TRAINING THE YOUNG IDEA

Current Problems Affecting the Public Schools of the Country.

OPINIONS ON THE MILITARY DRILL

The Pull and the Politician in the Management—Public School Lands—An Army of Teaching Candidates—Various Educational Matters.

The matter of military instruction in the public schools is receiving considerable attention in various sections of the country. As a rule, the drift is favorable to the innovation, and it is probable congress at its next session will accelerate the movement by lending material assistance.

In some quarters the fear is expressed that the institution of the military drill will divert the attention of pupils from important studies, and therefore should be subordinated and indulged in moderately. Others believe that the chief advantage of military drill lies in the physical benefit it may be to the pupils. In the citizen soldiery of every state are to be found officers who are opposed to continuing military instructions in the public schools, claiming that it injures recruiting for the militia, and that young men who have held office in a school regiment are reluctant to accept subordinate positions in the militia of the state.

On the other hand, it is stated as a fact by the Boston Globe, that "the register of the Massachusetts volunteer militia will show that many of its brightest officers were graduated from the high and Latin schools and received their early military instruction as members of the Boston school regiment." And the Globe adds that "the trend of public sentiment at the present time is unquestionably toward a military education for the young. Many parents and teachers believe in the system as one calculated to impress boys with the rules of obedience and discipline, and give them a proper sense of subordination and command."

There are now upwards of 100 United States army officers on duty as professors of military science and tactics at universities and colleges in different parts of the country, and a plan to extend the same privilege to the high schools in large cities is said to be favored by the present secretary of war to the extent that encourages the belief that at no distant day army officers will supervise the drill of high school cadets.

Whatever may be said for or against military instruction in the schools, says the Minneapolis Times, no one will deny that as an exercise it is far superior to the feeble, meaningless calisthenics that are required by some teachers, while its diciplinary benefits are excellent. It gives a "set-up" that ordinary gymnastics, especially of the school variety, do not confer. It restrains nervousness and awkwardness, imparts readiness and inculcates order, cleanliness and obedience. The decided advantage that it has over other kinds of exercise lies in the fact that the boys like it. The perfunctory swinging of arms and legs that is girlish and ineffectual substitute for exercise is regarded by healthy and lively boys with undisguised contempt. Give them a chance to play soldier and they go into it with their whole souls.

TOO MECHANICAL.

The assertion of Mrs. Julia Holmes Smith at the National Council of Women, that "the methods at present used in public school teaching are entirely too mechanical," forms the text of a lively editorial in the New York World, in which the conspicuous evils of school management are handled without gloves. "The evil fact," says the World, "is the necessary consequence of an efficient cause. Our schools are governed by more or less ignorant Boards of Education, whose primary concern is always for politics. That is one difficulty. A worse one is that our Boards of Education have no notion of anything better than machine methods for testing the qualifications of teachers. The fetich of examination is the sole god in their pantheon. If a young woman can pass a good examination on the text books she gets a place, unless some other girl gets it away from her by a pull. There is no inquiry whatever as to her capacity to teach what she has learned. And when she gets a place she quickly learns that if she wishes to retain it she must not indulge in any efforts rationall to educate her pupils. Her 'job' and her promotion depend upon the 'marks' made by her classes in a poll parrot examination. She must not stop to educate them. She must devote all her time and energy to the task of drilling them so that they may glibly answer questions, even though their answers be as mechanical and as unintelligent as the responses of the 'learned pig.'

"If the public schools are ever to educate the children of the commonwealth we must begin by educating the Boards of Education, or, still better, by appointing to them men and women already educated and enlightened."

PUBLIC SCHOOL LANDS.

Thirty states of the union are the direct beneficiaries of a bill introduced in the house by Hon. W. M. Beckner of Kentucky, under the title "A Bill to Equalize the Several States of the Union in the Grant of Lands for Public School Purposes." The bill provides, according to the New York Sun, that there be granted to the states named scrip for the amount of public land set opposite their names to be sold and the proceeds to be used in maintaining a free public school system in said states. The following list of states is given, with the amount of land and the value at the price of $1.25 per acre:

A total of 27,589,996 acres, valued at $34,487,495, on a basis of $1.25 an acre. Not including Alaska, Indian and military reservations and railroad and other selections not yet adjudicated which may be restored to the public domain, the government owns 606,040,313 acres.

