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# YOUR PROBLEMS and MINE

## In the Guidance of Youth

A CASE BOOK FOR  
TEACHERS and PARENTS

By  
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" "  
Author of  
"Diary of a Western Schoolmaster"




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*a Review for the School if you  
think it worth while?*

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## PREFACE

This book is intended to be helpful to all school officers, and teachers, and to parents, in fact, to all who have anything to do with the teaching and training of youth. The problems presented and discussed are the problems that all who belong to any one of these classes have to meet.

The book is full of concrete illustrations drawn almost entirely from the writer's own record of cases he has observed and studied. In fact, it is a teacher's case book. The boys, of whom there are many, the girls, and the teachers, who appear on its pages are not fictitious people; but each one is a real character true to life.

The writer is often asked what he would do with this boy or that boy; this girl or that girl; this teacher or that teacher; this school situation or that school situation. An open confession of what he has tried to do in his own school with boys, girls, teachers, and school situations, and the manner of doing revealing the spirit in which he has tried to do his school work, is his answer.

The closing paragraph or paragraphs in many of the chapters are intended to direct the reader's attention to the lesson or lessons in pedagogy the story is intended to teach, for the purpose of aiding him in understanding similar cases or situations in his own work, and in suggesting to him possible solutions. In an appendix a further consideration is given of some cases from each chapter.

The whole book emphasizes the great importance of child-study to all who have to do with youth. A study not only of some of the instructive books that have been written on this subject, but also a careful, sympathetic observation and study of the boys and girls under their

care, in the school, the home, or elsewhere. Books must receive their full share of attention, but these pages place the emphasis on the study of the flesh and blood boys and girls.

In presenting some of the characteristics of the physical and of the mental life movements of youth as discovered and recorded by special students of this subject, the writer has seen these characteristics verified again and again in the many boys and girls whom he has carefully observed and studied, still he lays no claim to original discovery of any of them. Even in giving these facts, he lays no claim to the form of the statements. In many instances, he has quoted the language of the specialists; in others he has held so closely to the form in which specialists have stated these facts, that these parts, too, might almost be included in parentheses.

It is a knowledge of these facts of the life of youth that he has ever had in mind while working with pupils in the grammar grades and scholars in the high school. In stating these facts, he had drawn largely on the writings of Dr. G. Stanley Hall, Dr. William H. Burnham, Dr. Arthur H. Daniels, and others.

And lastly the book teaches that the teacher, the parent, or anyone who would rightly direct child-life at its emotional flood-tide, must make a careful study of himself that he may be in the right attitude toward the youth for whose instruction, guidance, or care, he is responsible.

J. K. STABLETON.

## SWEET CLOVER ILLUSTRATION

Three years ago the Iowa State Agricultural College, from its experimental department, sent out over the United States and Canada, to other agricultural experiment stations, and to thousands of private persons interested in agriculture, small packets of annual sweet clover seed that owed its origin to a single plant of an annual character that appeared, as if by accident, in a pot of biennial (two years) sweet clover at the Iowa Agricultural experiment station.

Biennial sweet clover had been known for a number of years as a valuable farm crop. Annual sweet clover, one year sweet clover, was something new.

The Iowa Agriculture experiment station sent out the packets of this annual sweet clover seed that it might be tested in all parts of this country and Canada where biennial sweet clover grows; to have it tested under all possible conditions to find out whether or not the newly discovered clover was of value for agricultural purposes.

Only a short time ago I received a bulletin from the Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station setting forth the results of that station's testing annual sweet clover. The bulletin showed the results of very close observation and study of the plant. Point after point as observed was set down. First, the plant proved to be an annual; that is, the seed planted in the spring ripened seed the latter part of the summer of the same year, then died.

The plant on good soil free from weeds, made a growth equal to the growth made by the biennial sweet clover the second year.

The annual sweet clover plant made less foliage than the biennial sweet clover.

The annual sweet clover plant had a smaller root system than the biennial variety.

In this manner all the results of the observation of the plant were stated. But had the bulletin gone no further than to give these results of observation of the plant, it would not have been the valuable bulletin that it is. The work of observation was very carefully followed up by a thorough study of the data gathered by observation, and the results of this study were given in the bulletin together with the data of observation.

The annual plant made a growth the first year equal to the growth made by the biennial sweet clover the second year, but the annual sweet clover had less foliage on its stems than the biennial sweet clover so was less valuable as a hay crop than the biennial type. But the annual sweet clover makes a heavy crop of hay the first year and while the quality is somewhat inferior, still under some conditions this large crop of hay the first year makes annual sweet clover more valuable than the biennial in some situations. The results of long and careful study are here given to all farmers.

But why is so much time, study and expense devoted to this plant? What is the purpose of all this labor? The object in view is *to know annual sweet clover* in order to determine whether or not it has sufficient value under *some* conditions to give it a place in agriculture.

This observation of the plant to see how it responds to this or that condition of soil, to this or that condition of climate, to cultivation, or to no cultivation, and the thoughtful study of all the data secured in this manner, are the means by which the usefulness of a variety of plants may be determined. All the qualities of the plant must be known, otherwise a plant of great agricultural

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value under some conditions, might be cast aside as useless.

I have dwelt quite at length on how the scientist observes and studies a plant in order that he may know the plant. I have so dwelt on this bit of plant observation and study that those who teach and train youth, or have anything to do in directing youth, may see that as the scientist observes and studies plants, so should these guardians of youth observe and study boys and girls that they may know them physically, mentally and emotionally during their growing years, and as much as possible in their body and mind birth inheritances; that they may know the physical and mental qualities of the boys and girls as the scientist in the Botanical field knows a plant.

But how much higher the purpose of knowing on the part of these teachers of youth than on the part of the scientific student of the plant! As in the case of annual sweet clover, the scientist would know all the qualities of the plant to determine whether or not it is sufficiently useful to make it worth preserving, so the teachers and guardians of youth would know all the qualities of each individual youth not for the purpose of determining whether or not the boy or girl is *worth saving*; but that they may so adapt their teaching and training to each boy and each girl that the finest qualities of body and soul of each one may be developed in the best possible manner.





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## YOUR PROBLEMS AND MINE

### CHAPTER I

#### SOME SAMPLE CASES

Ned R. had come up through the last three years of our elementary schools into the high school, and was at the mid-year of his senior year when one morning the high school principal said to me that Ned was becoming a little smart, was anxious to show off; that he had committed an offense the day before that could not easily be passed over lest something more serious might happen; but that Ned had always before, in his three and one-half years in high school, been above criticism in his conduct, and in scholarship had always ranked with the best in his class.

“This fine record,” said the principal, “makes it hard for me to know just how to meet the case. As you have known him longer than I, and I have often heard you speak of his fine standing in the elementary schools, I would like very much to have you talk with him if you will. The fact that you have known his good record for so much longer time than I, will make it easier for you to touch him in a way to get a happy response.”

I replied, “I’ll do my best.”

In a few minutes, Ned came into my office looking a little ashamed. As he stepped up to my desk, I extended my hand to him. As we clasped hands, I asked: “What about the trouble, Ned?”

With his fine, clear eye looking straight into mine, he replied: “I did wrong. I’ll *never do wrong* in school again.”

I replied: "I take your words at their full value; you *never will*." And he never did.

Then I asked: "Ned, how many years have you been with me in school, the elementary school and the high school?"

He replied, "I came here at the beginning of the sixth grade and have been in school here ever since."

Then I said: "In all these years up to the present time you have never before been spoken to in regard to your conduct, nor has fault ever been found with your class work. The principal did not tell the offense for which you have come to me. He said you would tell me. But you need not. I do not wish to know. You are forgiven. I want you to understand that *a good record counts*. You will graduate in June, and when you leave us, the principal and I wish you to remember that we tried to appreciate the great good that was in you boys and not to magnify the mistakes."

Ned gave my hand a firmer grip, big tears stole down from his eyes and stood on his cheeks, his lips quivered as he said: "Thank you," and left the office.

When I told the principal what I had done, he said, "I knew you would settle it that way. It was just what I wished you to do."

\* \* \* \* \*

I had spent the afternoon in one of the elementary schools and as was my custom, had stopped in the principal's office for a conference with her or any teacher who might wish to talk over with me some part of her work, when a teacher of the advanced half of the seventh grade asked for a few minutes of my time. We passed to her room as the private office was occupied.

She said: "Mr. Stableton, I'm all discouraged today and want to talk with you about one of the boys in my room. You know Marion S——, and you know how every teacher that has ever had him in her room has thought him about the finest boy in the school."

"Yes, I know what they have all thought of him," I replied.

"Well, today," she continued, "I found that instead of his being the fine boy we had thought him, his mind is perfectly filthy, he is unclean as he can be."

She then gave me a note that he had written, not as *she thought* an unclean note, but a note that showed that sex inquisitiveness had come to him as it comes to all boys whose development is normal. Then she passed me his dictionary in which he had underscored many of the words referring to sex. This was further evidence to me that not evil-mindedness as she thought, but sex inquisitiveness, had come to him; and that while she must guard further outcroppings of this awakening instinct in school, the inquisitiveness was not in itself bad. I said to her that while she could not talk to the boy of himself, she could give him to understand that any further note-writing on his part would be considered no light offense; that she should require him to erase all marks from his dictionary, and tell him that she would examine it from time to time to see there was no more marking; that the greatest thing she could do for him was to keep him so busy with his work, by giving him extra work of an attractive kind, that he would have no time to think about himself while in school; that she ought to explain the situation to his parents in order that they might give him help; that she must not in any way lose her high regard for him or she would render herself helpless to do him good just when he needed her most.

This teacher was in many ways an exceptionally fine young teacher. She gave herself unreservedly to her school, was scholarly, able in her instruction, and tactful in managing her room. The pupils greatly respected her and admired her. The work of her room on the whole was of a fine character; but in this case she had failed to connect what she had read of the physical and the mental development of youth with the boy in her room who was experiencing the very changes of which she had read. This failing to determine the cause from its effect on the boy, had led her to believe the boy was foul-minded. Then, too, as a result of not properly interpreting the boy, she said she thought "If he is as filthy minded as he seems to be, what must the others be, and what does our teaching amount to anyway?"

I talked his development over with her. She was just a little chagrined that she had failed to understand the boy; that she had failed to apply to the boy in her own room the information she had gathered from reading; that she had failed to discover the cause from the effect it had on the boy.

After our talk, she was again in her happy, hopeful frame of mind that was so characteristic of her in her work with boys and girls.

\* \* \* \* \*

Another afternoon at the close of school at another building, I called at an advanced seventh grade room to speak a moment with the teacher. As I looked into the room, I saw she was engaged in talking with a boy. She immediately excused herself and stepped into the hall. She smiled and said, "Alonzo and I have just been having a little talk. Today I found a note that he had written, so asked him to wait a few minutes after school.

I have just given him to understand that that kind of thing must not occur again, and I know him well enough to know he will not try it again. It was not a bad note, but a little off color. In two or three years, he will be ashamed he ever wrote such a note. But, Mr. Stableton, he is a splendid boy, and will make a fine man.''

She pleased me greatly. She knew the boy's physical and mental condition. She knew too what her part was with the boy, and understanding the situation, met it in a good, strong way, all the while keeping a fine, helpful attitude toward the boy.

\* \* \* \* \*

In a town where I lived for many years, there dwelt from youth to old age, a man, who even when hoary-headed, his face bleared and bloated, a life of sin written in every lineament of his features, was still attractive to boys and young men. I often heard it said that that man had led more boys to lives of wrong than any other one influence in that community. He was always surrounded by a crowd of boys, and no boy ever came under his influence who was the same again.

With that peculiar charm about his personality that wins youth, had he been a noble character, he might have been of untold good to his community instead of making himself the source of a great stream of immoral conduct.

What was the secret of this man's great influence over boys and young men?

There was always in him a keen appreciation of boy-life. For forty years, he was ever at the front of his place of business to speak a pleasant word to the passing boy, to cultivate his acquaintance. And in this he was

not evil. This great love of boy-life stands out prominently as the one redeeming trait in his character; and yet, it ever drew the boys to him only to be hurt by his many vices.

Often as I have thought of this man, the question has come to me,—Cannot those who are interested in the *good* make themselves as attractive to the youth? Cannot, should not, teachers, too, cultivate that manner that appeals to youth? Can they not have that same sympathetic touch with young life that gave this man his wonderful influence over boys?

\* \* \* \* \*

A few years ago, I happened to hear two gentlemen talking. At that time, they had been friends for several years. One of them said to the other: "Do you know, I liked you from the first time I met you." I am not going into any explanation of what is implied in this statement, but will say that boys measure men and women in much the same way, they "kind o' like them," or they "kind o' don't like them," when they first meet them. When boys "size us up," rest assured they give us credit for about all there is in us. Sometimes they fail in their first estimate of us, but when they do, it takes time for us to prove to them that they were wrong in their judgment.

When I go into a strange town, I feel rather lonesome. I miss the boys that at home meet me at every corner ready for a look or word of recognition. I know nothing more delightful than to pass along the street and exchange pleasant words with the boys: here a group is playing, and I stop to see how goes the game, and everyone gives me a pleasant nod as I watch the game with unfeigned pleasure; or I tip my hat to some



boy as he rides by in his car, fearful of not being seen in his elevated greatness; or politely I speak a word of recognition to some boy who is busy at his work in office or store, yet glances up to give and to receive the approving smile that blesses life; I hear someone's shoes going clickety-clack, I turn 'round and see some boy running to catch up with me. I wait and as we walk the next block or two, we pleasantly chat of what is uppermost in *his* mind. Then with a "Good-bye," he is gone another way.

Teachers cannot afford to walk along the streets with their minds wholly occupied with solving their problems, but in this pleasant way they may so get hold of the boys that many of their school problems will solve themselves.

Do we not remember some men whom we greatly admired when we were boys? Were they men who passed us by with never a word or look of recognition? I hardly think so.

\* \* \* \* \*

Boys are natural hero-worshippers, and cannot admire or respect one who is not able to carry out his plans. They admire that teacher who, if need be, can make them do as they ought, although he may never be compelled to use his coercing power. Still, if some boy leader sets out to contest the leadership with the teacher, the teacher must, if he wishes to sustain his position as head of the school, bring this leader to ignominious defeat; otherwise the boys will array themselves under their own leader against the teacher; but if, on the other hand, the teacher or principal brings this leader into humble submission, the boys will rally to the teacher's standard.

A number of years ago, on taking up my work in Charleston, Illinois, in one of the fifth grades I found a large colored boy, possibly sixteen years of age. Judging from his size alone, he seemed even older. His teacher said to me: "I am afraid of that boy, he is so sullen and is not at all inclined to do what I wish." I asked a few questions about the boy, and learned that a gentleman in the town had brought him from Oklahoma, had given him a home, and was trying to educate him; that the boy had been in the fifth grade the year before but had not been promoted, and that his not being promoted was what caused his sullen manner.

The teacher who had taught the fifth grade the year before was this year principal of the building, and teacher of the sixth grade. She said that while the boy was not strong in his work, she believed that it would be better to give him a place in the sixth grade room; that she knew he would do his best for her and would learn more, and she was confident that to leave him where he was could only mean trouble.

I replied that I would arrange to have him placed in the sixth grade, but would try to do it in a way that would have a good effect on him. I made it convenient that day to meet the boys as they were dismissed and apparently accidently, I met Sam, the colored boy, recognized him pleasantly, and then said, "Sam, someone tells me you are from Oklahoma?" He stopped, grinned pleasantly, and said: "Yes, sah, I'se from Oklahoma, I came to Charleston with Mr. ———. He found me out there. I live with him."

I then told him that I was from the West too, that I had lived a number of years in Nebraska, and chatted a few minutes with him about some common char-

acteristics of that western country. A day or two after this, I was at that building again, and made it a point to get to talk a little while with Sam. I said to him: "Sam, I have been thinking that you might, by working extra hard, *try* to do the work in the sixth grade. I'm sure you would feel better in the sixth grade than where you are with all those little folks. What do you think about it?"

A big smile parted his thick lips and spread almost from ear to ear as he replied: "Mr. Stableton, I'd like mighty well to be in that grade, and I'll work mighty hard if you'll try me."

"All right," said I, "I'll ask the principal to transfer you to her grade, and I'm *sure* you'll not disappoint me."

Three or four weeks later, I was hurriedly called to this same building. The janitor, very much excited, met me at the door and said: "Dick's on a tare, and has a big piece of iron and swears he'll knock a hole in your head if you go in where he is. I *tell* you *he's a terror*. The superintendent last year turned him out of school, and after that Dick rocked the superintendent on the street."

I passed to the principal's room and found her much excited. Dick had been very unruly and had defied her in the presence of the school. When he knew that she had sent for me, he swore he would do so and so if I came.

There was an unoccupied room adjoining the principal's room, into which she had finally got him. I went into the room. He was standing with an iron bar in one hand. He growled something as I entered. I paid no attention to this, but spoke to him when he

growled again that I had better look out. Before he knew that I was going to touch him, I gripped both his hands so quickly that it startled him. I shook the rod of iron out of his hand. He immediately threw himself down on the floor, locked his legs around mine, and tried to trip me down. I held his hands in a tight grip, and by lifting his feet with my feet, moved across the room to where there were some switches left from the year before. I then whipped him severely. This brought him to his feet. As he rose to his feet, I said, "Be seated," pointing to a chair nearby. He sat down. Just then the door to the principal's room opened and in came my big colored boy, Sam, and stepping up to me he said: "Mr. Stableton, do you need any help?" I thanked him, and replied, "No." He returned to his own room.

I then talked with Dick. He was out of his passion so he could listen to what I had to say. I told him he was not *all* bad, but when he allowed himself to get into such an angry passion, he was terrible, and nothing but severe punishment would bring him to his senses; that he *must be in school* that year; that I had no thought of turning him out; but that he would be compelled to do right and be obedient to his teacher. I said further that I had known worse boys than he to make good men, and there was no reason why he could not. He had felt that everybody thought he was wholly bad, and was, so to speak, trying to keep up his reputation.

My aim was to let him see that I did not consider him a hopeless case, but that I expected something good of him and believed he could make a useful man.

As he had been so unruly in the presence of the school, and as the pupils could hear the noise we made when I first took hold of him, I felt that the school must

know how the affair was settled, so I arranged it with him that I should explain to the school. We passed into the room together, and I told the school that I had punished Dick severely for his conduct, and that he was going to try to be a better boy. They saw him come into the room so changed from what they had seen him leave it a short time before, that they understood fully what had been done. I then said that as the matter was settled, it must not be made a subject of conversation anywhere about the school or schoolgrounds; that I would consider it a very bad offense for any of them to be heard talking about the trouble; that it must be dropped and dropped at once. *The affair was not talked about openly.*

The principal said that the colored boy had asked to leave the room and she had excused him but had no thought of his wishing to assist me; it was his own doing. When he went home he told his folks what he had done, and said that he was afraid Dick might be too strong for Mr. Stableton, and so thought he ought to help him, but that he had not needed his help.

When Dick went home from school, he told his mother what had occurred, but said he didn't care if I had whipped him, he liked me anyway, for I had said that he could make a good man, that I had known worse boys than he to make good men.

Dick was not always perfect in his conduct, but he was never again as he had been before, and a few words were all that were necessary to set him right.

This may not be the best way of getting hold of boys. Many may not approve of it. All I can say in its defense is that it answered my purpose when I knew no other, and to me it is far preferable to not getting hold

of such boys at all. It is in perfect harmony with the physical and mental laws of the development of youth.

\* \* \* \* \*

A teacher in a high school said to me one day that he was greatly annoyed by the boys on the street, not simply high school boys, but grammar grade boys as well, by their dodging behind the corners of buildings and fences and yelling names at him as he passed along the street. "What would you do if you were in my place?" said he. I replied: "I would cultivate the acquaintance of those boys, and instead of trying to keep out of their way, I would make it a point to meet them and to speak to them just as politely as I could." He tried this, and the trouble disappeared. Those same boys came to know that teacher as a fine man and a worthy friend. He said afterwards in speaking of the affair: "My speaking pleasantly to them and cultivating their acquaintance seemed to take all the wind out of them." He was about right.

\* \* \* \* \*

One Tuesday afternoon several years ago, about five o'clock, I sat at my office desk busily engaged with the last hour's work of the day when Miss G——, one of our high school teachers, entered, and said that as the high school principal was not in his office, she thought that possibly she ought to tell me that some of the junior and the senior boys were getting ready to post up about the city, some Rules and Regulations for freshmen and sophomores; that one of the boys, calling him by name, had just been talking to her about it; that they intended to have one hundred large posters printed, and to put them up in conspicuous places about the city;

that they did not intend to make any trouble, "only just have a little fun."

