few carrots, and some other stuff."

"How often do you come out here to work?"

"Whenever I have a chance—two or three days a week."

"What did you do for a living before you came out here, and how do you make a living now?"

"I do anything I can—odd jobs, you know."

"How much land have you got to till?"

"This plot, about 25 by 100 feet. They gave me seed, a hoe, a rake, and the ground was already ploughed. That man there with a red sweater on is foreman. He'll tell you more about it than I can."

"Do you like it out here?"

"Yes, you bet I do. It is pleasant work."

All along the man had shown a disposition to be at work. He knocked a stone off a cornhill, and threw a bit of dried grass into the furrow between his and his neighbor's plot, besides doing other little things which men are not apt to do if they object to their work.

Foreman Bush said that all but two or three of the men had families, which often came out with them, the wife and the older children joining in the work.