The discrepancies in the amounts apportioned are accounted for by the fact that some states have been more favored than others.

In 1785 the congress of the colonies passed an ordinance providing that lot 16 of every township be reserved for the maintenance of a public school within said district, and from this time until 1853 each state admitted received the benefit of the same reservation. In the act organizing the territory of Oregon, dated August 14, 1848, Stphen A. Douglas inserted an additional grant of the thirty-sixth section for school purposes, making a reservation of two sections, or 1,280 acres, in each township of six miles square, which has been the policy with reference to all states since admitted.

The lands thus given have aggregated 67,893,919 acres, and the states and territories have received an additional 1,165,520 acres for university purposes, originating with the admission of Ohio. The agricultural and mechanical college act of 1862 gave these states a further advantage in that those in which there were no public lands were compelled to take scrip, which they could only sell before locating the lands. The amount passed under this act equalled 9,600,000 acres. Under the swamp and overflowed lands act the saline land grants, grants for building canals, military roads, railroads, and other minor grants, these favored states have received 196,569,372 acres more. The object of the bill is to equalize the rights of the original states and those in which there was no public domain at the time of their admission.

TWENTY THOUSAND WANT TO TEACH.

Twenty thousand candidates for teachers' certificates appeared for examination at the four sessions of the New York commissioners held last year. According to the New York Herald, "84 per cent of this number were women, some of them already teachers, others normal school graduates, and the remainder young persons who had undergone a special course of training to qualify for the work.

"A good typewriter can earn twice, or nearly twice, as much as an excellent school teacher, but it is safe to say that there are not 20,000 new typewriters applying for positions during a single year in New York state. However, the majority of those who wanted to be school teachers were not native of New York, strange as that may seem. They come from various states, even remote, and from foreign countries in some cases.

"Under the law, they are obliged to pay tuition fees. The popularity of these schools has filled nearly all to their utmost capacity, and it often happens that applicants from this state are unable to gain admission on this account. If candidates were confined to residents of New York alone it might be different. And yet the dwellers in this state do not seem to be over anxious to be teachers; outsiders show more disposition to try for places.

"If all the politicians in the state, little and big, had a normal school training it is appalling to think how greatly the army of qualified teachers would be augmented. That $12,053,007.26 was paid out last year in salaries is enough to make the average political place hunter writhe at his inability to be 'in the deal.'

"Nearly 33,000 teachers, however, shared in it. There were 27,833 women who are proud because they have such an overwhelming majority, and 5,096 men, whom the women think could find something more suitable to do than earning school funds.

"Some of these men, however, teach, not for money, but just for the sake of demonstrating that they know something more than somebody else. This is the view of a young woman who was unsuccessful in a recent examination, and the truth of it can be ascertained only by an individual and personal acquaintance with these noble fellows, who, instead of assuring the country's salvation through politics, are doing so by the cultivation of the poung idea.

"Time was when the young idea was trained to shoot. But that primitive western method has given way to the most advanced theories. The young idea is now trained to syllogize, which is just as effective as the use of any firearm. Of the idea there are 1,932,325 available for culture in this state; but that there are still more than 800,000 of them as yet untutored is the hope of the great army of young women and young men who want to become teachers."

EXAMINATIONS AND PROMOTIONS.

At a late meeting of a committee of the Philadelphia Board of Education, Superintendent Brooks of the city schools presented his views on promotions and examinations. The superintendent pointed out that the ideal system of promotion in a system of graded schools is that all pupils shall be advanced from lower to higher grades, on the judgment of their teachers. Weekly records of the progress and standing of pupils, based upon the knowledge of teachers, are preferrable to the markings of daily recitations.

To carry out such a system Superintendent Brooks says several conditions are necessary: "First, there must be teachers of skill and experience, whose judgment is reliable. Second, there must be principals who can supervise the school and become familiar with the work of the teachers and the progress and standing of their pupils. Third, these principals and teachers must be so circumstanced that they can exercise a free, independent and unbiased judgment upon the matter. Given these conditions, the problem is an easy and simple one, and examinations for promotions are not only unnecessary, but an absolute waste of time."

In a comprehensive summary of the whole question Superintendent Brooks says:

"After a very thorough consideration of the entire subject, based on a careful observation of the conditions and working of the schools, the following conclusions have been reached:

"1. That we are not yet ready to promote to the higher schools without an examination.