I thanked her and she passed from the office.

In a moment's time, I thought it through. It meant a clash between juniors and seniors on one side, freshmen and sophomores on the other. I must head off the affair. I had seen the boy whom she mentioned leave the building not five minutes before the teacher gave me the report.

By this time the high school principal had returned to his office. I stated the case to him and requested him to find the boy and tell him that I said that he must go no further with the affair, but must call at my office before school in the morning. I said further: "Do not leave the boy until you have his word that he will do nothing more until he sees me." I knew the boy and that he would do, with the proper insistence on the part of the principal, as I requested.

The principal then said that he had seen a certain other boy engaged evidently in a very serious conversation with some other students at the close of school, and that he thought this boy must be interested in the same thing. I immediately called this boy over the telephone while the principal went to look after the first boy. In a few minutes the second boy was in the office. I said to him that I had learned that a number of junior and senior boys were getting out a set of Rules and Regulations for freshmen and sophomores to be posted up about the city; and that this could not be done without great wrong to our school; that I *believed* he was one of the promoters of the scheme, and for this reason had called him in to have a talk with him. I did not bluff him, I was as honest with him as I hoped he would be with me. I don't think it pays to bluff.

He replied that he *was* one of them, but said that they were not intending to make any trouble, that they had no thought of doing anything that would interfere with the work of the school, but just wanted "to have a little fun"; that the plan was to put up the posters some night, then catch a few freshmen and sophomores, take them to one of the city parks, where the juniors and seniors would have a wiener roast, read the Rules and Regulations to the captured "freshies" and "sophs" and make them pledge to observe the rules; that no one was to be injured in any way, that they were only "going to have a little fun."

I accepted his statement of their intentions as honest, for this boy had always been loyal to his school and one on whom we could depend as ever standing for the right. I pointed out to him just what would be the result of any such action on their part: that it would mean strife and ill will between juniors and seniors on one side, and sophomores and freshmen on the other; that it would mean the loss practically of at least two weeks and possibly a month of school time, as far as the regular school work was concerned; that the energies of teachers, principal and superintendent would be taken from the regular school work to keep the disorder from going beyond bounds, and that the school would win for itself a name as a center of rowdiness. He had not thought the whole thing through. It is not often in these cases that young people do think the whole thing through, and see the end from the beginning. I then asked him his promise that he would have nothing more to do with the affair and said that if he would not give me his word, I would call in his father, that we both knew what his father would do.

He gave me his word that he would have nothing more to do with carrying on the affair. In fact, would



try to help stop it, and said: "Mr. Stableton, you had better call in the other fellows and talk with them."

I thanked him and he left my office. I knew I could trust him.

A little later I had word from the first boy that nothing would be done that night, and that he would call to see me in the morning. I went home feeling sure that the first steps had been taken that would prevent five hundred pupils being thrown into an excited, riotous state, and that with close, tactful work for a day or two the good name of the school for order and decency would be preserved; but I knew there was still work ahead.

Very early the next morning the boy with whom I had talked the evening before called at my office with a copy of the Rules and Regulations for sophomores and freshmen, saying that he thought I would like to read them. I thanked him. I then knew just what the intended posters contained, and that they had been handed down from some university or college. I was glad to read them, for when a few minutes later the boy whom the teacher had reported the evening before called on me, I was able to talk directly to the point as to the effect the posters would produce.

This boy's statement of the case was almost the same as that of the other and I felt they were both honest in what they said. I explained how it appealed to me, and kindly, yet without any possibility of its going on, stated that the whole affair *must* be called off. I asked him, not in a way to make him feel that I thought he had intentionally planned something to disrupt our school, to give me his word that he as one of the leaders or originators would call off the affair and bring the posters to me.

He gave me his word that he would, but asked if they would have to pay for the posters if they gave them to me. I replied that they most certainly would. He then said that the money to pay for them had not been collected, and asked if it would be all right for him to go on collecting it. I replied "Yes." This was Wednesday morning.

Thursday the same boy came to my office and asked me if I would be willing to talk to all who were interested in the affair, as I had talked to a few of them, saying that it would help him in settling up matters. I told him to get word to all interested to meet me in a specified room. That forenoon the word was carefully gotten to all interested that I would meet them in one of the class rooms at a certain hour. When I entered the room to talk to them, I was surprised to see the large number present. I had not supposed so many were taking part in it. I stated the case as it appeared to me, being careful not to impute any bad motive to those who had originated it, but to dwell rather on the unfortunate results that would come to our schools; and to make clear the fact that as the head of the school system it was my bounden duty to ward off all things that might bring harm to the school. For an hour I sat with them and counselled with them in the very pleasantest manner. They were free to ask questions and to speak their minds, and I answered them with all frankness. Whether my answers were always the best I know not, but I do know that I won my case. Their questions were well put and right to the point.

Some one said: "Mr. Stableton, why is it they permit university and college students to do these things, and do not think it right for high school scholars?"

I replied that in most cases it would doubtless be better if university students did not engage in affairs of

this character, as they often lead to some students' being excluded from the university; that the university being a school for more mature students did not hesitate to sever the connection of any who were detrimental to the school; that ordinarily high school scholars heard only of the "big times" the university students had on such occasions, and that those students whose opportunity for further education was cut short were lost sight of; that with young people in the high school our aim was to give each one the best possible opportunity for a high school education and to keep the school free from everything that might take this opportunity away from any of them. These and many other points were discussed.

One asked: "Mr. Stableton, if we pay for these posters and promise not to use them as we planned, cannot each of us who helps pay for them, have one to hang up in his room at home?"

This looked fair to them, but I had to say "No." I stated that as soon as it would be known, and it would be known, that these posters were hanging in the rooms of Bloomington seniors and juniors, even in their homes, there would be trouble, and as it would affect the school I must insist upon their being given into my hands.

At the close of the conference they were unanimous to do as I requested. Then with good feeling and in a happy frame of mind, all passed back to their studies.

Thus far the school had not been excited by the affair, but the principal and I knew that as soon as the sophomores and freshmen should hear what had been planned, and we knew they would hear it, *they* would begin to plan. The following morning the leaders in these two classes were privately called in and told what had been planned and that it had all been called off, that there

was nothing for them to consider, that the whole matter was a thing of the past. In this way any counter plan was forestalled.

A day or two later the one hundred large posters bearing "rules and regulations for sophomores and freshmen" were delivered to me at my office. And so the affair passed out of the minds of the scholars.

All this time I had been wondering who was responsible for the thing's taking shape in the mind of the leading boy. I thought possibly a letter from a boy friend in some college or university had given him the cue. Two weeks later the teacher who first gave me notice came into my office and said: "Mr. Stableton, I think I owe you an apology. I fear I was responsible for that Rules and Regulations affair. It was this way—the boy who was the leader had spent an evening at my home a short time before and while entertaining him, I told him of my university life and showed him a card with those rules and regulations on it, a card that I had hanging in my room. And that put the idea into his head."

Then the whole situation flashed over me. Here was a teacher whom the scholars were taught to respect and whom they did respect, telling one of the boys of the most glorious time of her college life and reading with him the card that she kept as a prized memento of the occasion. Suggestion had done the rest. Why *should not they have a "glorious time?"* Their teacher had had. *And why not?*

I said to her: "You are a good woman; you mean well; but your lack of judgment came near engaging this body of five hundred scholars in a strife that would have degraded and disgraced us in the eyes of the public, and would have robbed us of much valuable time. To pre-

vent this the high school principal and myself gave two or three days of the most nerve-straining work that ever comes to those in authority.”

I was glad that I had accepted the intent as the boys had stated it, and that I had so felt that what they stated was true that I could talk with them with no other thought than that of helping them to see the situation as I saw it; and that as a duty to them and to the school it was my part to prevent anything that would hurt the school.

Only those who deal with young people know the tension under which one labors when handling a body of several hundred high school scholars at such a time, in a way to hold their confidence so that he can shape their action, even when he is shaping it against that on which their hearts are set, and when, as in this case, they have a precedent that in their eyes could scarcely be questioned.

\* \* \* \* \*

It was just before the opening of the morning session of school, Thursday of the third week of school, one September, that the principal of the high school stepped into my office and said: “Mr. Stableton, will you talk with the foot-ball boys? They are all stirred up this morning.”

I replied, “Yes. What’s the trouble?”

He then told me that Jack S—— had entered school that morning and that as Jack had been the finest foot-ball player in the school the year before, the boys were wild to have him on the team; that the boys had asked him if Jack would be permitted to play, and that he had replied that the State High School Athletic Association Rules said that *no one could play* who entered school

later than the *beginning* of the third week of the semester.

The boys, boy-like, had jumped at the conclusion that the principal was, as they put it, "making too fine a ruling" and so were in an excited mood.

As soon as I understood the situation, I asked the principal to send the captain to me. In a moment he came. He was a splendid, big fellow, and manly through and through, but impulsive, and only a boy.

"What's the trouble, Henry?" asked I.

"Oh, Jack S—— has entered school this morning and we fellows want him on our team. He's the *best football man* in the school, and WE NEED HIM. The principal says he don't think Jack can play under the State H. S. A. A. rules, and we think that is shading a little too fine."

I took a sheet of paper, drew five spaces, and marked them Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday. I held up the paper and asked: "Where is the middle of the week, Henry?"

Henry smiled and replied: "Wednesday noon, of course."

Then I asked: "Did you ever hear of the *beginning* of the week's coming after the *middle* of the week?"

He smiled again, and said: "*Nobody* ever heard of the *beginning* coming after the *middle*."

Placing my hand on his shoulder, I asked: "Do you wish me as *your superintendent* to sign my name to a certificate stating that Jack entered school the *beginning* of the third week, in order that he may play on your team? Would you respect me as your superintendent if I should do this?" I waited a moment, then Henry, looking me full in the face, said: "*Don't you do it. I'll not ask you to sign it. Don't do it.*"

“Will you take this stand with the boys?” I asked.

“Yes, I will,” replied Henry. I patted him on the shoulder and he passed out of my office. I knew I could trust him.

Next I called for Jack S——. He was a boy who was greatly liked by all, both students and faculty. He came into my office, happy-faced, shaking his head, and saying, “*Please don’t ask me any questions, Mr. Stableton, I want to play.*”

I took my sheet of paper with the spaces for days and put the same questions to Jack that I had to Henry. At first he said: “Please don’t ask me,” but when I placed my hand on his shoulder in a kindly way and waited a moment he said: “Mr. Stableton, *I’ll not ask you to sign such a paper, you must not do it.*”

I said, “Jack, will you say the same thing to the boys?”

He replied: “Yes, sir. *I will.*”

I patted him on the back and he went out smiling.

I then asked the principal to get word to all the football boys and other athletic boys to meet me at once in a certain classroom. The room was soon filled. I stepped to the blackboard, marked off five spaces and named them as I had done on the sheet of paper. Again I asked where the middle of the week would be found.

“Wednesday noon,” came the answer. I then put the same questions to the crowd that I had to each of the two boys, adding: “Your captain says he would not ask me to sign a certificate that Jack entered the beginning of the third week, and Jack says he would not ask me to sign it. Now what do you boys wish me to do?” Immediately a loud chorus of voices said, “*We don’t want you to sign it. Don’t do it.*” Only one boy asked, “But, Mr. Stableton, couldn’t you get around it? Busi-

ness men get around things." The other boys said:  
"No, no, we don't want you to get around it."

I thanked them and passed them on to their school work. All happy, no discontent anywhere.

Jack *did not play*; but the *one game* of all games of the season that the team and school wished most to win, they won. They were happy, but they were not more happy than I.

\* \* \* \* \*



## CHAPTER II

### SOME COMMENTS, A FEW CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUTH WITH CONCRETE CASES

While some teachers who have little or no knowledge of the physical and the mental characteristics that should mark pupils of the grammar grades, and scholars of the Junior and the Senior high schools, make excellent teachers in these schools, still it is only the few and not the many who are blessed with an intuition that enables them to do this. Yet even these might do far superior work if they understood the physical and the mental life movements of these boys and girls as revealed by special students of this subject.

My acquaintance with high school teachers and grammar grade teachers leads me to believe that the rank and file of them are not to any great extent conversant with the literature that has been given us by special students of this subject during the past comparatively few years.

I have been led to inquire why teachers whose work should be in perfect harmony with these recorded facts, have so little interest in knowing them. Again and again I have asked these teachers why they did not familiarize themselves with the literature treating of the physical and the mental characteristics of youth. Almost every one of them has said: "I don't enjoy that kind of reading, and so do not read it." One high school teacher, one of the ablest young high school teachers I have ever known, when asked, replied: "Mr. Stableton, I'll tell you why I don't read that kind of literature; it makes me feel creepy, and I think most other young men teachers are affected just as I am, and so don't read it."

I suspect this young man gave me the correct answer; and I can see why in many cases it would be so. Many, very many, of our high school teachers and grammar grade teachers are not beyond the later period of youth themselves, and so are much given to introspection, and as a result, when in their reading they come upon some of the distressingly abnormal cases, they study themselves and imagine they see the beginnings of these abnormalities within themselves, and so are frightened, or "feel creepy." This results from the fact that all abnormalities, both physical and mental, we are told, are but normal conditions carried to extremes. The very state of the youth's mind makes it impossible for him to consider the abnormal without more or less introspection that may, for the reason given, be so unpleasant as not to be helpful, if not, indeed, harmful. I hope, however, I may be able so to present some of the leading facts relating to this subject that they will be attractive to teachers of these grades. It is also true, as someone has said, that these characteristics of youth have so much to do with the element of sex concerning which there has been so little healthful teaching, that many teachers hesitate to read for fear of happening on something that might offend what is called good taste.

But many things concerning sex that teachers of youth should know—not the things the teachers should teach the boys and girls concerning sex, but the things teachers should know that they may be in the right attitude toward youth—these things it should be possible to state in language offensive to none, but helpful to many.

I have nothing to say in this book of what should be taught boys and girls of their own development. That is a problem for others.

While for many years I have been a student of the physical and the mental life movements of boys and girls from twelve years to twenty, still I lay no claim to originality in the discovery of the facts I am about to state, though I have seen them verified over and over, again and again, in the great number of boys and girls whom I have carefully observed and studied. These facts are what specialists have discovered and recorded. Today they are common knowledge of all who read carefully along this line. While I lay no claim to the original discovery of any of these facts, neither do I lay claim to originality in the statement of them. In many instances I have quoted extensively the words of other writers, and have so indicated. In other cases, I have kept so closely to the wording of other writers that these parts too might almost be included in quotation marks.

These facts are the facts that have given me a basis for my dealings with boys and girls of these grades of school; that have helped me to interpret youth. I give them to the readers of this book that they may have in mind the facts that I ever had in mind while working with young people of these grades in school.

As I have already said in the preface, the book is, to a very great extent, concrete. The boys of whom there are many, the girls, and the teachers who appear on its pages are not fictitious people; but each one is true to life. The concrete cases of my dealings with them are given in answer to the questions so often asked: "What would you do with this boy or that boy; with this girl or that girl; with this teacher or that teacher; with this situation or that situation?" An open confession of what I have tried to do and the manner of doing it revealing the spirit in which I have tried to do it, is my answer.

In the upper grammar grades and the high schools, most of the scholars come between eleven years of age and twenty. In the lower grammar grades, the fifth and sixth grades, we find the greater number under twelve years; while in the senior high school, we now and then meet with a few older than twenty.

Pubescence is the term applied to the physical changes looking to reproduction, that ordinarily occur in boys from the thirteenth year to the sixteenth, and in girls a year or two earlier. Adolescence is the term sometimes considered as including all the changes, both physical and mental, that take place in youth *from* the state of puberty, or pubescence, to fully developed manhood or womanhood. However, a slightly different use of the term adolescence considers it as applied to all changes both physical and mental beginning about the twelfth year with the approach of pubescence and extending into the twenties, to fully developed manhood or womanhood. This latter use of the term makes pubescence but an early phase of adolescence. In this sense, the terms will be used whenever they occur on these pages.

Sometimes these changes that usually take place between the thirteenth year and the sixteenth in boys and earlier in girls are delayed even into the twenties. Again we find them occurring earlier than the twelfth year, even with pupils in our own schools. But the delayed development and the precocious, are the exceptions, not the rule.

Those who have made careful investigations tell us that among primitive peoples and in warmer climes, these changes come at a much earlier age than among civilized peoples in temperate climes. A friend of mine who was for a number of years a physician in the Philip-

pires, said that the youngest mother he saw while there was but twelve years of age, and that she was the mother of two children, not twins.

Says one writer: "As the boy or girl enters the stage of pubescence, the parts of the body looking to reproduction are rapidly developed. The bones make rapid growth; the muscular system is rounded out; a fullness comes to the chest; the vocal chords are elongated; the chin lengthens; the nose gives up its flabby character and takes on stronger outlines; and the eye flashes with a brilliancy never before known. New brain centers are becoming active, and the heart is pumping the blood through the body with an energy that causes every part of the body to throb with renewed life." One writer calls this the second birth.

It is easy thus to state these changes and in a few words to sum them up; but the processes of nature in working them out are far from uniform. Sometimes like Jonah's gourd, a night-time is sufficient for the marvelous change, while in other cases years are necessary for its accomplishment. Sometimes the life of childhood seems to glide with perfect ease into the life of youth, and youth into early manhood or womanhood; while again these changes are accomplished with apparently great effort.

Says one: "At this time pug noses and soft flabby noses of all kinds are shaped to their final form by the cartilage and bones that push up and give them outline. The jaw shapes weak or strong. The peculiar racial characteristics of mould of face are apt to become prominent."

Robert T. was a beautiful boy, ordinarily bright, his face of somewhat regular mould, no parts unduly prominent, until about his fourteenth year, when the carti-

lages and bones of his face began to make rapid growth. At the end of eighteen months the boy that had been was scarcely recognizable in the youth that was. Just as the volcanic forces of the earth will sometimes suddenly push up a great volcanic mount, changing the appearance of the whole country round about, so within the space of a few months the growing forces of his body pushed up a great Roman nose so out of proportion to other parts of his face as to disfigure it forever after. No ordinary person would have dreamed that his slightly arched nose of childhood was the beginning of the great disfigurement he was doomed to carry through life.

But while such cases as Robert's may be somewhat rare, it often happens that the beautiful face of a child is only very commonplace after the changes of this period of life have taken place; and it is just as often that the commonplace face of childhood is transformed into one of great beauty. Character, weak or strong, now stands out prominent in many a newly-moulded face.

At this time, too, we see the tall, awkward, gawky boy. "The boy whose body and limbs have lengthened out of all proportion, until he is tall, slim, very often slightly stooped, and awkward in every movement. Physically, he looks ready to fall in a heap, and physically that is about his condition; for with all this growth of bones there is as yet no growth of muscles to hold this long, bony framework erect. The muscles that held the shorter body erect and alert are not equal to the task, and must themselves take on renewed growth and vigor to meet the new demands."

"Sometimes the bony framework at this time makes only a moderate growth in length, and so gives us the man or woman of ordinary height; or as again happens,

there is little or no growth in height, but a broadening out, a massive growth of bones; or in other cases, only a comparatively slight lengthening and strengthening of the bony structure fitting it for its work in the life of the coming man or woman; but whatever the changes may be, this is primarily a period of bone growth."

During childhood the bones and the muscles have grown with a fair balance of adjustment, thus giving the free, graceful, swift-moving play of childhood, the ease and certainty of which add beauty to all child-life. But with the oncoming of pubescence all this balance of adjustment between bones and muscles ordinarily disappears, and the awkwardness and the uncertainty of youth take its place. This is especially true where there is a great growth in the length of the bones with for a time, no corresponding growth of muscles.

Once in a while there is a great growth of muscles before the bones take on growth. This results in an unbalanced condition that gives the same uncertainty and awkwardness.

Even after the bones and muscles have made their growth, time is required for them to become accustomed to working together before awkwardness and uncertainty entirely disappear.

The following is one of the most pronounced cases of uncertainty and awkwardness I have ever observed: Theodore as a boy had a small body, quick and certain of movement and full of nervous energy. He grew to more than six feet in height, and he made this growth in so short a time that the adjustments of muscles and bones were greatly unbalanced. The latter part of his first year in high school he began to change rapidly, and when he reentered school the following September, he was so completely changed that some of the younger

teachers began to ask: "What is the matter with Theodore, he hardly knows which way he's moving, and he looks awful." But all his teachers said that he was keeping his class work to the front, except that his written papers were mere scrawls and scratches that taxed their skill to interpret. His forehead had become massive, bulging out over his eyes, his hands and feet looked so very large and appeared too heavy for use. As the boys put it: "Theodore, what's the matter with your feet handles, can't they move your feet? Better get you some new ones." It did not occur to them that that was just what he was doing, and that for him, it was a serious business.

