

The Pedagogue of Long Ago

He Was Not as Jolly as Poet George Arnold Makes Him, But a Useful Man Withal

By Will T. Hale

The April Munsey contained an article by Dr. Parkhurst on the decadence of positive authority. He is not inclined to endorse the action of the English pedagogue to whom a class of thirteen was sent, and who took it for granted that they were to be chastised. He had scourged seven, when one of the remaining six explained they had had been sent to be examined for the confirmation class! Still the doctor thinks a "measure of severity" necessary.

I call after thirty-five years a well-kept, on my shoulder on one occasion by a schoolmaster who believed that in sparring the rod you spoil the child.

This man had eyes like old Ben Butler's—cocky, one looking east, one looking west, when facing north or south. That was owing to the independent action of his eyes, look at the same moment up and down or backward and forward. The forehead and same pedagogue seemed to be able to do the same. When I would have sworn that he was looking to the other way, I began eating an apple; then to an behold he of the crooked eyes came down like a wolf on the fold. He slathered me with a great ox-goad, and the welt thereof gave me pain many days.

Of course it was brutal, as things go in school rooms now. But public sentiment makes a thing good or bad, and that time public sentiment was with the schoolmaster and his rod, of whom it was truly written by John G. Saxe:

"And as 'tis meet to bathe ye feet,
Ye sitting head to mend,
Ye yonker's pate to stimulate,
He beats ye other end."

Life for hundreds of years was made a burden to helpless little pupils on account of the power given overbearing teachers; and I have wondered that no one came to their relief as Mrs. Browning appealed in behalf of the little ones of the factory in "The Cry of the Children." It is no wonder that Horace anatomized his crusty teacher as Orbillus of the Birch.

Plautus, Rome's greatest comic and dramatic genius, who died nearly two hundred years before the Christian era, says that for missing a single letter in his reading a Roman boy was stripped like his nurse's cloak with the black and blue spots left by the rod. Martial, the witty epigrammatist, born about 40 or 41 A. D., declares that in his time "the morning air resounded with the noise of floggings and the cries of suffering urchins."

The famous English schools have in the past carried brutality to an extreme. Goldsmith was often flogged as a dunce, and was once caned by a tutor for giving a ball in the attic story of the college. Whipping in the earlier American schools was almost an established feature of the curriculum, also—especially in the old field sort.

The preacher and historian—and he may have been a teacher—Thomas Fuller, in his work on the schoolmaster observes that the ingenious and idle think, with the hare in the fable,

that running with snails they shall soon come to the post, though sleeping a good while before their starting. "Oh, a good rod," he says, "would finely take them napping." Notwithstanding he holds in the same paper that "many a schoolmaster better answereth the name of pairotripe (boy-flogger) than paldagogos (boy-teacher), rather tearing his scholars' flesh with whipping than giving them a good education. Their tyranny in mauling the pupils about their heads hath dulled those who in quickness exceeded their masters."

But the good done to learning makes up largely for the errors displayed in some of the methods of making the young idea shoot. Time softens the memory, as distance lends enchantment to the view. We are therefore rather glad that they have many of them not been left to oblivion, but are thought of now and then in connection with former pupils who have become distinguished.

An early teacher was Thomas Platter, who began life as a Swiss shepherd boy and ended it as a famous Bale schoolmaster. At 9 years of age he was sent to the village priest, of whom he "learned to sing a little of the psalm and to beg for eggs, besides being cruelly beaten and oftentimes dragged by the ears out of the house."

Another was Roger Ascham, born about 1515. One of his pupils was Lady Jane Grey, and so was Queen Elizabeth. He may have used harsh means toward some of his pupils, but when it came to trucking to royalty he was an expert—such an adept, in fact, that he has given us a very false picture of the girl Elizabeth. "With respect to personal decoration," he says, "she greatly prefers a simple elegance to show and splendor." If this was so then, she outgrew the old preferences, for at her death she is said to have had about 2,500 costly suits of all countries in her wardrobe. She had also eighty wigs. Old Roger avers, too, that she was "exempt from female weakness," yet at the age of 16, when he described her, she and the husband of the queen dowager were having stolen interviews, in which much boisterous and indelicate familiarity passed. He should have been aware of this, for there was much scandalous gossip about my lady Elizabeth going in a night in a barge upon Thames and other light parts.