"2. That in promoting the pupils from grade to grade in the lower schools, fourth and eighth grades promotions to other schools should for the present be examined by the department of superintendence.

"3. That promotions in the elementary schools having all grades should be made with as few examinations as possible, certainly not more than one a year.

"4. That it would be unwise in the board at present to abolish all examinations for promotions to the higher schools or from grade to grade in the lower schools."

MODEL SCHOOL BUILDING.

The George W. Childs public school building, recently dedicated in Philadelphia, is regarded as a model one. The building is divided into twenty-one divisions. On each of the three floors is one large assembly room, subdivided into five divisions by means of sliding doors. In addition, there are on each floor two separate class rooms in the wings at either end of the main building. Coat rooms adjoin each class room, and in the opposite recesses are closets for books and general school supplies. The walls of the class rooms and corridors are artistically colored, and decorated with maps and pictorial friezes suitable to the various grades. Fire escapes are easily accessible from each floor. The system of ventilation is perfect. By a double air pipe, fed by enormous fans, the atmosphere in each room is changed every six minutes, and it is estimated that each child is supplied with forty cubic feet of fresh air per minute. Beside this generous provision for the health and comfort of the students, there is a large playground adjoining, which is not always to be found in connection with city school buildings.

Names.	Acres.	Value.
New Hampshire	$ 329,955	$ 411,443
Massachusetts	277,333	346,666
Rhode Island	46,435	58,044
Connecticut	168,389	210,486
New York	1,671,111	2,088,888
New Jersey	295,822	369,777
Pennsylvania	1,635,555	2,041,666
Delaware	74,832	93,540
Maryland	395,520	494,400
Virginia	1,363,484	1,704,355
North Carolina	1,802,801	2,253,501
South Carolina	1,208,889	1,511,110
Georgia	2,062,222	2,577,777
Kentucky	1,339,733	1,674,666
Vermont	353,093	453,866
Tennessee	1,622,333	2,027,916
Maine	1,224,444	1,530,580
West Virginia	817,777	1,022,221
Ohio	710,471	888,089
Louisiana	733,928	917,410
Indiana	601,048	751,311
Mississippi	838,328	1,047,910
Illinois	985,141	1,231,425
Alabama	901,725	1,127,156
Missouri	1,162,136	1,452,670
Arkansas	922,467	1,153,834
Michigan	1,004,573	1,255,466
Florida	1,053,653	1,317,066
Iowa	975,800	1,219,750
Wisconsin	958,648	1,198,310

EDUCATIONAL NOTES.

The legislature of Indiana is considering a bill providing for free school books throughout the state.

The Board of Education of New York City has appointed Mrs. W. S. Rainsford a school trustee for the Eighteenth ward, to hold until 1899. She is the wife of Rev. Dr. Rainsford, rector of St. George's church.

The New York superintendent of education states in his latest report that Dr. Alexander Carolus Curtis was the first Latin teacher of New York City. He came over from Amsterdam in 1659. His salary was $280 a year, which closely approaches the average salaries paid to teachers in 1894.

Prof. Cayley, the famous mathematician of the University of Cambridge, England, who died a few days ago, was the author of 800 mathematical treatises.

Three thousand Boston children of school age can't get into the overcrowded schools.

At the McCormick Theological seminary eighty-three of the divinity students are the sons of farmers, thirty-one of ministers, twenty-three of merchants, three of lawyers and three of physicians.

A financial officer of the University of Chicago says that its capital or endowment is $8,000,000 and its income $600,000 annually. It transpires, incidentally, that one of John D. Rockefeller's large donations was in Northern Pacific 5 per cent gold bonds, then a gilt-edged security, but the interest on which since has been defaulted. Mr. Rockefeller makes good the amount of the interest each year to the university.

Next year's school budget in Chicago will amount to $8,000,000.

David Stockbridge, colored, known to nearly every man who has attended Yale college during the last thirty years as "Old Davy," was found dead in a chair at his home, 497 Winchester avenue, the other afternoon. He was 68 years old, and had peddled candy about Yale college for more than a quarter of a century. Death was due to heart disease.

W'EN MA'S AWAY.

Arthur Chapman in Chicago Record.

W'en ma's away it seems 's though
Th' sky gits dark an' folks must know
'At sump'n's wrong; an' nen it's chill
An' dreary home—th' house is still
An' creepy-like
W'en ma's away.