At the opening of the second semester of this year, his second in high school, he came into my office to ask advice in selecting his elective work for the semester. He was uncouth looking, and so awkward that he could hardly sit down on a chair, and when he did, it was to sit down, lean forward, and double up almost like a closing blade of a pocket-knife. But when he laid his plans before me, there was no uncertainty as to what he wished to do. He had selected the course he intended to take in the university. That for the time being, at least, was settled; but of the elective work in the high school he wished to know which I thought would give the best foundation for his intended course in the university. He wished to get the best preparation the high school could give him for his university work. He was uncertainty itself and painfully awkward in every movement of his body, but his thinking was clear-cut and unusual for a boy at his stage in physical development. Later on he came into his own physically, and was a fine-appearing young man when two years later he graduated from the high school. He entered the uni-



versity following the course he had selected his second year in the high school, and after dropping out at his country's call to fight in France, where he was made an officer, reentered the university and graduated.

But awkwardness does not always mark the boy who grows tall and slim at this time. Nature is so capricious that none may forecast with *absolute certainty* what may happen to the youth at this stage of his development. *In general*, we may forecast, but nature is sure to give the exception. However, the exception only makes more evident what is *generally* true.

Harry G. was under my supervision from the time of his entering the first primary to his graduation from the high school. He was always as erect as grace and beauty of movement would demand. When he came to the period of rapid growth at the beginning of youth he stretched up to more than six feet in height, slight and graceful, with never a stoop of the shoulders, nor an awkward movement of any part of his body. He towered head and shoulders above most of his classmates, but seemed unconscious of the fact that he stood physically above them. He had always been a good student, he was still a good student. If wild visions passed before his mind, there was nothing in his conduct that gave evidence of them. If the opposite sex had any unusual attraction for him, no one knew it. He was always courteous and polite toward the girls, but never seemed to have favorites.

The year before he graduated, teachers would often say: "What a handsome young man Harry is, what a gentleman and scholar. Why can't there be more like him?" No one ever answered the question, for no one knew. To all appearances he had been spared the pangs of bashfulness and awkwardness that torment many.

Exacting or trying to exact good written form of scholars while they are in a wholly unsettled state of levers and muscles is just about as sensible as trying to draw red blood out of a turnip. The teacher who attempts this becomes a nagger, and often ruins a scholar's year in school or drives him out of school altogether. So often boys who were fine penmen in the fifth and the sixth grades show a letting down for a time in some higher grade, a letting down in the written form, due not to any lack of trying on their part, not to any unwillingness on their part, but to a lack of adjustment between their bones and their muscles for which they are not at all responsible.

Take the case of Theodore A., a most painfully awkward boy at this period of his life. Had his teachers been exacting and nagging in trying to secure from him a better form in his written work than he was able to give, they could have easily driven him from school; but with good sense on their part, they recognized his condition, appreciated his fine work even though his written form was almost unintelligibly scrawly; and looked forward to the time when his written form would again show muscular control.

A teacher lacking in good judgment and the power of discrimination, or what is more probable, lacking the information concerning the characteristics of youth that would enable her to form a good judgment, to discriminate, will often select some unusual boy like Harry G. whose case I have given you, a boy with no visible unsettling, either physical or mental, from childhood to early manhood, as her ideal of what all boys should be at this time in life, and as a result, utterly fail as a teacher.

It is a fact that at this period of life, while many boys cannot do the fine *little* things in form work, and sometimes in other things they will omit many of the minor points in a subject, points that a mere memory reciter would give with great exactness, still they seize upon the really important things and present them in a way that shows a wonderful mastery of the subject. Boys of this type can be held to *little* things until they almost lose their power to do *big* things. They seem to have the power to take in "great chunks" of information in the rough and get out all that is in them. If given too finely broken up information with unnecessary explanation, intellectual dyspepsia results.

Don't destroy all their ruggedness of thinking and speech.

In singing, and in oral reading and oral recitation work, at this time, the teacher needs to exercise great care. The boy who was a beautiful singer before his vocal chords began to lengthen, now for a time has but little or no control of his voice. He cannot sing; he does not know why; and often the teacher does not know why, so when the boy flatly refuses because he knows he cannot hold his voice from squeaking, the teacher attributes it to stubbornness on the boy's part, and then the trouble begins. But when the teacher is on the lookout for changing voices, she easily controls the situation. She does not hesitate to say to this boy or that boy: "Your voice is changing. You need not try to sing for a while. Your voice will be all right later."

But, says one teacher: "It always makes trouble in my school if I excuse one boy from singing, so many others want to be excused."

All I can say in reply is that this teacher lacks the proper control of her school. It is *her shortage*, not the

*boys' fault*, that she cannot so conduct the work in her school as to be able to deal justly in all these cases. A really able teacher soon creates a school atmosphere in her room that enables her to do right by any scholar and not a shadow of criticism come from the school.

Oral reading in the advanced grammar grades and in the first two years of the high school often fails in comparison with that done by these same scholars when in the sixth grade and the first half of the seventh, because of the lack of voice control due to lengthening and thickening vocal chords. Oral recitations are sometimes mere stumbling attempts for the same reason, and also from the fact that the scholar is often so self-conscious, so bashful, as he stands up in the presence of the class that he loses all power to think.

I have again and again heard some young high school teacher say: "I have some boys in my classes in English who can scarcely read so as to be understood when they stand up before the class. I wonder what their teachers in the elementary schools were doing that they never taught them to read?"

The fact is this teacher knew her English but had no knowledge of adolescent boy life. She was directing her critical questioning toward the very able teachers of these boys in the grammar grades, teachers who in their power to teach were so far above her that their work could not be compared.

But do not misunderstand me. I would not unjustly criticize this young high school teacher. She was not wholly at fault. The university had prepared her to be a high school teacher but had taught her nothing of the boys and the girls she was expected to teach.

Out of just such material as this principals and superintendents in the past have been compelled to

make teachers. I remember one young man who taught his first year of school in our high school. He was finely equipped in the subject-matter he was to teach, yet had heard nothing of the problems he was to meet in the boys and girls. But he was teachable. His principal and superintendent gave him every possible attention and watched with pleasure his growth in power as a teacher.

At the close of the school year just as he was starting home for his summer vacation, he called at the superintendent's office to thank the superintendent and the principal for their very great help to him, adding that if his professors in the university had been half so careful to teach him as his superintendent and principal had been the past year, he would not have been so foolish as he was when he began his teaching. "I have learned more this year," said he, "than in any year I was in the university."

Today colleges and universities that prepare young men and women for teachers in our high schools are giving courses in school management and teaching that throw much light on the phases of the work that have been so long neglected. I am glad this change in the preparation of teachers for high schools has come.

### CHAPTER III

## CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUTH, WITH CON- CRETE CASES (Continued)

Pubescence means hairy. This is not only the period for bone and muscle growth, but it is also the time when the upper lip of the boy begins to darken; or it may be the hairy growth creeps down in front of his ears, or straggling patches sprout out on his chin, giving a dirty, unkempt look until the sharpness of the razor is called upon to remove the appearance of dirt that will not wash off.

But all these visible physical changes are but the accompanying physical changes of a still more fundamental physical change that is preparing the body for the great work of reproduction. "Any retardation, whatever its cause, in the perfecting of the parts of the body looking specially to the work of reproduction, manifests itself somewhere in the accompanying physical changes."

We school men know very little of the physical causes that may result in the retardation of the body in its development for reproduction. We see the effects of, to us, some unknown causes and often are helpless to render assistance. We are not much better than blind leaders of the blind in our efforts in school in behalf of some of these retarded cases.

The following is a type of cases where the teachers see the result but know not the causes. I question whether or not, the school did anything very helpful for the boy. In the light of wider experience, I am confident that it would have been far better for him had he been out of school for a year or two when he first began

to manifest arrested development, providing he could have had interesting occupation of some kind under good environment.

This boy did good school work through the eight grades, and at fourteen and one-half years of age entered the high school. He was then physically as much a boy as at twelve; and for the three years following his entrance into the high school, made no further development physically, and seemed to lose, rather than gain, mentally. The first year in high school, he worked by "fits and starts," but his efforts showed less and less vigor. He failed to pass in a large part of his year's work. The next fall his parents asked me what I thought they ought to do with the boy, keep him in school or let him remain out. They finally decided to keep him in school, for it was a question of the school or the street. They said he was in good health, although he had ceased to grow, and that they felt that as long as he was well, he was better off in school, even though he failed to do a full year's work. They could not account for his condition, nor could their family physician. He was kept in school the entire year and made but little progress in his school work.

A few weeks before the close of the year, one of the teachers said to me that she thought he ought to be put out of school, that she had no use for a boy who could do good work and would not do it. I asked her if he was disorderly or disturbed her. She replied that he was not disorderly and did not disturb her, but that she was tired of working with a boy who ought to do good work and did not. I then asked her where she would have him go; she did not know just so he was out of her way. I then asked her if she had thought of his age and physical condition; she had not; if she had thought

of these things in connection with other members of his home; she had not. I then called her attention to the fact that he was a boy in his seventeenth year with the body of a boy of twelve; that his sister, two years younger, was even more diminutive and undeveloped physically, but was, intellectually, one of the strongest in the school; that his two older sisters had developed young, physically and mentally, and were strong, both in mind and in body; and that one of them at that time weighed more than two hundred pounds. She had not thought of these things. To me they were an interesting study.

I could not call the boy a boy of poor mentality, but he was a boy long after the ordinary time for his passing to youth and early manhood. Why, I do not know; neither do I know why his sister, two years younger, should cease to grow physically and yet take on unusual mental power.

This boy continued in high school the third year, doing but little better in his work. The third year closed his school life. He was, at this time, not so strong physically as he had been, so went to live on a western cattle ranch, hoping the outdoor life would benefit him. After a year on the ranch, I met him again. He was so changed that I did not recognize him 'till his father said, "Mr. Stableton, this is *our* boy." He was a vigorous, independent young man. The year had brought him greater changes than the previous three years.

As I said at the beginning of this sketch, I think the boy would have been better off had he been given outdoor life for a year or two, under good environments, at the time when he first ceased to grow and to do school work; but in these cases no one knows what is best and, as with this boy, parents are often not able to provide



anything that gives an environment that they are willing to trust as they do the school, so hold the boy, or it may be the girl, in school. They do this, feeling that there is, to some extent, good in the carefully guarded environment of the school.

It is no doubt true that the school is a safer place for the boy than the street, but the school, to some extent, suffers from his being there. The teacher of whom I have spoken in relation to this boy was not a careless indifferent teacher, but the very opposite. She was enthusiastic and earnest, and she felt that he only increased the inertia of the class she would move. She was right in this, for he did add to her load. No one of this type can be in a class without adding to the burden of the conscientious teacher. At the Yale commencement, June, 1909, President Hadley discussed Honor Courses. In his address, he said that the honor students suffer from the presence of the pass students, or in other, plainer words, I may express what he meant by saying that the honor students, those inspired by a desire for the highest scholarship, are prevented from accomplishing all that they might, by the requirements that are necessary on account of the presence of the pass students, those who are not working for scholarship, but only attempting to make the minimum requirements for a pass; that thus far the university had not been able to so organize its student body as to free the honor men from the hindrance offered by the presence of the pass men.

So in grammar grades and in our secondary, or public high schools, the teachers often find their work heavier from the presence of those for whom the public makes no other provision, and whom the school authorities have neither legal nor moral right to exclude from

the school. The boy of whom I have just been speaking, represents only one class of those whose right to be in the high school teachers sometimes question because of the seemingly little they accomplish. But, on the other hand, who knows what high school student receives the greatest good from the high school?

I must say one word more about this teacher and the boy before leaving them. You have sometimes seen little boys playing when one would accidentally hurt another, and then, with tears in his eyes, the injured boy would say, "It don't hurt very bad; he didn't *mean* to do it." The fact that his friend "*didn't mean* to do it" takes away all bitterness and calls up the courageous spirit. Had this teacher fully appreciated that the boy was not responsible for his lack of power in the preparation of his lessons, she would have had a different feeling toward the boy and, as a result, would have been much happier. The nervous energy spent in worrying over what could not be helped, would have been saved for pushing forward the work of the class, and the boy, as well as the other members of the class, would have been better taught.

A short time ago I called the attention of one of our leading physicians to a girl in one of our third grades. She was not an imbecile, but while only twelve years of age, with the intellect of a child, she had the body of a girl of fifteen or sixteen years of age, and weighed about one hundred sixty pounds.

After seeing the girl, he said: "There is something wrong with her thyroid gland. There is too great physical growth. Doubtless with proper treatment, she could be greatly helped."

We are told that help could be given many of these arrested and abnormal cases by proper medical treat-

ment, but that all the causes that bring arrested development or other abnormalities are not fully understood, even by the best posted of the medical fraternity; that the functions of certain glands in the economy of the body are known only to a limited extent; that at the present time much study is being given to the work of these glands that may throw a flood of light on many of the problems of physical and mental development. As the medical fraternity's field of knowledge is extended, greater help will come to the teachers, for the work of the teacher is very largely dependent upon the condition of the physical body of the child or youth. The teacher must look to the skilled physician for information concerning the youth's physical condition.

I have no doubt that many of the hindrances that the teacher meets in his work are deep-seated in the physical body.

I have spoken of a more fundamental physical change at this time, a change on which all other changes seem to be attendant. "This is the great change that takes place in certain centers of the nervous system and in certain glands at this period of life. Brain centers that until now have had a very little part to play in life, for a time become very active. The sex element in the scholar's life up to now has been largely a sealed book to him. I say largely, speaking cautiously, for long before this the dawn of the awakening of the sex instinct has come to many. But now Nature is opening wide the book within the walls of his own being." The scholar does not always understand the reading. But I'm not speaking of what of themselves should be taught scholars. That is another subject.

The wonderfully constructed nervous system is uniquely responsive to the sex instinct, and at this period

the development of the nervous system seems peculiarly affected by this instinct. "The perfecting of the nervous system in its relation to the organs of reproduction is the greatest accomplishment of the physical body at this period of life."

As the nervous system is also the seat of the emotions, and of thought, we can see how closely the thought and the emotions of youth would center around the sex idea. One noted writer says that for a time at this period of life, two-thirds of the thinking is centered on the subject of sex.

The mental life of scholars of this age, including both the intellectual and the emotional life, is a story of marvelous interest. "We stand in admiration in the presence of the young man who has just come into full possession of a physically perfect manhood, whose physical strength and beauty words fail to describe; the charm of whose being holds us spellbound; yet, the changes a few years have wrought in his physical body at this period are not greater than his mental and spiritual transformation of the same years; and the resulting mental and spiritual strength and beauty often tower transcendently over the physical, or as sometimes happens, all mental and spiritual strength and beauty seem to be lost or buried under a flood of gross and sensual thoughts."

Quoting again: "It is a time when the very fountains of the emotions seem to be let loose and the newly-awakened passions often sweep like a whirlwind over the boy, almost breaking him from his moorings of mental sanity. Reason in many cases has not yet asserted her sway; she is often tardy in coming to the rescue."

“Today and tomorrow no longer occupy all his thoughts. Life begins to open up with a new meaning. He feels and sees himself as a part of society, destined to take his place in the great active, thronging field of life. Cause and effect begin to link themselves together and everything appears to him with a question as to their relation to everything else.”

Still again: “This opening up to him of great vistas, this looking for the first time into the future, his future with no experience in the past that enables him to see how to meet it, produces in many a boy feelings of uncertainty and self-mistrust; while at the same time his rapidly lengthening limbs and swelling muscles are not perfectly under control, his hands and arms are in his way, and the muscles of his legs are unable to handle his feet with ease. Do you wonder that a feeling of uncertainty is seen in all that he does? He is ill at ease with himself and so self-conscious that he is ill at ease with others. He hesitates to meet strangers and when compelled to meet them is painfully bashful. Sometimes this is just reversed, the boy instead of being self-conscious and bashful, is anxious to show off, to be smart even to an offensive degree. Whichever it may be, the type is but the result of the physical and the accompanying mental changes incident to adolescence.

Ben M. completed his eighth grade and entered the high school when thirteen years of age. He was a boy of good mental parts, not brilliant, but had the gift of persistent work so that he always ranked high in his studies. He was merely a boy in his friendships and in his play up to the beginning of his second year in the high school when a change came over him and he sought older boys for his friends: he became self-conscious and giggly, so giggly that he was annoying to one of his

teachers whose nerves were quite on edge. He had never been a boy to interrupt or disturb school in any way, nor did he now wish to be annoying, but his nervously disturbed condition caused him to blush and giggle wherever he might be. One day his teacher in English said to me that Ben's written English was excellent, but that his monthly report was low in English because he had failed to recite orally before the class and that he never more than began his oral themes.

Shortly after talking with his teacher, I was passing by the manual training shop where Ben happened to be working. I asked permission of the shop teacher to speak with Ben. Ben stepped into the corridor to see me. I greeted him pleasantly so as to put him at ease. We were close friends. Then I asked about his English saying: "What is the trouble with your oral English, Ben? You have always stood high in English." He blushed and hesitatingly said: "I'm too bashful, I can't stand up before the class and talk." And then he giggled.

I replied: "All right, Ben, do your best, you'll soon get over your bashfulness," and left him to his work in the shop.

In the same class with him was a boy of the smart type, anxious to show off. He did brilliant work in his English, especially his oral English. It gave him an opportunity to "shine" and he thoroughly enjoyed it.

But I remember one occasion, not in English, when his smartness brought confusion. On this occasion at the noon intermission he called at the principal's office and asked the principal to excuse him that afternoon at 2:30 as he had to have some work done on a tooth and the dentist had set the time at 2:30 p. m. saying he could not give him a later hour. Such things sometimes hap-

pened, but it was the principal's habit always to call up the dentist to see if a later hour could not be arranged. So when this boy made his request, the principal very naturally asked: "Who is your dentist?" The boy replied: "Dr. Mc——."

"What?" said the principal. "Dr. Mc—— has been in France with the army for the past six months. Don't you ever again ask me to excuse you. Pass to your work." He passed.

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Daniel was under my supervision from his entering the first primary to the close of his Junior year in the high school. There was never a time in his school life when he did not rank at the very front in scholarship; and in conduct always made the heart of a teacher glad.

At the middle of the seventh grade he became exceedingly nervous. He was then in his thirteenth year. He was so nervous that any attempt at oral work caused him to break down in a flood of tears. As soon as the situation was understood by the teacher, he was excused from all oral work. Written work either on paper or before the school on the blackboard he did with no embarrassment.

Before the seventh grade year closed, on the advice of the family physician, he was taken out of school that he might live outdoors. This seemed to do him great good so that at the opening of school the following September he was able to take his place in school and, having made up what he had missed of the seventh grade work, was passed into the eighth grade.

For a time all went well, then the nervousness began to annoy him again. He was excused again from all oral work. This prolonged his stay in school but finally

his physician said that he must have outdoor freedom. He remained out of school all the latter part of the eighth grade year but at the close of the year, he was well up with all the eighth grade work and so was promoted to the high school. These two years he had grown in height quite rapidly but otherwise showed little evidence of the changes of puberty. The first two years in the high school were but a continuation of his condition in the seventh and the eighth grades. His scholarship was fine, but at times he was so nervous that he was excused from all oral work, and was given the privilege of being out of school whenever his physician so advised.

At the opening of his third year in high school, the changes of pubescence were pretty fully accomplished. His body was tall and erect, his muscles finely rounded out; his voice had taken on a heavier quality, he was deeply interested in all the social activities of his class; and welcomed appointments on committees that he might help direct affairs. His timidity was now largely a thing of the past. He could recite orally with the best and was regular in school to the close of the year. He was now quite strong physically as well as mentally and of unusually fine appearance.

All the way through these five years his parents were in close touch with the school. They were at times very deeply concerned for fear all might not be well in the end, but his physician said that while the changes came slowly and with an extremely nervous condition, still with patience and care, he would arrive at early manhood in a good state both physically and mentally. In his case, five years were taken for the accomplishment of changes that often require but a few months.

“The activity of the organs which connect the individual with the race is accompanied by powers and



instincts which affect his mental life in all its various aspects and mark the beginning of a new life, intellectually, emotionally, and morally. At puberty the differences between the individuals as well as the differences between the two sexes become marked and characteristic. Plays and pastimes of childhood lose their attractiveness. With the child, life is all play and fairy-tales, and learning the external properties of things; with youth it is bodily exercises, exercises of a more systematic sort, novels of the real world, boon fellowship and song, friendship and love, nature and travel and adventure, science and philosophy."