A valuable book by Ascham is entitled "The Schoolmaster." Like other of his calling, who had such predilections for writing verse that they wrote their text books—even arithmetics—in rhyme, he often dropped into poetry. By too close application in composing a poem, which he intended to present to the queen on the New Year's day of 1549, he was seized with an illness which proved fatal.

Platter and Fuller and Ascham owe little of their fame to a reflected light. Still less did that of Mathurin Cordier, born in 1478, perhaps the greatest of them all. Of this native of Normandy it is written: "He possessed special tact and liking for teaching children, and taught first at Paris, where Calvin

was among his scholars, and, after a number of changes, finally at Geneva. He wrote several books for children; the most famous is his "Colloquia," which has passed through innumerable editions, being used in schools for three centuries after his time." How is that for a text book's vitality? It is supposed that this work was in the schools in which Shakespeare received his instruction.

Speaking of Shakespeare, the world's greatest dramatist, recalls his friend, John Florio. The latter was a Tuscan by birth, but after the accession of James I. of England, he was made tutor to Prince Henry and became the personal friend of Queen Anne, to whom he dedicated his famous translation of the essays of Montaigne, his best known work. Special interest, by the way, attaches to this translation, from the fact that of the several copies of the first edition in the British museum library one bears the autograph of Shakespeare and another that of Ben Jonson. It has been suggested that Florio is the original of Holopernes, the pompous pedant of "Love's Labor Lost." He died in 1625.

Strangely enough, there were some parts of colonial America where almost any sort of a man was considered good enough to teach.

It is asserted by the historians that banished felons from England sometimes took to the profession of teaching in Virginia. Somewhere about the middle of the seventeenth century, Berkeley, the royal governor of Virginia, exclaimed: "Thank God, there are no free schools nor printing presses, and I hope there will be none for a hundred years." But there was then going on the first established in North America—that founded in 1834 by Benjamin S. P. who devised 200 acres of land on the Pococoon river, with the milk and increase of eight milch cows, for the maintenance of a learned honest man to keep upon the said ground a free school."

I should like to know the name of the first teacher of this school, and something of his methods. His name has not come down to us, however, neither have the particulars of many of those who, even in the old-field schools, so instructed (and straddled) the youth that Virginia was soon to show up some of the most able soldiers and statesmen.

We do not get all the information we long for about the second college established in America, William and Mary; but there is taught here a most interesting old pedagogue, John Camm he was, and those who would know more of him should read John Fiske's "Old Virginia and Her Neighbors."

Washington was graduated from "the people's college"—the old-field school. His first experience at school was in Stafford county, opposite Fredericksburg, and his first teacher was Hobby, the sexton of the parish. While Hobby was teaching the three R's, and no doubt treating young George as though a very ordinary boy, he had little idea that his own name would be pleasantly recalled today in connection with that of the great patriot. Another of his teachers of reading, writing and arithmetic—with a little geometry and surveying—was Mr. Williams. His school was somewhat better than Hobby's, though both were humble enough. A peculiar and fortunate whim of fate is this—Hobby and Williams, obscure and unlearned, being as readily recalled as Ascham and Florio, the cruditte tutors of queen and king!

The Dutch colony of New Nether-

lands had to put up for awhile with a sorry son, the first teacher. A boose-killer, he from Holland one whose record in the new world was unenviable—Adam Roolandse, the first teacher. A boose-killer, he held his place six years before the sluggish Dutch made up their minds to fire him. This teacher had to take in washing to supplement his income, and it is hardly a matter for wonder that he was driven into cultivating the jag.

Evidently educational matters were not much better off for many years after the English gained control; for William Smith, a historian, writing of his fellow New Yorkers in 1754, says: "Our schools are in the lowest order; the instructors want instruction, and through a long, shameful neglect of the arts and sciences our common speech is very corrupt, and the evidences of a bad taste both as to thought and language are visible in all our proceedings, public and private." Smith ought to have known, for he was an associate justice of the supreme court of the colony.