W'en ma's away they ain't no fun;
I jest set roun' an' can't eat none,
An' feel my heart beein t' sink
At all th' accidents I think
Has happened sure—
W'en ma's away.

W'en ma's away up to that place
Where nary angel's got a face
'S kind 's her's I b'leeve I'll die
An' foller her, 'cause I can't try
An' live alone—
W'en ma's away.

A Sicilian monk is said to have invented a machine by which editors can put their own copy in type. The machine would be a positive detriment to the profession, as it would deprive the members of that convenient and commodious refuge for slips of the pencil, the intelligent compositor.

WHITTIER WITH YOUNG FOLK.

Mr. Whittier one day told an incident of his youth to a young friend of his. He said that in the beginning of his career, when he was only about 21, he was put temporarily in charge of a leading newspaper, I think it was in Hartford. The editor was to be absent a few weeks, or months. During this time there came about a most unprecedented crisis in public affairs, and the young editor was left to grapple with a difficult question which in some way affected slavery or to pass over the matter in silence, as, possibly, the permanent editor would have done and as would have been the more prudent way, if looked at only in the present time, and were one without an ideal of life and its duties, and without patriotism. But prudence of this kind was a cap which in no wise fitted the young poet, gifted as he was with a judgment which later often guided public affairs through public men who sought out his advice. His soul was on fire with earnestness, and his conscience—that grand conscience which the branding iron of time never seared—was alive with instincts of national righteousness. He burst forth in an editorial which one is safe in thinking must have been fine, as it certainly was stirring. The editorial appeared. And the next morning appeared in another paper from a famous pen the most scorching criticism of this editorial and the most contemptuous comments upon the literary ability of its author, with the suggestion, forcibly made, that he had better go back to his bench, since it was plain that writing was not his vocation. The young man, fresh from home, modest as the truest greatness is, susceptible to praise or blame as the finely attuned nature of a poet must be, was overwhelmed by the ridicule cast upon him. He writhed under it, and it came near being the turning point of his career. But genius is like love; many waters cannot quench it, neither can the floods drown it; and at the time that Whittier told the story his name was known over the world and that of his once famous critic had long ago fallen into deserved oblivion.

THE WHITTIER HOMESTEAD.

It may be that his experience added to his natural kindness toward literary aspirants, for his hopeful words and his helping hand held out to these are too well known to need comment.

To a young friend who spoke to him with admiration of that beautiful poem of his, "The Pipes at Lucknow," he confided that after having written the poem he had hesitated about it and sent it to another poet, not now living, for his criticism. The said poet had written him back word that it was not up to the mark. But after having kept it a while, the consciousness within himself, "it does move, though," was too strong for Whittier, and, fortunately for the world, he sent it to his publishers.

His scorn of deceit and his sense of humor were fully roused by an offer that was once made to him by a man old enough to have known better—and who could be young enough not to have known better? This man came to him and proposed that they should go into a literary partnership. The unknown would write the poems, Mr. Whittier would put his name to them, and the two would share the profits! But even here the poet was too modest and too sweet-natured to tell the deceiver that the world would not be gulled by dross for gold. "Thee are a minister of the gospel," he said to him. "Now, does thee think that such a thing would be right?"

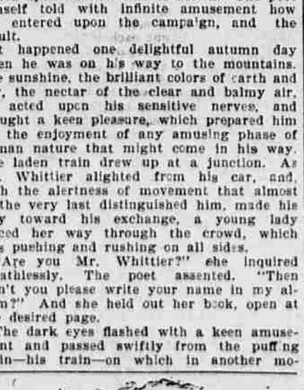
Among all the great personages whose autographs have been sought after, none gave his with more kindness and comprehension of the attitude of the asker than did our Quaker poet.

A young lady who had never seen him, and who neither had nor was likely to have any opportunity to proffer her request unless she made such opportunity, yet resolved to secure his autograph. Feeling that her request, if written, might be consigned to the limbo to which in later years some of the letters which the poet had not time and strength to answer, and which had no special claim, were of necessity sent, she determined upon another line of action. The poet himself told with infinite amusement how she entered upon the campaign, and the result.

It happened one delightful autumn day when he was on his way to the mountains. The sunshine, the brilliant colors of earth and sky, the nectar of the clear and balmy air, all acted upon his sensitive nerves, and brought a keen pleasure, which prepared him for the enjoyment of any amusing phase of human nature that might come in his way. The laden train drew up at a junction. As Mr. Whittier alighted from his car, and, with the alertness of movement that almost to the very last distinguished him, made his way toward his exchange, a young lady forced her way through the crowd, which was pushing and rushing on all sides.