"There is at puberty a great increase in vitality and energy. This is manifest in the increased power to resist disease, by great mental activity and the like. The great evolution of energy and the corresponding influx of emotional vitality may objectify itself in many different ways. With some it may result in merely greater physical activity; with others, it gives an impulse to intellectual work; with still others it leads to social and altruistic activity: A love affair, poetry, religion, political fanaticism, bizarre actions, general perversity and insanity, are all possible outlets. The whole subject is most complicated. It involves the most profound questions of life and heredity. What the phenomena in any particular case may be depends largely upon one's health, education, inherited tendencies, temperament and the like."

At the close of pubescence, or shortly before, the philosophy of all things makes tremendous appeal to youth. The mind is occupied with the why and wherefore of all things as never before. Great mental power seems to be let loose and to occupy itself with the very fundamentals of life.

One writer who has made extensive investigations tells us that a good part of the world's work along philosophical lines has been done by men scarcely beyond the later adolescent years.

The unsettled state of the world since the beginning of the Great World War has greatly stimulated the study of the economic and the social problems of the world by high school scholars of certain groups among the more mature scholars. Books, magazines and newspapers are watched from day to day and everything bearing on the economic and the social questions of the day is read with avidity.

Most of the thinking of these scholars of high school age aroused by this extensive reading on these subjects, seems to have a wholesome trend; but in a few instances the streams of thought seem to be polluted by the reading of books of a radical character, books and articles against all existing forms of government. Only by being near the thought of these scholars can one realize how now and then some bright, erratic scholar for a time, at least, is carried away by reading the writings of radicals.

Generally where scholars seem to be sympathizing with the anarchistic doctrines of these radical writers, it is only the outcropping in these boys of the adolescent desire to be conspicuous, to attract attention by advocating the things that astound their associates and friends.

As the adolescent craving for notoriety fades out the scholar of this type usually comes back to sane feeling and thinking on all the disturbing problems of the day, and to unbounded loyalty to his own government and country.

Warren N. was a beautiful boy in the grammar grades, with an expressive face that would attract attention in any school. All his teachers spoke in high praise of him, although in the eighth grade, I can see the teacher smile as she said it, "Warren is a dear boy, so bright and so attractive, but just now he likes to show off to attract attention."

In the high school the first two years he did fairly good work, but never stood in the highest rank. One teacher to whom he looked for guidance and real friendship more than to any other, became very greatly interested in him. One day in talking with me of him she said that he *could* make a high record in his work if he *would*, but that he had said he did not care to make high grades; that all he cared for was to have good grades in school and plenty of time for outside reading. This was his aim at that time, a fair record in his school studies and plenty of time for reading. Another day this same teacher said to me that she did not think Warren was reading the *kind* of literature he should read. "Why," said she, "he is reading and filling his mind full of the worst of radical and anarchistic doctrines and persists in trying to thrust them on one when one engages him in conversation. You know how bright, happy-spirited and interesting he has always been, but now he is losing all that and is sour, and critical of everything in this country that we hold good."

One evening a short time after this conversation, Warren called at my home to talk over some school affair in which he was to have a part. He needed assistance in some way. I gave it.

He visited with me for quite a little while; told me what he had been reading and what he thought of it. He had read so carefully that he could almost repeat

the words of the writers; I could see, too, that when he spoke of the theories he was reading, he was committing himself to the better things set forth by the writer.

I studied him carefully while he talked, believing that it was only another case of an adolescent seeking the unusual, the unpopular, for the sake of attracting attention; that his state of mind would not be lasting.

I entered into no discussion with him, but seemingly paid no attention to what he was saying of his reading, and his thinking. I did not wish to cause him to feel that I was at all concerned about what he was reading.

When the United States entered the World War and our body of high school scholars was aflame with patriotism, Warren came near bringing the ill-will of the whole school on himself by making some remarks that were considered unpatriotic. The principal of the high school very frankly told him that his words and conversation must be above criticism from the patriotic standpoint or the consequences would be bad for him. Nothing more was heard from him.

A year later he offered his services to his country to fight in France. The last I heard from him everything indicated that he had given up his wild, anarchistic views.

But there is always danger at the time the scholar's thinking is dominated by these anarchistic thoughts and feelings, that some unfortunate happening or influence may so fasten their hold on him as to place him forever after with the anarchistically inclined.

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As many specialists tell us and my own observations confirm it, there is a great increase in emotional and intellectual power at the close of puberty, a power that continues to grow for a number of years or until full

maturity. Still even here, Nature holds true to her liking for variety by giving us youth who experience no intellectual awakening at this period of life nor ever after. Many boys and girls strong in the memory work and the elementary thinking of the elementary schools or lower grades, fail to develop power to do the more scientific work or thinking called for in the high school.

Here are two families of children who were under my supervision in the elementary school and in the high school. Both families were of the best class of people in the community.

The children from one home, as they came up through the elementary grades, one by one, were of the class that the ordinary teacher calls perfect in their work. In all the mechanics of the elementary grades, perfect, and in the comparatively simple thinking of these grades, excellent; but when these same scholars entered the high school, they began to show a lack of intellectual grip on the subjects. Not that they failed to apply themselves, for there was no shortage of effort, sustained effort, even to the close of the senior year in the high school. Each year in the high school their work was weaker and weaker, their senior year being their poorest, not much above passing. They were fine young people, but with no intellectual grasp of high school subjects.

The children from the other family were just as industrious school-workers, but at the start, they seemed actually dull. As they moved along through the lower grades they were the slowest of plodders, painfully heavy, and slow of comprehension. But at the close of each year, they had gathered something. The teachers always debated whether or not to promote them but finally said: "Possibly they know enough to do the next grade as well as they have done this, and they

might be discouraged and do nothing if we hold them, so we will pass them 'by grace,' whatever that may mean. But after entering the high school, we were all surprised at them. Even their classmates in an amazed way gave them attention. They were so evidently growing in intellectual power that no one could fail to see it. Year by year they showed increased power; their senior year was the best of all.

When they graduated, they had the high school foundation and the intellectual power to do good university work.

The youth from the one family failed to respond to the awakening intellectual impulse of puberty, while the youth from the other home seemed to receive endowment of intellectual power.

"Up to the change of puberty, all life is objective, now it becomes largely subjective and when this is extreme, melancholia sometimes darkens the mind. The boy is often given to musing, wishes to be alone, holds himself aloof from friends except those of his own choosing, and usually of his own age. It is the period of life when inherited tendencies crop out and the unexpected often comes to the surface, the time when many wild schemes pass and re-pass before the mind, and if not fixed, then leave it to return no more." Says one writer: "The greatest danger is that the sexual element of body and soul will be developed disproportionately. Indeed early physical maturity is in this respect in itself bad. If it occurs before other compensating and controlling powers are unfolded, it is then more likely to be uninstructed and to suck up all that is vile in the environment."

"The advent of puberty when normally reached, has generally something of the mysterious and unknown for

the individual; and the newly-awakened sensations put to test the balance and self-control of the healthiest and best-instructed natures; but sexual maturity when hastened by reading bad literature, a perverted imagination, bad companionship, or by whatever causes, may have disastrous results which can hardly be estimated." Specialists tell us that it is the first really dangerous period in the life of both sexes as regards insanity, though not so dangerous as a few years later.

## CHAPTER IV

### RELIGIOUS AWAKENING

Says one writer: "In Christian nations, youth is the age when the greatest number of conversions occur; it is the time in life when in the Roman Catholic and the Lutheran Churches, the children are confirmed; and there is a psychological reason for these things. The mind newly awakened to a broader and deeper life reaches out after that which it hopes will satisfy this craving, restless sense, or state of being. It is brought face to face with the problem of life and death at a time when it looks at it as never before."

"At no other time in life is there the same possibility of pressing home religious truths. The very unsettled state of the youth's mental and physical natures makes him meditate on the deep problems of life, God and eternity. It is the period when questionings come, come unbidden, and active Christian work is recommended as the surest help to tide over this uncertain period. But the questioning, even to the very foundations of his belief still goes on, and is, if rightly directed, but one means of growth, of widening and strengthening his faith. Up to this time, his has been the faith of a child in the words of home friends whom he trusted; now it is a faith based in a firm conviction that the evidences of the Divine are sufficient to justify it. Sometimes the questioning leads to a loss of all faith, to a doubter, a skeptic."

One writer says that the flood of emotional life often finds its outlet in singing with fervor religious songs and in putting life and interest into the religious work ordinarily given over to young peoples' societies in Protest-



ant churches. How true this statement is all of us know. Nor do the churches overestimate the religious character-shaping value of this work. Those who have most carefully studied the religious training of youth tell us that active Christian work at this time of life is the surest way of tiding over this period of religious questioning; and that the religious impressions made at this time of life are more likely to be lasting than those made at any other time. Not only in young peoples' societies do many of the Protestant churches provide for the religious training at this, the young peoples' period of deepest religious awakening and thought, but in almost all the services of the churches provision is made to give them a part that habits of right religious thinking and of religious work may be formed. All of us who teach know how when the revival services are in progress in our communities, the various churches call on their young people to help with the singing, to be on hand to help the interest with their presence. Take the young people out of these meetings, the singing, the life, the religious feeling in the community,—all suffer. It is the doing right religious thinking and work at this period of youth that fixes religious habits that in the end mean religious character.

I have an elderly friend, some eighty years of age, cultured and keen of intellect, a man who by honorable means has amassed wealth, a man full of good qualities, but not a happy man. His years are growing few and he knows it. Not long ago, he said to me that nothing religious appealed to him; that while he tried to attend some church service regularly and for years had made it a part of his life to attend each church in the community, a part of the time, still nothing in any of the services appealed to him and that he had no faith in any

religion. And after standing thoughtful for a few minutes, with his eyes cast down, he looked up, and full of feeling said: "Somewhere in my early life, I was turned wrong in my religious thinking, and I have never been able to get turned about." I wonder if away back when life was young and the questions came at the unfolding of youth, if someone, or some influence, did not give a wrong trend to his thinking that has made him unhappy to the end?

In the Catholic church, great care is given to the religious education and training of the youth. As one writer whom I have quoted says, it is the time in the Catholic churches when the children are confirmed. This church recognizes the vital importance of proper care of the religious interests of her young people at this character-forming time of life, and makes much of it.

The following bit of personal experience, given me by a former boy among my school friends who is now a man, is in perfect keeping with the statements just made: As a boy, he grew up in a Christian home, with Christian parents, and at the age of thirteen, united with the church of his parents. He was happy and contented in his Christian life until about his sixteenth year when one night at a revival service, the preacher spoke at length of infidels and skeptics, those who do not believe the Word of God, who call the Bible a book of cunningly-devised fables. All at once, the boy was deeply disturbed by questions as to the possibility of the infidels' being right. It frightened him; he had taken his parents' word for it that the Bible is God's Word; could it be that they were mistaken; could it be that they had been deceived? How could he know for a certainty that the Bible is God's Word to man? Who could tell him,

how could he discover the truth? These questions came to him with great force—he was distressed, and yet he felt afraid to say anything to anyone or to ask questions. He attended church regularly, and listened eagerly to all the preacher said; but there was all the time the question, “Is what he says true?” presenting itself to him and giving him no peace of mind. He read every religious book he could get hold of to see if it presented convincing arguments; but for the greater part of a year, he was religiously in a disturbed state of mind. Finally, one evening at a religious meeting, an elderly man, in whose knowledge and wisdom the boy had great confidence, in speaking said that he had that day been talking with a young woman who was passing through a season of questioning and doubt, and who was, as a result, in a very unhappy frame of mind; that he had told her, in trying to help her, that almost all young people who become strong in their religious convictions, pass through somewhat similar experiences; that it is a process of growth in religious life; and that the earnest inquiry for a wider knowledge of the evidences that the Bible is God’s revealed Word, would bring a broader faith and would lead to a stronger Christian character; that he, in his life-time, had known many young people to pass through the same period of doubting and questioning; and that he thought all who became established in a religious faith, other than the simple faith of childhood, based wholly on the words of loving friends, had had, to some extent, a period of honest questioning and doubt. The boy had often heard of infidels and skeptics, but never until his sixteenth year did his hearing that men did not believe the Bible suggest to him to doubt the Bible. After he heard this old man’s talk, the boy’s load dropped from off him. If others had so questioned

the grounds of their religious belief and had become stronger thereby; if to others, probably to most all others, this questioning had come as a means of growth to cause them to study and know why they believed, so it would be to him. He would hold on to his faith and learn more and more of the grounds for it. He read extensively of religious writings for a boy of his age, and learned many of the reasons for belief in the Bible as God's Word. He is today strong in his Christian faith and religious thought, and looks back to his awakening at sixteen as the time when he first formed a taste for this line of investigation. The old gentleman who so wisely gave trend to the boy's thinking was not a psychologist, but he had been a close observer and student of the growth of religious faith in young people. His statements are in perfect accord with the words of special students of this subject today.

One other illustration: A number of years ago we had in our high school where I was then superintendent, a handsome lad of sixteen years, an excellent student, and so honest and upright in everything that he held the perfect confidence of all of his teachers. One day, very much to the surprise of his teacher in Biology, he asked if it would be possible for him to drop the subject of Zoology, saying that he thought it would be necessary for him to give up the study. The teacher asked him not to think of giving it up as he was doing good work and making a fine standing in the subject; but referred him to the high school principal for a decision. Before the principal had been called upon to consider the advisability of the boy's dropping Zoology, I happened to meet the father of the boy on the street, a very intelligent man and a most devoted and interested father. He explained, as the boy could not, why the boy wished

to drop his Zoology. The father said that the boy was passing through a very trying religious experience and was deeply disturbed; that in his school work, he had come to the theory of evolution for the first time, and that he was greatly worried as he was unable to reconcile it with his way of interpreting the Bible; and he (the boy) was sure if he continued to study Zoology as presented by the book from the evolution point of view, he would lose "his religion"; that the boy had reached the point where it disturbed him to the extent that he could not sleep; that his parents were greatly concerned for the boy's welfare.

In order that I might first see how serious a matter it was to the boy, the father gave me a little history of the boy's religious life for the several months just preceding our interview—a history known only to the boy, his mother in whom he confided, and the father. The boy was a member of the church of his parents in which he had been reared; but a few months before he had become concerned about the doctrines presented by his church and had become convinced, as he thought, that there might be some other church, whose doctrines would better meet his views. He had read up the church doctrines of every church in the community, and from time to time thought that this church or that church was the one where he would be most in accord. His parents had not interfered but had kept close in their sympathy with him. They were very anxious that he pass through this phase of religious experience without a wrong bias from any source.

The parents had no fault to find with the teacher in the high school or his teachings, but felt that it was unwise for the boy, in his state of mind, to continue a subject that was causing him so much unrest.

As soon as the father had explained the boy's condition, I gladly granted the boy the privilege of dropping out of the class. I granted him the privilege of dropping Zoology and taking up another subject in its place, believing it unwise, in fact, poor pedagogy, to attempt to force the subject on the boy in his religiously unsettled state of mind, knowing full well that a little later, when he had come to a more settled feeling in regard to his religious life, to a more mature judgment concerning things religious, he would, in all probability, be able to study the subject from the evolutionist's point of view and see in it only God's plan of creation. As the father said, the boy could not give his teacher a reason for not continuing the study, for he did not wish his teacher to know how he was feeling. I immediately spoke to the principal and as soon as he heard, he understood, and permitted the boy to take another subject in place of Zoology.

The boy finally became settled in his religious convictions and is today one of the finest of men, a strong Christian character.

I wish to add one word to what I have said of the boy that no one may think the teacher at fault. The teacher was a fine teacher and a devout Christian and presented evolution as a possible plan of creation; as God's way of bringing these things into existence.

## CHAPTER V

### MILD TYPES, DEMONSTRATIVE TYPES, DISCUSSED—

As I said in the case of Harry G—— given in Chapter II, we have the milder types as well as the more demonstrative ones, the types that seem to glide unconsciously from childhood into youth and from youth into early manhood or womanhood. In them, emotional life swells like a gently-rising stream that keeps well within its banks as it rises and rises until it is channel-wide, and channel-deep, carrying its vast volume of water, with safety to its bordering country, on to its destination.

In the extremely impulsive, demonstrative boys and girls, the new emotional life often comes in successive flood-waves of impulses that know no bounds. Just as in the rising water of some streams, one torrential flood-wave after another rolls down, flooding the banks, breaking across fields, and if not carefully guarded, causing ruin and destruction everywhere.

But shall we call the quiet boy more normal in his development than the boy of a more impulsive, demonstrative type? “The boy who is easily swayed by his emotions or by every passing wave of influence?” He has one wild scheme today and a dozen new ones tomorrow. He is for a time unstable in all he does. With many boys of this type, their friends are greatly concerned; and well they may be, for sometimes wrong influences brought to bear on a boy at this time turn the current of his life to an evil end; while right ideals strongly implanted are a mighty force in the accomplishment of a noble life.

A mother of two of our schoolboys, a year's difference in their ages, once said to me that she feared greatly for her impulsive, emotional, easily-influenced boy, while for her steady boy, moving with the regularity of clock-work, she had no fears. Personally, for this emotional, impulsive boy, I had but little concern, for while for two years he had been passing through the most critical period of his life, all the time, he had kept before himself certain high ideals to which we could appeal, ideals that held him with a grip. While from time to time he had been swayed a little by some passing craze, his ideals soon lined him up again.

Most of us, especially teachers, are inclined to consider the milder, more quiet types the more normal; but I doubt it. Sometimes the great flood of emotional life finds its outlet in doing wild, strikingly daring things to attract attention, and the boys often for a time are unreliable in every relation; but where there has been good early training and good boyhood habits have been established, if no strong, shaping influence moves them too far from the right, as the later, not the latest, years of adolescence come, for this happens usually during high school life, the lines of good conduct of the earlier years begin again to take the lead, the objectionable characteristics fade out, and a good life follows.

Once in a while it happens that some quiet boy, a boy of the milder type, is seized by a sudden impulse to do something striking that he may be the recipient of a little hero-worship; that he may stand in the "lime light."

One day a number of years ago the high school principal and I were accidentally given word that some boy or boys would enter the high school that night to do



some "lime light work." We accordingly placed a night watchman in the building.

A word about the building will help to understand what follows. After entering the front door at the high school there were twelve or fourteen steps up to the first floor. On reaching the top of the stairs, the railing turns directly to the left, extending twelve feet, to the principal's office door.

The night watchman seated himself on a chair at the head of the stairs just at the turn to the left toward the principal's office door. The night was extremely dark, without, and Egyptian darkness reigned within. As he looked at the glass in the door, it being more densely dark within than without, he could see anyone coming in at the door while no one coming in looking toward the dead darkness of the building could see him.

It was about ten o'clock p. m., everything deathly still, when two boys came to the front door, unlocked it, and opened it. One boy stood outside the door, the other very stealthily crept up the stairs and turning toward the principal's door, feeling his way, placed his hands on the shoulders of the night watchman. With never a word on his part, silently, suddenly, the night watchman rose to his feet. The boy jumped straight up into the air, and as his feet came down to the floor, he gave forth a succession of unearthly, frightened yells, and with one leap, cleared the stairs, bolted out the front door, down the street, yelling at the top of his voice. At the first yell from the boy inside, the boy outside gave a piercing yell of horror, and started down street at breakneck speed.

The night watchman said that when the boy jumped into the air and came down giving forth such unearthly

yells, he himself was so startled that he could feel his hair stand straight out from his head.

The boy, in his leap down the stairs, lost his hat, which was picked up the next morning. By means of the hat we identified the boy, a boy who had always been of the milder type. The principal and I decided that his punishment had been sufficient, almost more than he was able to stand. We kept his hat at the office for many weeks, but he never called for it. And we kept his secret, too, not even mentioning it.

James Henry S—— stood head and shoulders in scholarship above all others of his class in the seventh and the eighth grades, and during these two years in his deportment, he was without fault. His teachers and his classmates had for him the highest respect, and his principal would often remark that James Henry would be a star scholar in the high school and a leader in everything that stood for what was best in the school.

He entered the high school at thirteen and one-half years of age, and while healthy and strong, physically, still the changes of puberty were only beginning to manifest themselves, and he was taking on a timidity or self-consciousness that made him wholly unlike the boy he had been in the eighth grade. A leader in every school affair in the eighth grade, in the high school he was too self-conscious to wish to be noticed. However, the first two years, he held his scholarship record high, but the third year his scholarship fell very low, in some studies he even failed to pass. Teachers and home friends alike were greatly concerned, fearing he might lose out entirely, so they left nothing undone that could possibly be done to keep him from failing. With them, it was a question of helping him to hold on to his school work until he should come to himself again when they

felt he would be as deeply interested as he had ever been.