Teaching has not been considered the royal road to fortune, though many of America's eminent men have taught. Considering the distinction of their later years it is amusing if vain to wonder, if the rod was ever wielded over unruly urchins by the one-time pedagogues, James A. Garfield, Grover Cleveland, Chester A. Arthur and Franklin Pierce.

The Jews were strictly charged in the law to educate their children in ancient times. There were schools of prophets, and it is interesting to learn that Samuel kept one of these institutions, David attending it at one time. —New York Tribune.

Boston Earthquake of 1755.
The earth at first seemed to be lifted several inches and then shaken like a carpet. The climax came with a heavy jolt, accompanied with a crash like a peal of thunder.

Superstitious Bostonians thought they heard in the midst of the groaning and rumblings the shrill toot of Gabriel's trumpet.

Although the houses of that day were built "for keeps," many of them were racked out of plumb and square. Chimneys, though built regardless of material, were shattered, twisted half-way round or tumbled down.

Heavy roof beams were snapped like matches in some houses. The spire on the Boston market house was snapped off like the cracker of a whip and dropped into the street with the weather-vane attached.

The water in most of the wells became so charged with sulphurated hydrogen that it could not be used. Cracks opened in the earth in many places, and a fine white sand was blown out by fetid gases.

WELL KNOWN SCIENTISTS

Many Expect to Attend American Association Sessions at Cornell.
An unusually large number of scientists have signified their intention of attending the special summer meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, which is being held in Ithaca from June 28 to July 30. In addition to the American association, several affiliated societies, including the American Physical Society, the American Chemical Society, the Society for the Promotion of Engineering Education, the American Microscopical Society, the American Fern Society and the Society for Horticultural Science will meet at the same time.

The preliminary meeting will be addressed by President Schurman of Cornell and by Andrew D. White. The formal opening of Rockefeller hall, the new physics laboratory of Cornell, will take place on the first day of the session.

After this the meetings will be largely in sections, where many scientific subjects will be discussed. There will also be a series of excursions to points of scientific interest about Ithaca.

THIS DATE IN HISTORY.

- June 29.
- 1566—Sir Henry Yelverton born.
- 1692—English under Rooke defeated by Admiral Tourville off Cape St. Vincent.
- 1734—Imperialists defeated at Parma, Italy.
- 1797—Cisalpine republic established.
- 1817—Pius VII. condemned Bible societies by bull.
- 1840—Lucien Bonaparte died.
- 1846—Resignation of the Peel ministry.
- 1852—Henry Clay, American statesman, died. Born April 12, 1777.
- 1861—Elizabeth Barrett Browning died. Born 1809.
- 1864—Confederates victorious at battle of Ream's Station, Va.
- 1873—First reception of foreign ministers by emperor of China at Peking.
- 1884—Palassa discovered a new asteroid of the twelfth magnitude at Vienna.
- 188—Mrs. Hamersley married to Duke of Marlborough in New York.
- 1891—Prince George of Greece arrived in Chicago.
- 1895—Thomas H. Huxley, English scientist, died. Born May 4, 1825.

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Shaw on Amateur Actors

He Vents Spleen on Their Theatricals and Demands on Authors. Says They Habitually Insult the Art.

I have a strong grudge against clubs of amateur actors, because they habitually insult the art they dabble in by assuming that it is a sin which can only be covered by charity. It is quite a common thing, writes G. B. Shaw in the London Tribune, for organizers of amateur performances to appeal to the author, to forego his fees on the ground that the proceeds are to be given to some charitable institution. That is to say, a popular author is asked to hand over some hundreds a year to amateur societies to give to their pet charities and that, too, without the slightest guarantee that the management of the performance will be business-like enough to realize for the charities the whole value of his contribution, or indeed, any part of it at all. A more unreasonable demand can hardly be imagined within the limits of practicable human audacity. Even professional millionaire philanthropists like Mr. Carnegie and Mr. Passmore Edwards reserve the right to choose for themselves the objects of their endowment.