"Are you Mr. Whittier?" she inquired breathlessly. The poet assented. "Then won't you please write your name in my album?" And she held out her book, open at the desired page.

The dark eyes flashed with a keen amusement and passed swiftly from the puffing train—his train—on which in another moment the bell would ring, and from which the conductor was already crying, "All aboard!" to the eager and entreating face of the speaker. He appreciated the situation. And he liked her pluck. He was willing enough to write his name, but where was the pen? He flashed a glance about the station, that glance which took in everything, and then, with the young lady in tow, he hurried up to the telegraph office, seized a pen, dashed off his autograph, walked swiftly to his train, and in another instant was whirled onward, laughing and chuckling to himself at the victory which he had helped the enterprising applicant to win.



JOHN G. WHITTIER.

But in another instance he was even more accommodating. It was a summer night, not far from midnight, but the poet had been for some time lying sleepless, for he kept early hours, when there was a sound of voices outside and a sharp peal at the door bell. Inquiry brought out the fact that this had been made by a party of pleasure seekers, returning through Amesbury from one of the beaches. They had with them a young girl who was very anxious for the poet's autograph, and they had called to ask for it—at that hour!

Divided between amusement at the absurdity of the thing, not the least part being the asker's unconsciousness of its presumption, and desire to gratify the young autograph fiend, the poet arose, dressed, went down stairs, wrote his name, and handed it to the girl, and the party drove off, vociferating their thanks.

Yet he could say "no" as well as "yes" when asked for his name, and do it in a way to raise a laugh instead of giving offense. I remember him one day standing at his own door as a young lady, a friend whom he liked much, was taking leave. It was several years ago, at the time that shares upon the Eastern railroad were at the lowest ebb and the shareholders, of whom he was one, were not sanguine as to the outlook. His young friend wanted his autograph at the bottom of a sheet of paper that she might write above something that she told him about, or perhaps give it to another person who was to do this, for it was a joke in which another was concerned. I can see now the bright and laughing face of the petitioner, and Mr. Whittier's quizzical gaze fixed upon her. He was not to be caught in any such arrangement, frank and honest as he knew her to be; but still less was he to refuse morosely, or evenly solemnly. He shook his head lightly, still laughing as he said goodby, and assured her that his name wasn't good for anything now that the Eastern railroad stock had gone down so low!

No one was more ready to accept the limitations of fame and find subject for humor in these.

Shortly after he had gone to Danvers to live (although he never gave up his Amesbury home, reserving always his rooms and the right to occupy them at any time, a right which he came to exercise more and more), some young Amesbury friends of his went there to carry him a birthday gift. He was immensely amused at an incident that happened on their way. There was more than one Danvers station, and a member of the party inquired of the conductor which Danvers was the home of Mr. Whittier. "Whittier?" he repeated, meditatively, "Whittier? What does he do?"

This recalls a scene that took place in Amesbury years before. Answering a summons to the door one day he found on the step a child of 10. She had lately come to make her home in the place and had been sent to the shoemaker's with a pair of boots to be repaired. The shoemaker happened to have the same cognomen. The child reached up the boots to the poet and began her message. "Hasn't thee made a mistake?" asked the latter, checking his smiles before her timid accent. No, the little one was sure she had made no mistake. How could she have? She had been sent to Mr. Whittier's—and here he was. Again he assured her of her error. But it was reserved for the older members of her family to make the child blush for her inability to distinguish between the dobbler and the poet.

We have all seen men and women of letters who demanded indefinitely or condescended infinitely in dealing with others not gifted with their faculty of expression, although these might have had quite as much power of thought. But Whittier's soul was too great, his nature too large in its sympathies, and his mind too really grand to allow this "looking superior down" upon his fellow mortals. And if these things had failed him, that keen sense of humor for which he was so remarkable would have kept him from the absurdity. He was too great to be other than simple. He enjoyed human beings too much and loved them too well to hold them as other than comrades.