One day, when his home folks were talking with him, they asked him why he would not at least *try* to make a good standing in his studies.

He replied: "I don't intend to make any more high grades, and I'll tell you why. I made almost perfect grades and was such a model in deportment for so long a time that everybody thinks I'm a sissy. I'm none of your sissy boys, and you'll know it, too."

His senior year was just as unsatisfactory as his junior year had been, and it was only by a small margin that he passed for graduation.

After graduating from high school, he entered college, and here came to himself again, and was counted a brilliant student in all his college work, a man of fine mind.

Possibly I should add that in conduct during his high school junior and senior years, he never failed to be an agreeable gentleman, just as agreeable when leaving his work undone, as though he were doing his teacher a great favor.

## CHAPTER VI

### ROSEATE DREAMS, DREAMS DAUBED WITH BLUE—THE DREAMERS

We are told that many of these characteristics of youth, intellectual and emotional, are of fleeting character if not fixed by some unfortunate influence; that this is the time in life when inherited tendencies crop out and for a time seem to control the whole life; that many of these tendencies too are of fleeting character if not fixed by strong influences at this time.

This is the time when the boy dreams dreams and has visions. Visions of leadership, of great success in the business-world, of wonderful things he can so easily accomplish; visions that make him exuberantly happy, or as sometimes happens, visions of possible failure that depress to a state of despondency where he needs the touch of an assuring friend.

This is the time when dreams of unbounded business success cause many a boy to drop out of school. I'm not sure which is the worse for the boy, the vision of a business life painted in too roseate hues, or the one that is more or less daubed over with splotches of blue.

David R—— was from a home of culture and refinement, but not of wealth. He was a bright and unusually attractive boy, and a fair student. At the close of his second year in the high school, he made known his plans to leave high school and take a place as an office boy with one of our leading business firms. We teachers were all surprised. We had never thought of his not completing a high school course.

He came into my office to tell me of his plans, and when he talked with me, I saw that he had been dream-

ing dreams and having visions and that his visions were all lighted up with roseate hues. One of his friends in the firm had told him that the last two years of the high school meant nothing to him, that the thing for him to do was to get into business.

I put forth the arguments that stand clear-cut in favor of a well-rounded, general education for business men; but he had seen a vision and it beckoned him on. I finally said: "David, some day your advancement in life may be blocked by your lack of the two years of high school education you are casting aside." David entered business life.

After he had been out of school four years, we had another business talk. Almost the first thing he said was: "Mr. Stableton, your fears were well founded. An offer of a position has come to me that I would like very much to accept, but I cannot. The one who accepts this position must hold a high school certificate of graduation. I made a great mistake.

\* \* \* \* \*

George M—— made an ordinary record in his elementary school work, and entered the high school at about 14 years of age. During the first two years he developed rapidly, both physically and mentally. In shorthand, typing, and bookkeeping, he made excellent progress. The first half of his third year, he began to make excuses for staying out of school. Day after day he was absent on some trivial excuse until finally his teacher in typing had a heart-to-heart talk with him about himself and his work. He was the ablest student in typing and shorthand in the high school at this time. Miss N—— was confident he would be able to fill one of the best openings in the city if we could only hold him to complete his high school course. But his third

year she was deeply concerned about him. After her heart-to-heart talk with him, she came to me to report what she had learned, and to counsel with me as to how we could help him.

She said to me: "Mr. Stableton, I can tell you what ails George N——, he's having the blues. My, but he's downhearted! Why, he says no one cares for him, so he doesn't care whether he goes on with his school work or not; that he doesn't believe the future has much for him anyway." "Now, Mr. Stableton," she said, we've *got to do* something for him, we *must*. It won't do to lose him. Can't you suggest something? You will *help*. I *know* you *will*."

"Yes, *I will help*," I replied, "and we'll save the boy or it will not be our fault if he is lost."

It was always a pleasure to see this teacher in her personal work holding students up to the best that was in them. She was uncompromising and almost severe in demanding the best in class work, but back of this was a personal devotion to the best interest of each one, a devotion that knew no limit to the sacrifices she would make that she might be helpful. The students knew this, and gave her the heartfelt respect always accorded a really great teacher.

After talking the matter over, we decided to ask a number of the teachers especially given to personal work, to take notice of George; to make a point of accidentally engaging him in conversation whenever opportunity offered, or rather when they could make opportunity. I promised to do my part.

The fact was, that George had always been a little retiring in his manner, always prepared in his work, and so consistent in his deportment that I really think all of us had unconsciously come to consider him as one

always right and so had failed to realize that he needed attention.

Our plan succeeded. A number of the teachers and students helped us and we took away the very root of his blues. Of course, we helped, but his own development, after a time, did much to bring him to a less depressed state of mind, to a more hopeful look-a-head.

George graduated from the high school and has since made an unusual success as a young business man.

But I never think of him without thinking of that talented and ever-watchful teacher who helped to keep up the courage not only of George, but of other scholars, when the seasons of depression came.

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Herman L—— graduated from the eighth grade, entered the high school, and at the close of his second year in high school, dropped out of school as he said, "to earn money." All was done that could be done to hold him in school. His home people, his teachers, his superintendent, all tried in every way possible to prevail on him to continue in school, but he would go to work.

Herman was from a home of high standing; his home training was of the best. He was possessed of good mental ability, and was a handsome lad, fifteen years of age when he left us.

At first, he worked at odd jobs, but finally drifted into the draughting-room of a prominent architect. Here he became, for a time, at least, a fixture. He "fell in love" with draughting work. This led him to do some good thinking about himself and for himself.

One day three years after his leaving school, he asked me over the 'phone if he might call at my home that

evening for a little talk with me. The favor was granted.

When he called on me that evening, he unbosomed himself to me, telling me all his plans. First of all, he told me how greatly he enjoyed the draughting work and everything connected with the work of an architect; that he had decided to be an architect, and that to be the kind of an architect he hoped to be, he must graduate from the course in architecture at our State University; that for a year he had been carrying on a correspondence course in architecture by giving his evenings to the work; but that the time had come when he must plan to make up his shortage in high school work to be able to enter the University; that my interest in him made him feel he could come to me to direct him; that he must make up the work and that nothing should prevent his doing it.

After listening with deep interest to his recital concerning himself I said: "That's *splendid*, Herman, of course I'll help you. I know how you can do it."

Herman replied, "It's not half so splendid as it would have been if I had listened to you three years ago and had gone on with my high school work."

However, we lost no time in lamenting over what might have been. Everything was right now and we must make the most of the time by planning his work so he could do it. So I asked him if he would object to reciting in high school classes with the younger scholars, saying that he could come into school for the recitation hour only, and return to his office work at the close, if he could be away from his office long enough each day to do this. But he replied that all his study and recitation work must be done after working hours, as he was on a good salary now, and must put in full time, as the office was pushed with work.



I then arranged for him to see one of our high school teachers of history, and one of mathematics, to take private lessons in General History with the teacher of history, and Algebra with the teacher of mathematics. He was to pay them the regular prices for such work. A word of explanation is in place here. Ordinarily, high school teachers were not supposed to give private lessons except by arrangement with the high school principal or superintendent. When lessons were so arranged and the scholar had been a high school scholar, the teacher's grade for the work was accepted on the high school credit or grade record.

For two years, he carried on his work under the instruction of high school teachers whom the high school principal or the superintendent selected, and did good work. The third year, he gave up his office work to devote himself wholly to his lessons. On my advice, he entered the Illinois Wesleyan University, taking work that would be accredited in his Freshman year at the Illinois State University, while under a private teacher he cleared up his last study for entrance at the University of Illinois. He finally graduated from the course in architecture at the U. of I. and is today a young man of ability in his chosen line of work.

I'm not able to say whether or not he lost by dropping out of school when he did. Possibly he fell into better hands for him than we teachers proved to be at that time in his life. The difficult thing for him and for many who drop out of school before appreciating what an education means, is how to get back into school work again when the hour of appreciation comes.

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Allison G—— left school at the close of the seventh grade and was given work in one of the dry goods stores

of the city. After he had been in the employ of this firm for two years, I received a letter from the head of the firm stating that he had a boy working in the store who should have more education, and asking me if I could do anything for him. I called at the store the following morning to offer any help that was in my power. I asked the proprietor if it would be possible for the boy to come to the high school for recitation hours only, the remainder of his time to be given to work in the store, his lessons to be prepared of evenings?

He replied that he would be glad to give him the recitation hours on the plan suggested, but said: "You understand that the boy has not had the work of the eighth grade."

"Yes, I understand that," I replied, "but I'm thinking the two years of excellent training he has had with you, and the valuable service he has rendered you, indicate mental power to do high school work and, too, there will be inspiration to him in high school association that would not be found for him in eighth grade work."

Allison followed this plan two years, and made a good record in his work. He then accepted a position in Washington, D. C. After being there for a short time, he took work in Washington University, finally graduating from that institution. Later on, he received his doctor's degree from the University of Illinois, and is today a professor of Biology in one of our greatest municipal universities.

## CHAPTER VII

### ARE THEY WORTH OUR INTEREST?

My second year of teaching was as principal of the schools of Central City, Nebraska. One member of the Board of Education there, Dr. O. L. Barton, enlarged my horizon of the duty of a schoolman. Many an evening after school hours, and of Saturdays, I rode with him behind his broncho team, a grey and a black, as he made his calls at the homes in the surrounding rural district. As we would approach the house where we were to call for him to minister to the sick, he would say: "At this home there is a young man who should be in our school this year or next," as the case might be; at another home, "a young woman," and sometimes more than one young person. Then when we entered the home, he introduced me as the principal of "our" school, and explained what a wonderful opportunity the school, the high school, was offering to the young men and women of all that rural district, as well as to those of the town. He was so enthusiastic about the school, and so truly interested, that these people in the rural district should understand that the school meant great opportunities for their boys and girls, that he never failed to awaken an interest. While he healed the sick, he inspired parents with a burning desire to educate their boys and girls in the high school that was in process of being organized and developed.

Then as we rode along, the hoof-beat of the never-tiring ponies keeping time, he talked of what we could do in our school for these *our* young people. He had no selfish end in view. He was planning for the people, *his people*, because he was wiser in educational things

than they; planning how he could make our school one of the very best of its kind, and how we could draw all the young people into its classes.

I had thought schools, high schools, were for those who wished to take advantage of them, and that our duty extended only to those of the town and that those who lived beyond the limits of the town were of no concern to us. Of course, if any of them happened to come to our school, they would be treated as our own were treated; but never a thought had I that otherwise I owed them any consideration.

But here was a man so zealous in spreading the gospel of educational opportunity among all people that he never lost an opportunity to speak forth the good word. He made me think of "going into the by-ways and hedges and compelling them to come in," and he cared not whether they had on the "wedding garments," just so they came. He had a wider conception of the work of a school than had ever come to me. He believed the school should be an educational center, uplifting to the whole community, both the town and the surrounding rural district, drawing into its classes all possible young people that it might put into their lives something better than they had known, ideals that would shape them to nobler manhood and womanhood. I learned my lesson. It has stayed with me through all the years of my school teaching.

Some years ago, in visiting with a teacher in a classical school in an eastern city, he said: "We have no poor students in this school, all rank high in scholarship. We sometimes get in some poor ones, but we drive them out by piling on the work till they are glad to get out." Was he a teacher?

Not long ago in conversation with a teacher from one of the large high schools of a city in the Central West, he said: "I like my work in the large city school. The scholars come into my room for recitations; if they are prepared, all right; if not, I flunk them. At the hour for closing in the afternoon, I lock my door and go home, I don't have to know a single one of them nor care anything about them except their lessons in the recitation. Oh yes, I like the large city work, I would not go back to a high school in a small city for anything. I'm so perfectly free here."

And I thought to myself: "You are another Nichodemus—'Ye must be born again' before you are a teacher."

Another young man teaching in a large high school in the same great city as the last, said in answer to my question, "Do you like teaching in the large city high school?" replied: "Mr. Stableton, I like it for one reason, and one reason only, that is, I get better pay than I ever received in a smaller city; but I do not do so good work as I did in the smaller city because of the conditions in schools in a large city. I feel it a great loss that I have so little opportunity to know the scholars outside of the classroom, and none at all, I might say, outside of the school. Then too, I spend so much time on the street-cars going to and from school, time that in the town and in the small city, I gave to the scholars and so was helpful to them. I miss greatly the opportunity to know them and to know their home life, that I had in the smaller places."

I need not say that this man had the spirit of a teacher. Ever since my second year in school work, I have felt it a duty, a duty rising to the height of a privilege, to look up and bring into school every pos-

sible boy or girl physically and mentally fit to do some kind of school work.

Dan Pruitt finished the eighth grade and entered the high school at fifteen years of age. He was a boy with good physical development for his age, and graded with the better half of his class in scholarship. By the middle of his second year in the high school he had made an unusual record in the manual training shop. He was a most skillful workman and turned out pieces of work that were a wonder to the others in the shop. Naturally the manual training teacher took great pride in him, so was somewhat disturbed one morning, the second year Dan was in the high school, when word came to him that Dan and another boy had run away from home, and had told some of the other boys that they were going to New Orleans and get work there. Dan had drawn his own money from the bank, so he had money for the trip. There was no trouble of any kind at home. They just wanted to take a trip. The two boys had been dreaming dreams and having visions of the time they would have in New Orleans.

But they had only been there a few days when they learned that dreams of New Orleans are one thing, the city itself quite a different thing. Dan had money for his return trip; but his companion had not, so he wired his father for money for the home trip.

In due time, the two boys were home again, wiser and more sober than when they started southward. They returned to school, but were not able to make up all they had missed before the close of the semester. This left them each two studies short in the semester's work.

The following year, Dan did a good year's work in school. Soon after the close of this year, he entered the U. S. service and sailed for France. After two years in

the service of his country, at the close of the war, he came home. Soon after coming home, he called to see me. He now knew what he wished to follow as his life work, and to be able to do this, must either complete his high school course or take up the same work in some other kind of a school.

I proposed to him that he come back to us. I gave him a most cordial invitation to return to us. We talked the situation over and finally left it for him to consider for a few days before deciding. After due consideration he called at my office to tell me he would come back to high school to finish his course, and that he was coming back, notwithstanding he was older than the other scholars, because he felt we would be pleased to have him with us again.

When it came to arranging his studies, without thinking of what he had lost by his trip to New Orleans, I was selecting regular Junior work, but when we looked up his record, I found him short two studies, and asked: "How did that happen?"

He replied: "Don't you remember? They are what I lost by taking my trip to New Orleans." I remembered, and we both laughed.

He did splendid work for two years, and graduated one of the best scholars in his class.

Twice he was brought back into school through personal interest in him, first after his return from New Orleans, and again at the close of the war. He is a young man of real worth today.

\* \* \* \* \*

One day in the opening week of school in September several years ago, a mother and her boy called at my office to get a labor permit for the boy. The mother

was a Polish woman and could not speak English. While I was filling out the permit the mother and the boy carried on a conversation quite animated, of questions and answers. I could not understand a word but I could see that she was asking the boy to get information from me, so I finally asked him what it was that she wished to know.

He replied: "She wants to know how much it would cost for me to come to this school."

I replied: "Cost you to come to this school? It would not cost you anything but your books. Can't you come? We'd like to have you."

The boy held an eighth grade diploma from some parochial school so was eligible to enter high school.

He talked again with his mother and then said: "She wants to know if I could learn to be a clerk if I came to this school."

I explained to him that we could give him the opportunity to educate himself so he would be qualified to be a clerk, providing he would do the work given in the school. There was a manner about the boy that was very pleasing. I asked him if it would not be possible for him to come, saying I wished very much to have him in our school.

Another conversation between the boy and the mother, then he said: "We must talk with my father before I can tell you whether or not I can come to this school. I would like to come."

"Why can't your father come talk with me? I'd be pleased to talk with him," I said, "and I'm sure I could help him to see that you ought to come."

"My father is a coal-miner and works in the mine every forenoon but could see you some afternoon," he replied.



Two days later the father and the boy came to see me. After talking with the father explaining the school to him, I took him to the shorthand teacher and to the teacher of typing, to meet them. Each of these teachers explained the work to the father and answered his questions and made him feel that she would like to have his boy in class. Then we called on a teacher of English. She too made him feel that his boy was worth while.

After we returned to the office he said: "Jacob will enter your school Monday. He has promised to do some work for Mr. —— this week, but he will be here Monday."

The father spoke good English, and was a very intelligent man.

Monday morning Jacob was in his place with the intention of remaining in school two years taking for the greater part work in the commercial department.

He had been in school but a few months when two of his teachers said to me that Jacob was too fine a student to be permitted to drop out of school at the end of two years, that we must hold him for the full four years, and must begin at once to help him to see what it would mean to him to have the four years in school instead of two.

I knew that if any teachers in the school could inspire a boy to look forward to a full four-year course, to graduation from the high school, instead of two years of selected commercial work, these two teachers could do it. They were teachers of commercial branches, and knew the value of a four-year high school course to scholars looking forward to business or commercial life; they knew, too, how to put the value of the four-year course before their scholars in a way that made a strong appeal; and they saved many.

The fact that a number entered our high school each year to take selected work for two years mostly from the commercial courses, enabled these teachers to know as other teachers could not, who were entering for two years only. All the commercial teachers made it a part of their business to help, as much as possible, these two-year scholars to an appreciation of a better education than two years could give them.

Jacob, before the first year was passed, was planning his work on the basis of a four-year course. He was excellent everywhere. The last year he was in school he acted as helper to the librarian for which he received a small remuneration. A month before the close of that year, he was offered a trial position in the freight office of one of the railroads if he could have a certain number of hours off from school each day to do the work. The trial month would pay him sixty-five dollars. If he made good, his salary the next month would be over eighty dollars. We arranged his school work so he could have time for the office work. Perhaps someone will say: "I wish you would tell us how you arranged his work." With this possible question in mind, I'll tell you. Jacob was one of those marked excellent in the senior class. The time he must have off would take from his hours for practice in typing only. He was to do an even greater amount of typing in the railroad office. We simply accepted the hours of business typing as an equivalent for his hours in practice typing.

Jacob made good, and stepped into a regular position that by the following September was paying him one hundred four dollars a month.

The day after he graduated, he came to me and said: "My parents want me to thank you school people for what you have done for me."

I wish I could help all teachers who read these little personal histories to appreciate the importance of the personal element in school work. Mass work may arouse; personal work saves. It was the personal touch of the two teachers mentioned that more than anything else inspired Jacob to complete a four-year course.

## CHAPTER VIII

### MISTRUSTFUL OF PARENTS AND HOME FRIENDS

Often boys of this age become mistrustful of their parents and family friends, and seek some other adult person or persons as confidential friend or friends in whom they place implicit faith; and to whom they reveal their hopes and their plans, as well as all their failures and disappointments. These friends whom they so fully trust have a wonderful opportunity to touch for good, to inspire; to fix ideals that may have much to do in shaping for good or evil the lives of these boys.

Mark Jones was a boy of good intellect, and with a well-developed body for a boy of fourteen, when he entered the high school. He soon became deeply interested in high school athletics, and was always present when teams were practicing. His regularity at the practice work attracted the attention of the coach. The coach asked me about him saying he believed he would try him out to see if he could make one of the teams. "There is just one thing that does not look very favorable, that is, he has taken up with one or two of our most worthless high school boys," said the coach. "But," continued he, "possibly if I put him on one of the teams where he will be closely associated with the team boys he will make them his intimate friends and thus come from under the influence of the other boys. The team boys are surely a great bunch of boys this year."

Mark had been a fine boy in the elementary school, but I had noticed, as the coach said, that he had fallen in with a group of high school boys whose influence might be harmful to him. I had also noticed that out

of school he was often to be seen in the company of two or three boys who were not in school, boys whose influence could be none other than harmful.

I was greatly pleased to have the coach state the situation as he had done, for I knew that the coach had a wonderful influence over the boys in his teams and that he would leave nothing undone on his part to save the boy.

Mark proved out in good shape and was given a prominent place on the first football team. He made a great athletic record throughout the four years of his high school life, and in his scholarship always stood well. He unconsciously dropped out his associates that were not of the right type and in the same way became one in sympathy and spirit with the team boys. This coach was always alert to the possibility for good and had unusual power in making his teams not only winning teams, but teams whose influence on the school life was wholesome and uplifting.

But during Mark's high school life, he never made his father a confidant in anything. In fact, he never talked with his father of his school work and school interests; nor of his plans or wishes for education beyond the high school. The father mourned the fact that he had no part in his boy's life at that time. What he knew of Mark, he learned from school teachers and principal, or superintendent, never from Mark. There was no trouble between them, nor for a time was there anything else between them. Mark would drop into my office sometimes and tell me what he hoped to do after completing his high school course; but never a word of this did he tell his father. He had great admiration for the athletic coach and made him a confidant in everything.