Besides, the charity of amateurs is hardly ever really charitable in its motive. It is a mere coat of whited wall for an indigence which is regarded as questionable, if not positively disreputable. It is also adulterated by a desire for the patronesses of charities. And the economic effect of the performance, when the expenses leave any surplus, is simply to relieve the rate-payers of their social obligations by helping to keep hospitals out of public hands and in private ones. Why on earth should a playwright be expected to contribute to the rates of places he has never lived in?

What makes this additionally exasperating is that while there is little difficulty in raising vast sums of money for the charities, it is difficult for the starving art of the theater either from public or private sources. If all the money that has been wasted on charities by amateur actors had been devoted to theatrical art by building up local dramatic societies with repertoires, wardrobes and even theaters of their own, not only would dramatic art be much more developed than it is now in England, but other arts would have grown up round the local theaters. Still think of what a playhouse would mean to a country town if it had its own dressmakers, its own tapestry weavers, its own armorers, its own embroideresses and its own dress designers and painters and machinists. What is to be said in defense of the stage-struck stupidity and ignorance that is content with a basket of soiled second-hand clothes and toy swords sent down by a London costumer and hired out for a night at about treble the price the whole parcel of rubbish would sell for in Hounslow?

Do you expect me or any dramatic author to be lenient in the matter of fees to people who keep up these nasty, vulgar, ignorant practices? Rather let us heap crushing exactions on them and starve their folly to death.

Almost all amateurs desire to imitate the theater rather than to act a play. They actually call their performances "theatricals," and are as proud of that illiterate insult as any genuine dram-

atic artist would be outraged by it. They lose all their ordinary decent instincts the moment they give themselves up to what they privately think is the sin of acting. You gentlemen who are so morbidly particular about the cut and fit of their coats and trousers walking on the stage in ludicrously misfitting tunics from the costumer's amateur ragbag. You see the amateur carrying a time-worn pantomime spear for the hire of which he has paid more than the local blacksmith would have charged him for a real spear. Women who would die rather than be dowdy in church or at a garden party lose the footholds in costume and make-ups which so self-respecting figures in a penny warwick would tolerate. Reach-me-down dresses, reach-me-down scenery, reach-me-down equipments are considered good enough for dramatic masterpieces—are positively preferred to decent and beautiful things because they are so much more theatrical.

As to plays, they, too, must be second-hand reach-me-downs. Your amateurs don't want to bring plays to a correct and moving representation for the sake of the life they represent; they want to do Hawtrey's part in this or Ellen Terry's part in that, or Cyril Maude's part in the other, not to mention the amateur Salvini and Dumas and Bernhardt and Ocellina. The enormous and overwhelming advantage possessed by amateurs—the advantage of being free from commercial pressure and having unlimited time for rehearsal—is the last one they think of using.

The commercial plays, which are the despair of actors, but which they must produce or starve, are the favorites of amateurs. They do out of sheer folly and vanity what our real dramatic artists do of necessity and give some saving grace and charm to the doing. Richard Wagner said that the music of the great masters is kept alive not by professional concert and opera speculations, but on the cottage piano of the amateur. I wish I could say as much for the amateur theater. As I cannot, I shall only beg your amateur clubs to let my plays alone and to assure them that as long as they persist in their present ways the only part I shall play in the matter of fees is the part of Shylock.

Black Art in Another Form.

A German gentleman and his young son, Fritz, were on an express train bound for the seashore.

While Fritz was smoking, his father, who occupied the window seat, snatched his cap and seemingly threw it out of the open window.

"Ah," the joking father said, "your cap lies on the outside. Never mind, Fritz, I'll vistle until it'll come on de inside agin mit quickness."

The father whistled and, at the same moment, deftly placed the cap on his attentive son's head. His was speechless. He pulled off his head covering and gazed at it in wonder and at his paternalist in deep admiration for several minutes.

As the train neared a bridge the little chap was inspired. Looking far out of the open window he dropped the cap and, turning to his father, confidently said, "Vistle, fadder."—Lippincott's.

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