To grow old with dignity and graciousness, to make no effort to hide one's years, and yet to keep life sweet with sympathy in joys and sorrows that are past to one's self, to be fresh always with fresh interest in the youth of the world and its future, to judge from the highest standpoint, and to love out of the deepest heart—this was Whittier. To illumine everything with his genius, and to make small things great in its light, to enlarge rather than lessen or belittle the powers of others—this was Whittier. This is the spirit of immortal youth, and always in sympathy with youth. Not children so much as young people were ever welcome companions to him. And yet a child's simplicity or beauty were never unnoticed. A little visitor came to one of his friends, and went to see him. The poet's sister had lent her a volume of fairy tales. When she returned them, something was said about his probably not remembering her. "O, yes, I do," he answered, and added aside to the older friend, "such eyes are not easily forgotten." And then he smiled again into the beautiful gray eyes that were looking at him with their child's gravity.

There is no higher inspiration from Whittier for youth or for age than the beautiful liberality of his spirit. His life was lived so near to God that happiness and goodness around him were a happiness to him, and the high achievements of others he gloried in as one who shared in all the triumphs of his Father's world. His days sung themselves in the measures of that poem of his: "My Triumph."

"Hail to the coming singers!
Hail to the brave light-bringers!
Forward I reach and share
All that they sing and dare.

"The love of God and neighbor;
An equal-handed labor;
The richer life, where beauty
Walks hand in hand with duty."

FRANCES C. SPARHAWK.

*Note.—Mr. Pickard in his "Life of Whittier" tells this anecdote a little differently. The article "Whittier with Young Folk" was written and placed months before Mr. Pickard's book appeared. F. C. S.

She Forgot the Baby.

The Chicago Tribune tells a rather amusing story on a young society matron. The daughter of wealthy and indulgent parents, she had never known a care until she assumed the responsibility of housekeeping at the time of her marriage a few years ago. She is now a mother. Her younger sister was seen recently in a street car with a child in her arms.

"Whose baby is that?" inquired a friend, who was rather astonished to see the young lady taking care of a child.

"O, it is sister's," she replied. "She was out at the house last night, and when she left for home forgot the baby. I am taking it to her now."

"But how did she forget her baby?" inquired the surprised friend.

"She knew she was forgetting something when she left, but could not hink what it was."

The Missouri legislature has decided to put the state capital on wheels. Sedalia, the prospective beneficiary, regards it as a good thing and will push it along.

Cook's Imperial. World's Fair "highest award, excellent champagne; good effervescence, agreeable bouquet, delicious flavor."

REDEEMING STREET WAIFS

Work Accomplished by the Children's Aid Society of New York.

THE STORY OF PATSY AND MICKEA

Street Arabs Taken from the City and Placed in Good Homes and Encouraged to Become Good Citizens.

Every six weeks a party of twenty boys is drafted from the ranks of the Newsboys' lodging houses in New York City, are put in charge of an agent of the Children's Aid society, and distributed through all parts of the west and south, from the prairie farms of Dakota to the orange groves of Florida.

The man who conducts a company of these sharp-witted, mercurial individuals over 1,000 miles of territory, necessarily leads a life untinged with monotony. Some of the experiences of Mr. B. W. Tice, one of these agents, for many years identified with the emigration department of the society, are better told in his own words.

"Several years ago," said he, in conversation with the writer, "I started out for the far west with as lively a crowd of boys as it would be possible to find. Most of them were Irish and Canadian, the ones who are always getting into trouble, and who also make best use of their opportunities. Anyone of them would fight at the drop of a hat, and I assure you that it was a difficult undertaking to keep them from annihilating each other on the journey.

PATSY THE BIFFER.

"The star member of our troupe was an Irish boy, about 16 years old, known as Patsy Biffer, or simply 'Biffer.' In addition to this, he had several other names, finding them necessary to use in protecting himself against the police, his practice being to give different pseudonyms upon his different contacts with these functionaries, with whom he had extensive acquaintance. Through much practice he had become a very clever boxer, was an Alexander in his way, and only waited for more worlds to conquer.

"One cold day we arrived at a small town in southern Nebraska, where there was in session, as I remember, a teachers' county institute. The town had assumed a gala appearance, and the boys, as was the custom, left the hotel in the afternoon, to meander about and see the sights.

"A long time that night we waited supper on the 'Biffer' and several of his friends, and finally, and about half through the meal, they entered. Patsy presented a sorry sight. His one eye was nearly closed, his hat was rimless and his clothes in tatters. Though unable to conceal his old defiant Bowery swagger, he, nevertheless, looked somewhat askance at me, so I turned to Mickey Morrell, his right-hand man, for the story. Mickey, who was glowing with suppressed excitement, related the events more graphically than lucid.