I could give other cases where the boys, who for a year or two, closed themselves up tight as closed clams, to their fathers, but were free to talk with some other friends, friends of their own choosing. I remember, in particular, one father, a father who gave his son every opportunity that could come to a boy of his age, but who suffered greatly for two or three years because the boy held himself completely aloof from him. The boy improved every opportunity made possible by the father, but during this time manifested no appreciation of what the father was doing for him, and held his lips closed in his father's presence. But a few years later, the father and son were close companions, and the son was, indeed, a son to his father.

How careful must be the teacher whom the boy chooses for his trusted friend, that he may ever keep the right ideals before the boy.

Here is another boy whose case is very different from the two given. The father of this boy was largely at fault, as you will plainly see.

Alexander Grey came from a home of not what you would call wealth, but a home of "great plenty"; if you will pardon the use of the term. He was one of the best-dressed boys in the high school, and knew how to dress most becomingly. He was a handsome lad, one whose first appearance would attract attention. But while he was a boy of good mental ability, he did a low grade of school work. His social life of evenings so exhausted his nerve force that he had but little energy left for school studies.

One day the high school principal came into my office to talk with me about Alex, as we called him. After considering his case very carefully, I requested the principal to write his father, telling him that Alex

was utterly failing in his work and asking the father's help in trying to bring the boy to a better grade of work. This was Friday afternoon. The principal sent the letter that day.

Monday morning before school, Alex came in to see me, looking as if he had lost his last friend. I asked him what I could do for him.

Scarcely waiting for me to finish my question, he began saying: "The principal *has done it now, he's done it now*, and he had *no right to do it.*"

"Done what?" I asked.

He replied: "He wrote dad that I was not doing my work here at school, and when dad read the letter yesterday he got mad and said I'd got to leave home this morning, get a job of work and make my own way. He's canned me out, so I've got to get a job and go to work. The principal had no right to write father how I was doing here."

I replied: "It was at my request that the principal wrote your father, and the principal did just the right thing, for your father has a right to know how you are doing here; and you know as well as I do that you are not doing what you should do. Don't be angry with the principal, but blame me; but Alex, remember it is not only my right, but my duty, to let your father know how you are doing. It's my duty to you as well as to your father."

Alex then said: "Oh, Mr. Stableton, *you don't know my dad, you don't know him.*"

"But I know this, Alex, he is very much concerned to have you do your best here, and you are not doing it."

After a few more words, I advised Alex to go to his father, promise his father that he would try his best to bring up his school work if he would receive him back

home, and let him return to school. But Alex said it would do no good, that his "dad had canned him out" so he must hunt a job.

As I could not talk longer with him at that time, I told him to come back at the noon hour and report what he had done. At noon, he came looking more disconsolate than ever. He had tried all forenoon to find a job and had found none. He was really distressed, for he had been provided for in a lavish manner, and now he had been sent out from home with nothing to do, no place to go. I said again to him: "Go, put yourself right with your father, then things will improve."

But he replied: "Mr. Stableton, you don't know what kind of a man my dad is, he always says to me 'You're going to Hell, you are going to Hell, and I'm not going with you, you're going to Hell.' My, but he gets mad."

Finally, I said: "You go to your father intending to do the right thing about your school work. You know you have been wasting your time, doing almost nothing. Get right about that and let your father see that you mean what you say. You do this, then report to me at four o'clock this afternoon, and no difference what report you bring me, I'll go and talk with your father." He finally said he would do this.

Shortly after 4 o'clock p. m. my office door opened quietly and Alex with a face all beaming, stepped in. I looked up and nodded come on, and as he came up to my desk, he said: "I talked with dad."

I asked: "What did your father say?"

He replied: "Dad said he'd rather have me go to school than do anything else; for me to go home and be ready for school in the morning."

I then asked where I would find his father. He told



me I would find him at that hour, five o'clock p. m. in a certain room at one of the clubs of the city, playing cards.

But before I tell of my call on the father, I must tell you some other things Alex said that were very interesting.

He said: "Dad says *boys* should stay at home at night and study like *he did* when he lived on the farm; that *boys* have no right to go out to clubs at night and to stay out late; but dad goes to a club every night in the week and plays cards, and comes home late. He don't seem to know that times have changed *for boys* as well as for men, and that *boys* have some rights as well as men."

I called at the club as Alex had directed me, and found the father in the midst of a game of cards. I made know my errand, that I had come to talk with him about Alex.

He left the game and we passed to a room where we could talk privately. When we were seated he looked at me, the tears streaming down his face, and said: "It's all settled now, Alex and I buried the hatchet this afternoon. It's all settled and there won't be any more trouble."

After we had had a good talk about Alex, I said to him: "I feel sure Alex's intentions are all right, however you must not be surprised if Alex does not do all that you hope he will do. If he should fail to do as we all wish he would do, don't put him out of your home; let him work, that is all right; but he is *your* boy, keep him in your home."

The next morning Alex's mother, she was his step-mother, but was a real mother to Alex, called at my office. She first asked if Alex were in school, and was happy to

know that he was. She was the boy's best friend and did all that she could to help him to do right; but she said his father worshipped him and humored him almost to his ruin. She said he spent money without counting it in buying clothing and other things that Alex wanted, never denying him anything. But that once in a while when Alex would go too far or greatly disappoint him, his father would get desperately mad and go to some unreasonable extreme with the boy. She had been greatly worried over the father's driving the boy from home, and was glad that I had asked him not to do it again.

Alex tried hard to do his work and made a marked improvement for a time, but did not continue in school to complete a high school course.

Alex knew the weaknesses of his father, and made them an excuse for his own shortcomings. At that time he had no wholesome respect for his father and when face to face he would upbraid his father, unmercifully lashing him with his tongue, never failing to hit him at his most vulnerable points. I learned this by happening to be present once when the father and Alex were having a talk.

In the first two cases given in this chapter, the boys found no fault with their fathers, nor would either of them permit one to speak in any but the highest terms of his father without a protest. They held their fathers in high esteem, yet at the same time, for a year or two, chose other persons for their confidential friends. Alex had a certain contempt for his father, yet all the while made his father's weaknesses, that called forth his contempt, his own excuse for failure to do his best. A few years later, Alex, while still recognizing the weaknesses of his father, appreciated his many good qualities, and had a very different attitude toward him.

## CHAPTER IX

### CHEATING—GRAMMAR GRADE PUPILS, HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLARS

I have said it before and say it again, that high school scholars have a wonderfully high sense of honor, higher by far than that of most of the fathers of these young people. If I were to be tried before a jury I would rather have a jury composed of high school scholars than of any other group of people. They have a fine sense of justice.

But this having a fine sense of justice does not interfere with their having a keen sense of humor, nor does it always prevent their keen sense of humor from leading them to do things that, to those who know them not, would seem to indicate an entire lack of honor.

To cheat in a class having a teacher who fails to make every condition conducive to honesty in answering test questions, does not appeal to many high school scholars and grammar pupils as cheating, but rather as a means of self-protection.

In one of our seventh grade rooms for a part of a semester we had a teacher under whose care the pupils made a regular practice of cheating. I never saw a room more completely given over to this kind of work. I talked with the teacher who was quite unconscious of the extent to which it was being carried. The teacher could give no explanation. I followed closely her plan of giving a test or written lesson, then I found that she took no care to see that everything was conducive to honesty on the part of those taking the test. Instead of devoting her undivided attention to those writing, she placed the questions on the board, set the class to writing

while she looked over some other written work, or busied herself with arranging other things. The order of those writing was quiet and not at all to be criticised till one noted what they were doing, then it required no effort to see that the test was a farce, that it was largely copy work.

Again I talked with the teacher. I said: "Why, they copy right in your presence and seem to think nothing of it."

She still could not understand why they should be so dishonest. She said that after having the books put into the desks, the papers, pen, and ink ready for work, she tried not to watch them too closely, for fear they would think she thought them dishonest; that she thought it would do them great harm, would tend to make them dishonest, if they thought she were watching them.

Then that she might see the situation from the pupils' point of view, I told her that the best boys and girls in her room said that she did nothing to protect them when they tried to be what she would call honest, but by her lack of attention to what was being done permitted those who did not hesitate to copy, to copy all they pleased, and that then she graded their papers giving credit just as if they had been honestly written. This they said made it necessary for those who would be strictly honest to work on the same plane as the others in order to have a fair show; that they did not feel that they were in the least dishonest, but were simply acting in self-defense.

This teacher's services were soon dispensed with. Many teachers have her wrong point of view.

When a little later on these same pupils passed into the eighth grade under the care of another teacher, all was changed. The scholars would tell you that *nobody cheated* in Miss G——'s room; that she protected the

honest ones from those that would cheat by making it impossible for anyone to cheat. They would say "No one *could cheat* in Miss G——'s room. It doesn't seem that anyone *wants* to cheat in her room."

The fact was that Miss G—— was one of the ablest teachers in the school, a woman of fine personality that created an atmosphere in her room that lifted her pupils above mean, little things. But how carefully she guarded that she might not *tempt* any of them to do the unfair thing. When she wished to give a written lesson, test, if you prefer so to call it, she quietly asked the pupils to clear their desks and get their paper, pen and ink ready for a written lesson. And the pupils just as quietly as she had given the instructions, cleared their desks, put paper, pen, and ink in order for the lesson and waited a moment for her to place on the board a few well-selected questions to be answered. Then at a word from her they began thinking the questions and writing the answers.

For the hour of the test she gave her undivided attention to the class. She knew what each one was doing. She watched them carefully. Was she spying on them? It would not have been well for anyone to ask one of her pupils that question. It would have been taken as almost an insult. *Their teacher* never spied on anyone; she was "tending to her business."

She was studying her pupils. From their manner of writing a test she learned much of their habits of thinking. It is true that studying the faces of pupils writing a test gives quite an insight into their thinking. She asks John to take a little more time for thinking his answers before writing them down, to go just a little more slowly as he had hurried the last written lesson too much to do his best. As she notices William's paper,

just a glance, she says "Fine, William, try to write a little faster, but don't hurry." William was a very scholarly boy but was of slow movement in all that he did. John was a fair student, but quick and a little scattering. It was his custom to hurry through a written lesson omitting many things that a little time for thought would have enabled him to put down. Then at the close of school after the other pupils had passed out, he would step up to the teacher to tell her how much he knew of the answers to the questions that he forgot to write down.

I agree with the pupils that some apparent cheating is not cheating.

Then I've seen the high school scholar who prided himself on his smartness in, as he said, "getting by" with certain teachers who were so sure no one could cheat in *their* examinations. He does not consider that he is dishonest, he is only as he puts it, "pulling off a great joke."

I am reminded that this sense of getting ahead of the teacher is taken as a joke by students in schools higher than grammar grades and high schools. Two young friends of mine, former high school scholars were attending a college of fine standing. It was nearing the close of their second year. One of the young women had been out of school sick for several weeks and as she was an excellent student, was given the privilege of making up the work she had missed. She was to take an examination on a certain textbook in school management one afternoon, and asked the other young woman her friend, to go with her to the professor's classroom. The second young woman had this same textbook to make up before the close of the year. She had never looked inside the book; but she not only agreed to go with her

friend, but said she believed she would try to pass the examination too. She took her friend's book, spent a half-hour in studying the table of contents, then together they presented themselves for examination. The one who had really studied the book made herself the more prominent. As there were only two of them, the professor examined them orally. The one who had never read a word farther than the table of contents very skilfully seconded what the other one answered, and also managed to ask the professor if he really agreed fully with the author in what he said on this subject and that subject in certain chapters of the book. The professor, who was quite susceptible to flattery, felt called upon to air his views and to point out wherein he did not wholly agree with the author.

At the end of a very pleasant hour, the professor said he was more than satisfied with their thorough mastery of the book, and passed them with grades well up in the eighties.

The two young women left the examination congratulating themselves on the exceedingly smart trick they had worked on the professor. And to this day the young woman who made an 86% on a book she had not even read, thinks that about the smartest thing she has ever done.

I leave you to judge of the honesty of this young woman.

There *are* high school students and grammar grade pupils who would not hesitate to deliberately take advantage of any help in recitations or in tests with the object of making a grade. No one could justify this in the least; but in dealing with such offenses we must not treat the offender as a criminal but help him to appre-

ciate the unfairness of it and, as it were, lift him above committing such offenses.

One day one of our high school teachers of English handed me two book reviews of the same book by two of her scholars and asked me to read them and tell her what I thought of them. I read them and then said that they were so nearly the same in all points that they must have been prepared as a piece of joint work, or that one was a copy of the other.

She then told me she had talked with both boys; and that Morris R—— had admitted that he had copied the other boy's paper. He had said that he was pushed for time, and so copied the paper. She said further that Morris did not seem to appreciate the dishonesty he had been guilty of, so she thought he needed a severe punishment as a lesson.

I listened attentively and then asked what she thought should be done. To which she replied that she thought he ought to be dismissed from school; that it would teach him a good lesson and be a lesson to others.

"No," I said, "I can't quite agree with you. I will talk with Morris and try to help him to see that he should be above taking what he has not earned. I would like you to assign him another book for a written review, one as difficult as the first one. He must make good the work. This, together with my talk with him, will be sufficient for the present." Then I called attention to his record in high school. This was near the end of his third year. No other complaint of any kind had been made against him this year; during the years before he had given us great concern on account of his conduct. In fact, the year before he had been out of school at least three months of the year, rather than do



as his teachers had requested in class work. He had become so disagreeable toward his teachers, and so determined to have his own way, that when his case was finally referred to me, I talked with him and told him there were only two ways open to him; one was to continue in school obedient and respectful to his teachers; or the other, to drop out of school until he was willing to conduct himself in the proper manner toward his teachers.

He finally decided he would drop out of school rather than do as the teachers wished him to do. All I could do was to say: "I'm sorry, Morris, that you take this stand and I hope some day you will see things in a better light, and will return to us ready to do your part and finish your high school education."

We parted friends, even though I could not recognize his way of looking at things.

He secured a job of work and was busily employed all summer. I often met him on the street as he went to and from his work. There was always a friendly word between us, and sometimes we walked along together and chatted.

One day just before the opening of school in September, Morris called on me at my office. He came in looking happy-spirited and almost in his first words asked: "Mr. Stableton, I want to come back to school, will you let me? I'll do anything any teacher wishes me to do."

I answered as I extended my hand to him, "Let you come back? I'm mighty glad to have you come back. By your words, you have already cleared away everything that stood in your way. I've been sorry to have

you out at all, but could not help it when you took the stand you did."

He replied: "I know how you have felt. You and the teachers were right all the time, but something was wrong with me, I don't know what, but I'll do my best this time."

Then he asked me if it would be possible for him to have the privilege of taking one study more than was ordinarily permitted, saying that he had already made so many extra credits that if permitted to carry the additional work, he could still graduate with his class, and added that the heavy work would help to keep him busy so he would have no time for other things. "My conduct," he said, "I know, will be better if I have about all I can do." He obtained his request.

Do you wonder that I was deeply interested in all that he did that year? Do you wonder that I felt there was a better way than the teacher suggested to help him when he had blundered?

I talked with Morris. He was very frank in admitting that he had done wrong. He said his work was pressing and without much thought he had copied the paper and passed it in, although he knew it was not right. He did not justify his act at all, and was willing to do anything in his power to make it right.

The affair was settled as I had suggested. This was his only offense during the entire year. When the year closed, he had done the greatest amount of school work of high grade of any student that year in the high school. You may judge whether or not we dealt justly with him.

After all is said of cheating in the grammar grades and the high schools, it comes back to the teacher. There are teachers who so carefully guard against op-

portunities for cheating, and whose personalities create such an atmosphere of fair play and honesty that no one thinks of cheating in their presence. These teachers at the evening hour can with a good conscience pray: "Lead us not into temptation" for they have tried *not* to lead their scholars into temptation. Their slumber should be sweet. But these other teachers who have been so afraid of their pupils' thinking they were spying on them, who so ignorantly have trusted the boys and the girls above what they were able to bear and so have tempted them to wrong, these teachers as night closes about them could not well pray the Lord's Prayer, "Lead us not into temptation," but rather, each should in all humility pray, "Lord be merciful to me, a sinner."

## CHAPTER X

### THE TAKING OF THE PROPERTY OF OTHERS

The taking of property belonging to others often presents problems to the teacher, to the principal, to the superintendent, and to parents.

Omar G—— was in the sixth grade when he came to us and continued in school with us to the close of his second year in the high school when he dropped out to go to work. He was a bright, attractive boy, polite and manly, and soon won the respect and confidence of his schoolmates and teachers. His mother worked hard to make a home for him and herself, doing any kind of respectable work she could find to do.

His record in scholarship was not high, though he was by no means a failure and his deportment had always been so correct that I was somewhat disappointed when one day, during his second year in the high school, the high school principal reported to me that Omar had taken some property that was not his, had written his name in it, and was using it as his own. We had been having considerable trouble with book stealing so this offense was quite serious.

The principal asked me to talk with him, saying: "You've had him so long on your mind and heart that I know you can do him good. He has returned the property and has confessed everything; but I feel a talk from you will help him to do right in the future."

Omar came to talk with me, ashamed that he had taken what did not belong to him, and that he had done it knowing it was wrong. We talked it all over, just what it meant to take property that was not his, and that while it was not of great value, the principle of the

act was as wrong as though it had been something of much greater value; and how he had always had a name free from any tarnish of wrong, and how important for him that he live so honest a life that all of his friends could recommend him for the best places he might be able to fill; but above all that he be honest because it was right.

He was greatly broken up and felt keenly the disgrace of his wrongdoing. Up to this time so far as we knew he had been honest and straightforward. His being detected and called to account for this his first act of this kind so far as anyone knew, would in all probability prove a lasting lesson to him. It takes repeated acts of wrongdoing at this time of life to form bad character, to establish the habit of wrongdoing. As one writer says, "repeated acts either good or bad, at this time in life mean character-building." If by any means we can keep the boy who has made one mistake by doing a wrong, from repeating that wrong, we can help to keep him out of the criminal class.

Just after the close of school in June that year, one of our leading merchants called me on the phone and said: "Omar G—— has applied to me for a position in our store and has referred me to you for a recommendation. We need a boy. Is he one for us to take? Will you recommend him to us?"

I replied: "I would like very much for you to take Omar into your employe, but before you take him, I wish to have a talk with you about him; though you *must* give him the place."

He then said: "I'll come to your office right away, if you can talk with me now?"

I replied: "Come on. I'll talk with you."

When he came, I said to him that while I recommended Omar to him and was very anxious for him to give the boy a place, still I felt that for the boy's sake and for his sake he must know the boy as I had come to know him by having him in school five years. I then told him all I knew of the boy, including the taking of the property of another scholar; and said that I believed the boy would prove honest; but that I would rather he would refuse Omar a place than for him to put him where he would continually be tempted by handling money so loosely that no one could call him to account definitely at the close of each day for every penny that passed through his hands; that with careful guarding for a year or two he would make an honest, trustworthy man, but that by being placed where he would be tempted too strongly at that time, he might, little by little, fall into the habit of dishonesty. To me *for the boy*, it was a very serious matter. I remembered then and I have never forgotten what a business man in a Nebraska town said to me when I was a schoolman of but little experience. This business man had taken a boy who had graduated from our high school the year before into his office, and had placed him where he handled much small change in a way that from day to day no one kept close account of it. After a number of months, this business man came upon positive evidence that the boy was taking of this money and spending it. The boy lost his position. This man said to me that while he let the boy out of a job, he felt that he himself had not done right by the boy in placing him just at the uncertain time of the boy's life, where it was easy for him to steal; and he said further that he thought many, many boys were ruined by business men in placing them as he had placed this boy, where no one

could know definitely, at the close of each day, the exact amount of money for which the boy should be held accountable; that it was a great sin against boys to put them where they would be tempted with no protection to hold them from yielding. The very fact that the boy knows that every penny that passes through his hands can be traced up and will be each day, is a wonderful protection to him. It keeps temptation out of his mind.

One of my Bloomington business men friends had this experience with a boy in his employ. This was fifteen years ago. He was paying the boy a fair salary for the work he was doing, a good salary for a boy in his early "teens." One day, he accidentally learned that the boy had a weekly increasing deposit at one of the banks. The amount of the deposit was so large that it was an impossibility for the boy to have accumulated it out of his weekly earnings and he had no other source of money. Up to this time, the boy had not been suspected of dishonesty, but now he was under suspicion. He was carefully watched, and found depositing money that had been marked and put into the channels in the business where it would pass through his hands; but it failed to appear after reaching him, and a little later he gave it in for deposit at the bank.

The next morning after he had deposited marked money, my friend, the head of the firm, decided that as he now had the evidence in good shape, he would not delay, but send or ask the judge to commit the boy to the State Reformatory. Thus far he had said nothing to the boy or to his people, but now he called the boy to the office and asked him to go over to the courthouse with him. The courthouse was just across the street. His intention was to take the boy into the judge's office to lay the case before the judge, and ask that the boy

be sent to the reformatory. But after going to the courthouse, he began to think: "I'm a Christian man; this boy has done wrong. Is it right for me to send him to an institution where he will be associated with many of the worst boys of the state, without trying myself to help him to do right; am I not taking advantage of the boy; I put him where he was tempted; ought I not to help him now that he has done wrong?"

He turned about and said to the boy: "Come on, we'll go back to the office." He took him to his private office; told him all that he knew of his taking the money; that he had gone with him to the courthouse to ask the judge to send him to the reformatory; but that he could not feel he would be doing right not to give him a chance.

It was not now the money that concerned this man, but it was the saving of this boy, that deeply stirred his soul. He felt he must save the boy.

The boy told him how day after day for months he had been taking out the money and depositing it in *two* of the banks. He had two bank accounts instead of one. He, with the help of the business man, made an estimate of what he had taken. The boy turned over his deposits and promised to pay a certain amount each week till all he had taken was paid back.

The business man said to him that he would show his faith in him by continuing him in his position, and would befriend him in every possible way; but said he, "If I find I cannot help you to do right, if I find you taking money again, then I shall feel it is my duty to you to ask that you be sent to the State Reformatory."

That boy never again betrayed the confidence placed in him, and became one of the most trustworthy and valuable men in the employ of that firm.



These cases, and other like ones, and my belief that a boy ought not to be tempted at this unsettled time of life by being placed where there is too great responsibility, or where he handles money in a somewhat loose way, except under the very closest, most careful supervision, made me feel that I would rather Omar would fail of appointment to a place in this store than to see him put where he would be too strongly tempted to take what did not belong to him. "How oft the sight of means to do ill deeds makes ill deeds done" is especially true of some boys.

Omar was given the position in the store under the best of conditions. That was eight or nine years ago. He has made good, and today stands high with the firm.

\* \* \* \* \*

One day the high school principal reported to me that one of the high school girls had had a beautiful pair of gloves taken from her cloak pockets in the cloak-room a few days before and that she had the day before found another girl, Nellie M——, wearing them; that the gloves in the possession of Nellie M—— were the ones that had been taken from the cloak pockets; that after Nellie M—— had gone to her first recitation that morning, he had taken the gloves from where Nellie M—— had placed them, and had found them marked on the inside just as the girl who had lost her gloves claimed they were. The loser of the gloves also claimed that her father had purchased the gloves in an eastern city and that there were no gloves of the kind in any store in our city; that to make sure this last statement as to there being no other gloves like them in the city, he had taken the gloves to every store carrying gloves in Bloomington, and had

learned that no gloves of the kind had been sold in the city, and that no store had them in stock.

The principal had, so it seemed to me, taken every precaution against accusing the girl unjustly by carefully examining every claim made by the girl who said the gloves were hers. The next step was for him to talk with Nellie M——. The principal wished to have a woman present when he talked with her about the gloves, so Miss ——, secretary in the superintendent's office, was asked to be present.

The principal stated to Nellie M—— that one of the girls had made the complaint that her gloves had been taken from her cloak pockets in the cloak-room, and that Nellie was wearing them to school; that it would be for her to tell how they came to be in her possession if they were hers, and to establish her right to them.

She immediately said she had bought them at a certain store in the city and that they were her own gloves and belonged to no one else.

The principal then said that the store where she said she had bought them had told him that day that they had never carried that kind of glove in stock, so had never sold them; that every glove store in the city had made a like statement.

After a little while, she said that she had taken the gloves from the other girl's cloak-pockets. She cried and cried, and asked if the whole school would have to know it. The principal replied: "No, Nellie, the superintendent, the secretary present, and myself, are the only ones of the high school who will know this, so long as you do right and take nothing that belongs to some one else."

I can't make you understand how kindly the principal talked to her, for he was deeply touched with pity that she should yield to temptation and take the gloves. He knew too that she was almost homeless, and had but little except what was given her in charity.

A short time after, in talking with her former elementary school principal, who had always been deeply interested in Nellie, I told her of the gloves.

She replied: "I'm not surprised, but I'm very, very sorry for Nellie. Poor girl! She took things when she was in our school, and I talked with her and did everything I could, but the disposition to take things that did not belong to her still clung to her. Poor girl, she has always craved beautiful things and has never had anything to satisfy her craving. It is hard; her parents dead, an imbecile sister and the aunt with whom they make their home, are her only people. The aunt cannot do anything more than give them a place to stay, for she has nothing. Nellie's ambition is to be a teacher, that she may be able to take care of her sister. She is in school through the kindness of friends. It does seem too bad that her love for beautiful things has never had anything beautiful to satisfy it. My heart aches for the child, yet it seems we are all helpless when we try to do anything for her. Poor girl!"

At the close of the term, Nellie dropped out of school. Two or three years later, I was surprised to see her acting as cashier in one of our city stores. I feared and feared greatly, but said nothing. I did not know the man who had employed her sufficiently well to know how to talk with him confidentially about her. I did not wish to do her harm by arousing suspicion in his mind, if she had changed, and was worthy the trust he was placing in her. When taking things is only an

outcropping of the ferment of adolescence, and it is not fixed into a habit by unfortunate circumstances surrounding the youth, it is apt to fade out, leaving nothing of dishonesty to mar the after life. For this reason, it sometimes does great harm to the young person for someone to arouse suspicion in the employer's mind as to the honesty of an employee, and causes him to let out of his service one who is most worthy his confidence.

But after a few months, Nellie lost her position. A friend of Nellie's asked the proprietor of the store why he had given the position Nellie had held to another. He replied that Nellie was always short in her cash account, and that while he had never caught her in anything dishonest, as soon as he put another person into the place, there was no further trouble with the cash account.

\* \* \* \* \*

I have always tried to be strictly honest and fair when called upon to recommend a young man or young woman for a position. Sometimes in my frankness I have been told that I surely was a little too careful; but later on even these cases proved me at least on the safe side.

A friend of mine, Mr. Mains, came to me one day and told me of his plans to open a branch store in a new addition to the city where he was then living, and asked me what I thought of his putting a certain former schoolboy of ours, Nelson R—— in full charge of the store. Without waiting for my answer, he proceeded to tell me that he had had him in his employ for several months and was greatly pleased with the way he did things; that he was a regular pusher in the business and seemed a first-class man to run the branch store.

Then he asked me if I would recommend Nelson for the place; if I thought it safe to place him where he would have everything in his hands.

I saw my friend's heart was set on giving Nelson, he was scarcely more than a boy, the place but that he would feel just a little easier if he could have my word favoring it. But I could not give him that word. I replied that I was pleased to know Nelson was doing so well, and wished him all the good that could come to him, but that I could not honestly recommend him to a position of so great trust and responsibility; that I did not think it best for Nelson nor best for my friend.

However, as I have said, my friend's heart was set on giving the young man the position, so he placed him in charge of the store.

For more than a year the business venture went well. Nelson was a "hustler" there was no question of that. He made things move.

At the close of the first year my friend said to me that I had placed too little confidence in the young man. "Why," said he, "Nelson is doing a wonderful business in our branch store. He is the ablest and most trustworthy man I've ever had in my employ. This one year has proved to me that he can run the business as well as I could do it myself, so I'm giving him a free hand."

The next year my friend was sick for several months. When he was again able to look after his business, he found that this "trusted young" man had unmercifully robbed him, and had so involved him that he came near losing not only the branch store, but all his property.

Shortly after Mr. Mains discovered how he had been robbed, he and his wife were in our city, and called at my office. They both were greatly distressed, for they then feared they might lose all their property. They

said to me: "Your fears were well founded, we should have listened to you, but Nelson had sort of blinded us, so that we thought it was just a case of a school teacher's letting his prejudice for some past wrong of the boy affect his judgment, thus interfering with the boy's advancement."

Why had I felt it would be unsafe to give Nelson the position? I will tell you as I had told Mr. and Mrs. Mains. The boy had caused us no trouble of any kind in school; he learned easily, and was always obliging and of pleasant manners; and his father was a warm personal friend of mine. But I knew the boy was untruthful; that he had helped to rob one or two stores; that out of consideration for his parents, very little had been said publicly about his store-robbing. This was while he was a scholar in the high school. I knew, too, how little consideration he had for his father's wishes. These things were not characteristic of him for a year or two only of his adolescent life, but had been a part of him for a number of years, even before his adolescent years, so that while these characteristics might disappear as the years of adolescence were passed, still for the safety of the boy and of all, I felt it would be better not to tempt him too greatly, but to hold him where his work would be so closely supervised that there could be little temptation to further wrong-doing; to hold him until his own faith in his ability to do right had become strong, and the habit of honesty somewhat fixed.

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One Friday morning, Mr. Smith, the head of the manual training work in the high school reported to the high school principal that one drawing-board and three sets of drawing-tools had been taken from one of the

mechanical drawing rooms; that the drawing sets cost \$9 a set. The classes had used them the fore-noon of the day before. Mr. Smith was the only one who carried a key to the room, and he still had the key in his possession. He had locked the room the day before at the close of his class work, and it was still locked when he went to meet his classes on Friday morning. The room was on the third floor, the windows were so placed that they could not be reached from the outside except by a ladder reaching to the third floor. The question was, Who took the board and drawing tools, and how did he get into the drawing-room?

Monday morning a package delivery boy from the Western Union Telegraph Company delivered the drawing-board at the principal's office. The principal asked him where he had gotten the board. The boy replied that a call had come to the Western Union office asking that a boy be sent to a certain number on Front Street for a package to be delivered at the high school; that he was sent to get the package and deliver it; that when he got to the Front Street number, he found a boy, waiting for him; that the boy paid him fifteen cents to bring the board to the high school. When asked if he knew the boy he said that he did not, and had never seen him before. When asked as to how old the boy appeared to be, he said that the boy had told him to tell the principal that a young man about seventeen years old had given him the board, but the delivery boy said he did not think the boy was more than fifteen.

The principal called up the Western Union office and the manager there confirmed what the delivery boy had said about the call for a delivery boy to be sent to the number on Front Street.

Nothing more could be learned about the theft until the next Monday morning, when a high school boy reported that he had seen the delivery boy at Sunday School the day before and that the delivery boy had told him of meeting the boy who had had the board Saturday afternoon, and that he had looked at him closely and would know him if he should see him in the high school.

The delivery boy was called to the high school. He said to the high school principal and superintendent that he had met the boy who had given him the board to deliver Saturday afternoon, and that the boy had wanted to know if the police had asked him anything about the board, and had added: "If the police do ask you about me and the board, don't tell them anything, and I'll give you some more money."

After talking with the delivery boy, we sent him for a little visit to the drawing room to see if he could identify the boy who had given him the board. He remained in the room but a few minutes. When he came out he said: "The boy at desk No. 2, in the second row is the boy who gave me the board to deliver." I immediately called the boy designated into the corridor. The delivery boy said: "Yes, he is the boy who gave me the board. He is the boy."

I then asked the boy, Melvin M—— how he had gotten the board out of the drawing-room. He replied that he was permitted to do some extra work in the west drawing-room of afternoons, and that on the day he took the board he had needed some drawing-paper and had asked the teacher to let him go to his desk in the east drawing-room to get it; that the teacher let him have the key to the east room, that while he was getting the paper he took the board, then hid it behind his



clothes locker until school was out and then slipped it home.

Then I asked: "What have you done with the drawing sets?"

He replied: "I did not take the drawing sets, I don't know anything about them."

The drawing teacher when told what Melvin had said, remembered that he had loaned the boy the key to get into the east room for drawing paper that afternoon.

We did not bluff Melvin by trying to make him think that we knew he had taken the drawing instruments. We said that the fact that he had taken the drawing board at the time the instruments disappeared and also the fact that he was the only one who had had access to the room, made it look very much like he had taken the instruments.

He replied when this statement was made: "I did not take the instruments, I know nothing about them."

We were waiting a few days, hoping to find some clue that would help us to get the facts about the instruments, when one afternoon the chief of police 'phoned my office asking me, if possible, to come over to police headquarters at once. I reported at police headquarters immediately, not knowing why I had been called; but I soon found out that Melvin, the boy who had taken the drawing board, was the center of interest.

But before finishing this part of the story I must tell you something of the history of the boy before the time of his taking the drawing-board.

He came to our school in the fifth grade. He had been in an excellent school before he came to our school. His transfer showed a fair record in scholarship and deportment. After entering our fifth grade, he continued

to make about the same standing he had previously made.

He was a fine-looking boy, of sturdy physique, with an expressive intelligent-looking face, well dressed, and gentlemanly in manner. He, in fact, was to a person who did not know him, one of the most attractive-looking boys in the school.

He had not been a pupil in our school long when one noon he brought to school some property that had so evidently been taken from one of the stores in the city that his teacher reported the matter to her principal. The principal, after examining the goods in the boy's possession and talking with him, phoned the mother, who lived nearby, asking her to come to the office, as she wished to talk with her about her boy. The mother was at the principal's office in a very few minutes, and soon had the boy's confession that he had taken goods from a certain store. The mother accompanied by the boy, returned the property to the store from which the boy had taken it. More than once this same thing occurred while he was in our elementary school. He was only in the sixth grade when the police came to know him through his frequent thefts. His eighth grade year he spent in a school in another city where he was living with his father. After living with his father the year, he returned to live in Bloomington and in September entered our high school.

The high school principal and teachers knew nothing of him and they were not enlightened at that time. His past was dead unless he himself should bring it to life.

He was now fifteen years of age, but had not yet entered the stage of puberty. He was physically as much a boy as he was at eleven years of age. He was

a beautiful boy to look at, a good reciter, and of pleasing manners and so made a fine impression on the high school teachers to whose classes he was assigned. I alone knew that he had a bad record at police headquarters, but kept this fact to myself.

This is Melvin's history so far as I knew it up to the time he became involved in the drawing board trouble at the high school.

Now I return to police headquarters to continue my story. First, we had notified the police of the disappearance of the drawing instruments, hoping their detectives might happen on some trace of the instruments. Now I'll move on to the close with my story.

The chief of police said to me that they had Melvin M—— in another room, and were holding him for robbing a safe in a store; that he had gone into the store in daytime the day before, on pretense of using the phone which was in the rear part of the store not far from the safe; that he had taken from the safe thirty dollars and had lost most of it playing craps.

He said further: "We thought possibly if you would come over while he is held for this, we might find out something about the drawing instruments; but he is the most hardened boy offender I have ever met; he has no feelings about wrongdoing; he would as soon be locked up in jail and sleep there as to be out, so far as anyone can judge from his actions; his father has been here for an hour talking with him; but nothing his father says has any effect whatever on him."

We then went into the police court-room where Melvin and his father and others were. Melvin looked at me and smiled as pleasantly and unconcerned as if he were sitting in the high school assembly room waiting in happy anticipation for the opening act of some school

play for which the curtain might be drawn at any minute.

We learned nothing about the instruments from him. If he knew where they were, he revealed nothing.

The father took Melvin with him to live in another city. His history since he left Bloomington is unknown to me.

Melvin was as I have said, physically as much a boy at fifteen years of age as he was at eleven. At fifteen, physically, he had not passed the threshold of youth. Why the changes of puberty were so long delayed in his case I know not. As he was out of the ordinary in this respect in his physical development, may it not be that some physical defect lies at the basis of his moral delinquency? May it not be that that part of the brain through which the soul functions in moral perceptions is defective? I only ask the question.

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Mr. L——, President of one of our banks, called on me just after the close of the school term one year to look up the record of one of the boys who had just graduated saying: "If his record shows up well, I'd like to take him into our bank. I hope you will, as I know from the past you will, give me a full account of him, for if he is of the right stripe, I'm anxious to give him the position; but it would be a serious mistake for me to put him into the place if he is not all right. Now tell me what you know about him, please."

I replied: "Samuel has an unusually fine mind; he stands in scholarship in the highest fourth in his class and with little effort. If he had applied himself as some members of the class did the past school year, he could have stood at the very head; but he did not

care to do it. Still to rank in scholarship in the best fourth of his class, is an honor. He is something of a leader among the school boys and girls, and is well liked by all scholars and teachers. His deportment in school all the years he has been with us has been good; but at the early part of the school year just closed, I learned he was becoming quite a gambler to the extent that he was bragging a little unguardedly of the money he was winning. He was spending considerable time of evenings in some of the 'called' gambling places of the city. My information came so direct that I could not question it, so I called Samuel into my office and told him what I had heard, giving the facts as they had been given to me."

"He made no denial of them, but said that he would not engage in the practice any more."

"I said to him: 'You are a senior, and nothing should come up to prevent your graduating next June; but Sam,' said I, 'if I should learn that you still engage in gambling after our conference today, I will refuse to sign your diploma. The diploma certifies that the bearer is of good moral character. I could not put my name to a diploma for you if I know of your gambling again.'"

"He gave me his word that that kind of work was forever past with him. From that day on to the close of the year I never knew of his gambling."

Mr. L—— then said: "He has touched the one thing I fear above all others in an employee of the bank. Boys may go far wrong in some ways and yet be strong in honesty; but the boy or young man who gambles is taking other peoples' money for nothing, and should never be put where he handles other peoples' money as

in a bank. To my mind, gambling in young men is a most difficult habit to overcome.

“Much as I had hoped to give him the place, I cannot do it.”

\* \* \* \* \*

One morning, a number of years ago, a hardware merchant of the city called at my office to make inquiry about two high school boys who were applicants for a position in his store. He explained that he had put an advertisement in the paper, and two boys had applied in answer to the notice. “From the character of the letters,” said he, “I think they are your school boys. One is a little older than I care to put into the place.”

I read the letters of application, and replied: “Yes, they are both our boys. The younger of the two is now in the manual training shop; you can speak to him if you wish.”

He then said: “For some time, we have been having trouble with the boys we have had in the store. They have been continually tapping the till. For some reason, we have not been able to guard sufficiently well to keep them from taking money out of the money-drawer. I have just let a boy go because he was stealing from us. I thought it might make a change for the better to come to you for your recommendation of the next boy we employ.”

I replied: “This younger boy Mack has always been honest and straightforward in all his school life. He is studious and painstaking in his school work, quiet and manly in his bearing. We consider him a very trustworthy boy, but he is *only a boy*. I will go with you to the shop. I will stop at his bench and talk with

him a moment. If you like his looks, you can step up to us and I will introduce you. Then you can talk with him if you wish."

He liked the boy's looks; I introduced them. Mr. N—— spoke to him of his letter, and offered him the position.

Mack replied that he would like very much to accept his offer but must first talk with his father. "My father is a traveling man," said Mack, "and will be home within the next day or two. Could you hold the place open till I talk with father?"

Mr. N—— replied: "Yes, let me hear from you as soon as your father and you have talked it over. I hope he will favor your taking the place."

The boy's father gave his consent, and Mack became a valuable man to that firm. Several years after, in talking with Mr. N—— he said: "Mack has always been honest and attentive to business, and he is the ablest stock man we have ever had in our employ."

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I have said so much about safe-guarding scholars who handle money or are placed in unusually responsible positions, that one might be led to infer that I think that all boys and girls at this time of life are likely to become dishonest when handling money in offices and stores, unless there is a daily checking up plan that easily discloses the slightest irregularity. Let me say plainly that I do not hold any such views. I believe there are boys and girls, unlimited numbers of them, most of the boys and girls in your school, most of them that have been known to me, who would suffer the loss of their right hands rather than to take money that did not belong to them. But while this is true, still

there may be some who are open to temptation. You and I cannot always tell who they are, but all of us who have lived for a number of years with school boys and girls know this is true, and knowing it, we are not reflecting on the quality of honesty of those who would be strictly honest under all conditions, nor are we mistrusting them, when we say the safe thing for all boys and girls when taking their places in offices, stores, and business life, is to guard them; possibly, a better term is to "protect them," by the employers' reducing to a minimum the opportunities for dishonesty. Too many business men have ignorantly trusted boys and girls and so have wronged them and destroyed their own faith in youth; while an intelligent trust, placed in these same boys and girls, would have saved them from drifting into the wrong class and would have kept the employers' faith in youth strong.

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Many homes fail to practice honesty in dealing with their children. These children's first lessons in honesty at all times are learned, if learned at all, at school.