MICKEY'S STORY.

"'They couldn't do Patsy,' he blurted out; 'he just hit the big guy a punch in the bugle, and you'd ought ter seen him tumble.'

"It seems that this town was infested with a gang of boys who greatly annoyed the shopkeepers and citizens in general by pilfering, breaking windows, insulting girls and bullying every passerby. They had heard of our New York boys being in the town and had laid in wait for them in front of the town hall, in order to have some sport. But they had run up against the wrong crowd. The town bully, a great hulking fellow, had tackled Patsy Biffer, and, as the bystanders expressed it, 'he was a sight to see' when the fight was over. The Biffer had cross-countered heavily on the point of the bully's chin, and it was some time before he could sit up and take notice.

"The fight was of such a decisive nature that the gang was completely broken up, and to this day has never been reorganized. The citizens of that town wrote a letter, thanking us for the Biffer's services, and four of the most prominent each took a boy.

BIFFER'S SUCCESS.

"Patsy Biffer is now assistant cashier of the county bank. His foster parents write that he is a terror to evil-doers and is regarded as the official vigilance committee. His last feat was to thrash a man for stealing. He is a fine musician, clever artist, witty conversationalist, has a high sense of honor, but is very lazy except when it comes to boxing. His brush and blacking box are displayed among the curios at the Newsboys' Lodging house, and are treasured very highly by his quondam mates, who come frequently to look at them and handle them. They generally conclude their inspection by remarking that 'Patsy was fast with his dukes, but he hadn't ought ter went way out west, where he'll never get a chance ter use them.'

"Mickey Morrell has had a career similar to that of his fighting friend. He became quite a favorite in the town and by his quick Irish wit was able to fill several responsible positions. His inherent laziness, however, finally cropped out, and in his last letter he informed us that he was about to start for Denver, where he expected to buy a restaurant and 'rest for a while.'

TOUGH, BUT TRUE.

"There is a bond of friendship and sympathy between these homeless and friendless boys, which is truly touching. When large parties are taken to the great west, the ones who have shared and shared alike their meager fares in a Bowery restaurant, who have slept in the same store box, and have fought each other to the bitter end, beg not to be separated, and the agents always make an effort to place them in the same town or neighborhood. This cameraderie is shown very well by the following incident: Some months ago there was found on the steps of a house in Long Island city a poor little waif, emaciated with hunger and cold. The owner of the house brought him to New York and put him in the custody of the Children's Aid society. At the Newsboys' Lodging house a fund was subscribed sufficient to buy him a suit of clothes and pay his expenses at the hospital. He was such a frail little fellow that the surgeons feared he would never get well again. But he turned out to have a wiry constitution, and within a month was able to sell papers. His affectionate nature soon gained for him many friends, and his comrades vied with each other in doing him favors. A good stand was procured for him at the entrance to Brooklyn bridge, where he may be seen any day calling out in his shrill treble voice, 'Extra! Extra Edition! Sporting Extra! Buy a paper, sir?' and his sales are always large, for his friends zealously prevent any boy from pre-empting the stand.

TENDER HEARTED ARABS.

Another instance of this loyalty was brought out a short time ago, when a bright little fellow, known by the name of Swiggs, had his frail life crushed out by the juggernaut cable car while he was attempting to cross the track to make a sale. Willie Swiggs had no relatives or friends but his own youthful associates, who tenderly cared for him. When the city authorities came to convey his body to the Potter's field the bootblacks and newsboys gave their last money, many of them pawning their clothes, to buy him a plot in a quiet country cemetery which lies along the green banks of the Hudson. Nor did they stop here, for every Sunday some one makes the journey to the little obscure grave and places on it a cheap wreath of leaves or flowers. The papers which he carried when he made his last sale are carefully preserved.

ITS WORK FOR BOYS.

The Children's Aid society of New York, which originated this scheme of emigrating these street arabs to the west and south, is the most extensive charitable organization in this country. In the forty-two years of its existence it has reclaimed from the slums of the city 10,000 boys, and placed them in Christian homes. Some of these boys have become famous lawyers, journalists, surgeons and artists, while many of them occupy seats in the various state legislatures, and one is today governor of North Dakota. Yet, so unpretentious are the methods of the society that never before have these facts been made known to the general public.

Thirty years ago there was picked up in Baxter street a little Irish boy who existed on crusts of bread, which he procured by creeping up on the back roofs of tenement houses and stealing the lead out of the chimneys, which he sold for a few pennies. When caught doing this he was sent to Randall's Island. That boy was picked up by an agent for the Aid society, and in a short time left with a party for the west. His foster parents gave him a good common school education and then sent him to Yale, where he graduated with honors. In a few years he went to Alaska, where he became a prominent member of the bar, and is now known as Hon. Judge Brady, United States commissioner to Alaska.

Another lad was taken from Randall's Island about the same time. Though only 8 years of age he had made a reputation as a professional pickpocket, along the wharfs of the East river, underneath which he had always lived. Soon after being put on a western farm he enlisted as a drummer boy in the war of the rebellion, where he served with distinction. After the war he engaged in various enterprises, but finally had his hand badly cut and was compelled to go to school, to which fact he now attributes his success in life. In his letters to the Aid society he always wound up by saying that he intended "to be somebody," and everyone who knows Governor A—— of North Dakota will agree that he has fulfilled his boyish promise.

CONNUBIALITIES.

Rev. J. H. Rylance, rector of St. Mark's Protestant Episcopal church, New York, will be married shortly after Easter to Miss Ellen Coe, the head of the New York free circulating library.

"Highstep seems very blue since Miss Coins threw him over." "Yes; he's heart-broken to think what an excellent husband she has missed."

Sillicus (reading paper)—The bride was supported to the altar by her father. Cynicus—Yes; and I dare say he will keep on supporting her.

Jameson—Why do you advocate long engagements so earnestly? Simson—The longer they're engaged the less the time in which they'll be married.

Ex-Governor John W. Davis of Pawtucket, R. I., and Miss Marietta Pearce of Providence, respectively 69 and 50 years of age, were married at Swansea, Mass., on Monday, and left the next day with an excursion party for the Pacific coast. The groom has the distinction of being the only democrat elected governor of his state since the war.

There is one class in the Pittsfield (Mass.) Methodist Sunday school which is remarkable in one respect at least. During the past four years seventeen young women have belonged to the class, and out of that number eleven have married during the forty-eight months. To the marriage of these pupils must be added the wedding of the teacher, and last week another engagement was announced, making thirteen.

He—Dear Clara, will you be my wife? She—Harry, I have tried every sort of way to bring you to a proposal. I have experimented with the baby stare, reckoned by my friends as particularly fetching. I have tried the soulful glance, and also the downdrooping lid; I have with apparent artlessness led the conversation up to a point where it seemed impossible for you to avoid asking for my hand and heart; but all, all without avail. Harry, I will not answer you at once. I will think the matter over. I will give you time. I feel that to accept you at once were too sudden.

Forty-two marriage licenses were taken out in Chicago on St. Valentine's day, and only eleven of the brides were under 20 years old. One confessed to 31 years, and she was going to marry a man one year younger. She had reached an age where she could not afford to be too particular about small matters. The oldest groom was 40 and he married a girl 27 years old, and the youngest groom was 19, while his bride was 18.

For the third time Miss Anna Nunnan of Winsted, Conn., has been deserted just as the marriage ceremony was about to be performed. This time she was to have been married to Patrick J. Burke, and now he cannot be found. She is 34 years old, and twelve years ago she was engaged to a Torrington man, who a few days before the date for the wedding refused to accompany her to the altar. Seven years later she became engaged to Thomas Myers of Hartford, and when the day for the wedding arrived he did not appear. She sued him and obtained $500 for breach of promise. Burke, who is 25 years old, returned from the west a few years ago with a snug sum of money. He invested in business and renewed his acquaintance with Miss Nunnan. It was supposed that he was really attached to her. Preparations for the ceremony were made by Miss Nunnan, and at the appointed hour, February 21, the church was filled with her friends. Miss Nunnan and her parents were promptly on hand, but though they waited for many minutes, Burke did not appear.

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For just ten days we shall make every possible effort to close out the balance of the Furniture stock. There is but little of this stock left and but little time to close it out. We have on the way an entirely new line of Furniture, much larger than heretofore carried in this department, of which we shall say something later. But just now we are making quick moving prices on what we have. We bought this stock from the bank at a loss to them of 50 per cent—so why shouldn't we sell it cheap?

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