One morning several years ago, as I was on my way to my office, I fell in with the editor of one of our daily papers, Mr. B——. He immediately said: "Mr. Stableton, I've been wondering what more the public schools could do to teach honesty? I am shocked by reading of the great number of crimes committed by young men and boys not out of their teens."

I replied: "Mr. B——, we do try pretty hard to teach honesty, but no doubt we should accomplish more than we do."

"Oh, Mr. Stableton, I know you do. I'm not criticising at all, but the number of youthful criminals is appalling."



“We school people need help,” said I, “Please tell me what you would do in the following case:

“At the opening of each semester, we give to each child in the first primary grade, an enrollment slip to take home to be signed by one of the parents and returned to the teacher. On this slip the parent is asked to state the day, the month, and the year the child was born. The teacher examines these cards when returned, and from the date of birth determines whether or not the child is of school age. The state law says children are of school age when they are six years of age. Our board of education, in order to have a better classification, gives parents whose children will be six years of age by the first day of December, the privilege of entering them in September; and for the second semester, a like privilege is extended.

“In examining the returned enrollment cards, it not infrequently happens that the teacher discovers that some of the children are as much as a year under school age. All are returned home, with a note of explanation.

“One morning after a number of under age children had been sent home, a mother and her boy came to my office. On my asking what I could do for her, she replied that she wanted her boy in school. I said that I’d be pleased to have the boy in school were he of school age; that the card she had filled out showed him six months under age, too young to enter that semester.

“The mother was somewhat indignant, and left the office. In a few minutes, she and the boy returned, accompanied by her husband, the father of the boy. The father appeared very angry and said to me: ‘*We want this boy in school.*’ Again I explained the age requirements for entering school for the first time.

“The father replied: ‘Give me that card. I’ll fix it so he’ll be old enough. If we had known what you were after, we would have fixed it in the first place.’

“I was somewhat surprised, and said, ‘Why, you would not give me a false report of his age to get him in school?’

“‘*You better believe I would. Just let me have that card,*’ he replied.

“Will you please tell me how to make a man of high ideals of honesty, out of that boy with that kind of home training?”

Mr. B—— shook his head, and replied: “I don’t know. I’ve nothing to offer. It’s a big job.”

See the situation with this boy. His father was the proprietor of a store. He was a wonderful man in the boy’s eye. Father would be untruthful in the boy’s presence with the boy understanding all about it. What would be the effect on the boy?

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One day, I had just seated myself for my noon lunch when I was called to the phone. A woman’s voice with a laugh as if something funny had happened said: “Oh, Mr. Stableton, you’ve got me into a lot of trouble.”

“Who is this talking, and what is the trouble?” I asked.

Back came the answer. “I’m Mrs. Morley, of E—— School. You know my boy Jesse in the fifth grade, well he got mad at his teacher Friday, and brought his books home and said he was going to one of the parochial schools. Now I didn’t want him to go to a parochial school, and didn’t know what to do, so I told him I’d seen you and you said he’d have to come

back to his own school; that you wouldn't let him go to a parochial school, so he went back to his own school and told the principal what I'd said, and she asked you on the phone if you had told me that; and you told her that you had not seen me, nor told me anything; and Jesse was right in the office and the principal told him what you told her. Now he's come home to his dinner, and says I lied to him, and I don't know what to do."

I phoned in reply: "Yes, I did tell the principal that I had not seen you, nor talked with you. The only help I can give you is my advice that you tell the truth and you will not be in trouble."

What effect on the character of the boy must this kind of home training have? Six hours a day, month after month, throughout the life of even his compulsory school years, under the teaching and training of forceful, honest, earnest teachers in the school, are a mighty power shaping the boy's character for good; and while this school life may not wholly overcome the evil effects of bad home training, still as one of the forces contending for the mastery of the character of the boy, it will at least bend the line of his character a little more toward the right, even though in the end the character be faulty. We are teachers of little faith if we are disappointed because we cannot always see the results of our work in the lives of the present generation. Much that we do for the boy today may not shape his life as we wish, but it implants in him the ideals that will shape the character of *his boy* tomorrow.

## CHAPTER XI

### WRONGDOING—RESPONSIBILITY, TEACHER'S? PARENTS'? CITY GOVERNMENT'S?

As one writer says, there is always the possibility that some of the ordinarily fleeting experiences of youth may become fixed as traits of character; youth is the period when one is open to moulding influences as at no other time in life; influences that may determine the whole after life; adolescent longings and activities wrongly directed lead to crime; and if there is continued repetition of criminal acts, criminal character is the result.

Mr. W. D. Morrison, an authority on youthful criminology, says, that from sixteen years of age there is a very rapid increase in crime; and that if the youth from sixteen years of age to twenty could be kept from embarking on a criminal career, the drop in the criminal population would be far-reaching; that if this critical period could be tided over without *repeated* acts of crime, there is much less likelihood of a youth's degenerating into a criminal of the professional class. One offense does not fix character, but continued repetition of acts, either good or bad, at this time in life, means character-building. Often a parent says: "Oh, if my boy could only be under good surroundings that would attract him for a few years, he would be all safe." And the parent is often right in what he says.

For eighteen years, I kept a pretty close tab on the boys of our city who drifted into the criminal class, boys who during their school life were in our schools. Most all of them I knew very intimately as school boys, and I also knew much about their own home life. This

knowledge made me consider well who they were and whence they came that swelled the too great number of the criminal class from our city.

This study increased my faith in the good early home training of children. They may drift, they may be full of all sorts of wild pranks, may even steal and lie shamefully in youth, but if detected and held from repeating these acts, as the later high school years of this period come, the character of childhood begins to assert itself again.

I believe this is true, as other writers have said that where certain habits were *firmly fixed* in childhood, and some untoward influence has not too strongly affected the youth, the firmly-fixed habits of childhood again appear, though somewhat modified; that all training in childhood is not lost as the youth goes through the breaking-up and recrystallization period of adolescence. Good early training and good parentage tell at this time of life. We are told, too, that it is the time when inherited tendencies crop out, and no doubt this is true; and it is also true that the better the training in good habits in childhood, the greater the possibility of good habits setting in in later adolescence, even with a poor inheritance.

Most of these boys who entered the criminal class from our city during the eighteen years of my life in Bloomington, never had good home training. Nowhere were they taught obedience and respect for law except in school. Their homes were places to sleep a part of the night and to eat some of their meals, though their homes were often homes of plenty. When not in school, they lived on the streets. Some of them never gave any trouble at all in school, while others were restless under restraint.

One morning a number of years ago, one of our principals asked me to come over to her building saying she thought some of her boys had been stealing down in the city. I immediately responded to her call. The principal said that from some things one of her boys had told to his teacher about a cigar he had brought to school, she believed a half-dozen of them had been robbing cigar-stores.

I asked the principal to call one of the boys into the office to talk with me. This boy was almost fourteen years of age, the oldest of the half-dozen. As he stood at the side of my chair, I placed my hand on his shoulder in a friendly way, and kindly asked him where he had gotten the cigars he had had. Turning his face away so that I could not look him in the eyes, he said he had bought them at the Phoenix Cigar Store for 15c a box. Then he told me where he had gotten his money. I knew from his manner he was untruthful, so asked him to stand in the hall while I talked with another boy.

The next boy was a beautiful little fellow about ten years of age. I put my arm around him as he stood by my chair and asked him if he would tell me where he got the cigars.

Looking me full in the face he said: "Yes, Mr. Stableton, we got part of them at the Phoenix Cigar Store on Main Street."

"What did you pay for them?" was my next question.

"Oh, we never paid anything for them, we just took them," said he.

He then told me that every evening after they had had their suppers they went to the Y. M. C. A. and stayed there till the time they put all young boys out; that when they left the Y. M. C. A. they would go to

the Phoenix Cigar Store on North Main Street, or sometimes they would go to Mr. S——'s store on East Front Street; that they did not go to the stores every night, but that they went pretty often.

"But how do you get the cigars?" I asked.

He replied: "You know when you go into the Phoenix Store there is a flower stand on this side," motioning with his right hand to the right to give its proper location, "We go past it and turn to the other side past the cigar counter, and go out that elevator room door," using his hand to give everything its position in the store, "and as we pass the cigar counter, we reach down under the counter and take the packages of cigars, as many as we want, then go on into the elevator room and out the front door of that room into the street."

"What kind of cigars do you get at this store?" I asked.

"We get packages with nine cigars in a package. At the other store we get tin boxes with twenty-five cigars in each box," he replied.

"How do you get them at the other store?" I asked.

In reply he said: "You know the central fire department station is next to the store on Front Street. We go in back of it to the back part of the cigar store. There is a side door to the store and a window next to it. Well, there's some steps up against the side of the building under the window, and one of the boys goes up the steps—"

I here broke into his story with, "and goes in through the window?"

"No sir," he replied, "goes up the steps and pulls down the upper part of the window, and reaches in and

takes the boxes and gives them to the rest of us, every one a box. These are tin boxes, twenty-five in a box.”

After he had told me this and much more of how they operated, I met the six boys together in the presence of the principal. As soon as they knew I had full possession of the facts about the cigars, they had many other things to tell me. They were more skilled than one would like to believe in the art of lifting goods from the Ten Cent Stores and various notion stores.

None of these boys caused any unusual trouble at school. One or two of them were a little restless under the confinement of school. The others were excellent in deportment at school. In one sense, this was not my affair; in another it was. I was interested in the boys.

I called at the Phoenix Cigar Store and asked the proprietor if he had been missing any cigars. He replied that he had not. I then told him the boy's story, but he said there was nothing to the story. Next I offered him some of his own goods given me by the boys. That was too much; he knew the goods. He then looked under the open counter where the boy had said they had gotten the cigars, and was greatly surprised to find they had been taking freely of his package cigars that were stored under the counter. He was somewhat chagrined that he had been so easily “worked” by the boys.

Next I called on Mr. S——, the proprietor of the East Front Street cigar store. He was standing at his front door when I told him that some of our school boys said they had been taking cigars from his store. Mr. S—— smiled and said there was nothing to their story, that he had not lost any cigars. Then I spoke of his side door, and the window with steps under it, and how the boys claimed they had taken the cigars; that



they said the cigars were in tin boxes, twenty-five in a box.

Then he said: "I carry that kind of goods, and I'm the only man in the city that does. Come in, let's see what we can find out."

We found out that the boy had given an exact description of the place and manner of taking the cigars; and that they had taken about five hundred cigars.

Of these six boys, two finally entered the professional criminal class.

From similar gangs of boys come many who continually fill up the ranks of professional criminals.

Too many cities and towns offer but little protection to these younger boys whose homes permit them to roam the streets from early evening till midnight. These are the hours when the forces of evil get a hold on these boys that means their ruin.

Public school teachers all over this land by their devotion to the boys and girls of their schools are exerting so strong an influence on many that it saves them from the street temptations that surround them; but there are city responsibilities and parental duties that can never be shifted to the teacher's shoulders. I will illustrate this point by telling a little story.

It was Monday morning following a Thanksgiving vacation of Thursday and Friday, that a prominent patron of one of our elementary schools called at the principal's office to lay a complaint against a boy of her neighborhood who attended this particular school.

The principal, a woman of sincere and gracious manners, listened to the complaint and the request that was coupled with it.

The caller proceeded: "I have come to make a complaint against Henry Smith. He is one of your pupils

and you are responsible for his conduct. Last Friday afternoon Henry attacked my son. Knocked him down and beat him until his face was a fright to see. Henry is as mean a *white child* as I know though his mother thinks he is perfection. They live just across the street from us and I know she resents it if anything is said about him. I can not go to her about this as she and I mingle socially and I do not wish any trouble to come between us.

“Now you are responsible since we employ you to look after the conduct of your pupils, so I’ve come to make this complaint and to request you to whip Henry severely for attacking my boy. It is your duty to do this.”

The principal gave respectful attention to the recital, and then asked: “When did you say this took place?”

“*Last Friday afternoon*, right in front of my own home,” answered the caller, nodding her head.

“*Last Friday?*” echoed the principal, “Why, that was during vacation. I have no control over these boys and girls when they are at their homes during vacation time. I have no right whatever to punish or correct Henry in any manner, so I must respectfully decline to consider it, as it is wholly beyond my jurisdiction.”

This principal always exercised good judgment in drawing the line between what responsibilities were hers and what were not hers. Most carefully, and most conscientiously, she discharged all that were hers.

Teachers may say this story is of a rather extreme case. I grant them that is true, but it is an honest recital of an actual occurrence. The woman was a woman of wealth and high social standing. It brings prominently to view the fact that the teacher has *her* responsibilities, and that the *parents* have theirs.

It is a great opportunity to be helpful, the opportunity to teach the ordinary lessons as arithmetic, history, geography, spelling and others, cheerfully, intelligently, conscientiously, living a life that exemplifies in the midst of the teacher's school, the ideals he would implant in the minds and hearts of the boys and girls who are daily in his presence.

It is the great opportunity that comes to teachers. It is their *direct* responsibility.

\* \* \* \* \*

One morning our compulsory attendance officer said to me that he had found some more work for me to do.

"What is it?" I asked.

The attendance officer replied: "I happened to meet Mr. A—— on the street last evening, and he stopped me and said for me to tell you that some boys were running a gambling den in a room in a certain downtown office building; that his own boy, a high school boy, was one of them; that several other high school boys went there sometimes; but other boys not high school boys made up most of the gang; that it was a bad thing, and he wanted me to tell you he hoped you'd 'clean it out.'"

Now Mr. A—— who had sent this word to me, was one of the ablest attorneys in the city.

I replied to the attendance officer that looking after delinquent *school* children, and parents who tried unlawfully to keep their children out of school, was a part of my legitimate work as superintendent of the city schools; but that gambling dens and especially those frequented by minors, should be reported to the mayor; that it was the city government's place to "clean out" the gambling dens; that I could do nothing in the matter.

Mr. A—— appreciated my position and through the proper officers had the den “cleaned out” and closed up.

A superintendent’s field is broad enough for the full exercise of all his powers. He makes a serious mistake when he assumes authority that rightly belongs to the city government. He should lend his influence to further all good works but to further them through the proper channels.

One afternoon the second week after the Christmas vacation, one of our high school teachers of English called at my office to talk with me about one of her scholars. After we had talked a few minutes, she said to me that she had at last found one thing at which Hiram F—— could make good.

“What is that one thing?” I asked.

She replied: “He would make a good reporter for a sporting paper.”

Then she said that the week after the vacation, for a class exercise, she had asked each member of her first year English class to write some incident of the vacation, and that Hiram had written the paper she held in her hand. She then passed me the paper saying that it was the first written paper that he had ever given her that could be marked above a passing grade; that this paper was an excellent bit of English and would grade in the nineties; that she knew it was his own composition for he had written it under her own observation in class; that it was the first subject she had discovered that he could write about.

I then read the paper. In the paper he told of his going to a club-room and engaging in a game of cards for money. He gave every move in the game from start to finish, telling just how much money passed hands and

how much he won. The story was told with a movement that would lead one unacquainted with the game to believe the writer knew well the game, knew it as only a good player could know it. Without giving the boy's name, the paper was passed to one of the expert gamblers of the city who said no one but an expert could so perfectly describe every move of a game.

A short time after I had a talk with Hiram. I asked where he had learned to play the game that he had become so expert in playing.

He replied that his father and mother had taught him; that they played a great deal. "Why, Mr. Stableton, all the people my father and mother go with socially play cards," said he.

"But," I replied, "Hiram, they do not play for money."

"Yes, Mr. Stableton, they *do play for money*, my father and mother, and the people with whom they play, *all play for money*. They play for money to make the game *interesting*."

Knowing the boy as I did, I had no reason to doubt his statements, he had always been honest and truthful.

A few months later, one of the leading ministers of our city called at my office for a little visit. He was not the pastor of my own church, but we were warm friends. In the course of our conversation, he remarked that we educators seemed to think education was everything even to the extent of giving religion but little place.

I replied, laughing, that I thought I was trying to live a Christian life just as hard as he was, but that my work was with young people, not in the pulpit; I then talked over a number of the boys to whom we school people were trying to be helpful, not only as teachers of lessons, but as friends, to guard them from

wrong; that often we could do little on account of home influences. Among others, I told him in strict confidence for I could trust him, of Hiram J——, not at first giving him the boy's name.

“What?” said he. “Hiram J——! He is a member of my church; his mother is a teacher in my Sunday School.”

Who is responsible for Hiram J——'s being more familiar with gambling than with any other subject on which he ever wrote in a year's work in high school English?

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As I have said elsewhere, most of the acts of scholars of this period of life are unmoral, not immoral; but as the scholars pass on to the later high school years of adolescence, to early manhood and womanhood, if there is not discernible at least a tendency to correct the untruthfulness or stealing that has marked them during the earlier years of adolescence, there is great danger that these commonly fleeting characteristics of this period will, as a consequence, become fixed as traits of character.

## CHAPTER XII

### AWAKENED TO A CONSCIOUSNESS OF POWER

A number of years ago when as superintendent I took charge of the schools at Charleston, Illinois, I found the high school well organized and doing excellent work. One day the principal and I were talking over the high school work and as there was no interest in public speaking in the school I suggested that we hold a declamation contest some time the latter part of the semester. For a number of years I had been in the habit of helping to conduct similar contests and had given considerable attention to training the speakers. I had found that a well-directed contest of this kind has a fine effect in arousing an interest in public speaking on the part of the scholars. The principal favored my suggestion, but asked who would help with the training, as all the high school teachers were carrying heavy work. I replied that I had helped with it in other schools and would help there; that I was not an expert but could and would help.

The principal said further that he did not believe any of the high school boys would be willing to take part.

I replied that I had no fear of their not being willing to take part; that I had never met high school boys who would not enter heartily into a contest of this kind when it had been rightly presented to them; and that I felt sure I should find the Charleston boys willing to do their best in making a program of this kind a success.

The principal then asked who I thought would be good ones to select for contestants. I had been in the school only a short time, and had not become well ac-

quainted with the boys of high school, but I had observed which ones the scholars recognized as leaders, or as "shining lights" in athletics, and I knew it would be wise to use one of the leading athletes on the program as I believed it would have a favorable influence on others who would be invited to enter the contest.

With this thought in mind, I replied that I thought Meyers Carter, the greatest athlete in the high school, should be asked to be one of the contestants. Meyers was a great big, likable, handsome fellow, the school's greatest asset in things athletic. This was before a scholarship standing was required to be eligible to play on an athletic team. When I named him for a contestant, the principal said: "Why, Mr. Stableton, he couldn't do anything. He's a mighty fine fellow, but he's no student; he's about the poorest scholar in the freshman class. Why, he can hardly learn a lesson, and would be an impossibility so far as a declamation contest is concerned."

I replied that I'd like to try Meyers and see if I could do anything with him. It would do no harm to try him out.

The principal then asked me if I had ever heard Meyers try to recite, saying that he stammers so that it is very hard to follow him in what he says; but if I would like to try him, he'd be pleased to have me do it. "There's one thing about him," he said, "he is a fine fellow if he isn't a student."

The declamatory entertainment was a great success. It was held in the First M. E. Church, and the seating capacity and standing room were taxed to the limit.

Meyers was an athlete and knew what it was to be in the foot races and other athletic contests. He was big, somewhat loose-jointed as would be expected at his age,



and yet with these handicaps, still had much of grace in his movements. I knew I must assign him, or rather help him decide on a selection that would give plenty of opportunity for the bigger movements of his body, the play of the big muscles, whose ease and beauty of motion called forth the thrilling admiration of the crowd when he was leading to victory his high school team on the athletic field. As he had won in the foot-race, so had Dr. Holmes' Old Horse, so "How the Old Horse Won the Bet" was his selection.

I had no difficulty in overcoming his stammering and bringing out a voice well suited to the selection. The piece gave him great freedom. Long before the night of the entertainment I knew he would surprise all his friends.

Before the evening of the contest, it was decided there would be no judges, no awarding or announcing of honors.

That night all did well, but none better than Meyers. The audience was spell-bound as Meyers' interest in the Old Horse and his jockey became so intense that he was lost to all about him and was swinging around that course, every power of body and mind bent on pushing on to victory the Old Horse and rider. As the Old Horse went round and round with mighty stride, so Meyers' big body swayed rhythmically in harmony with the Old Horse, till in triumph he passed the goal.

Meyers too had reached a goal. The people gathered about the contestants and congratulated each one on his part in the program. None were more warmly congratulated than Meyers. It was the first thing in the line of school work, except in athletics, that he had ever done for which he had received praise. His goal was

that he had become conscious that he could do things other than athletics that were worth while.

His principal, teachers and schoolmates, and his friends in the community, recognized the man they had not known before.

The principal and teachers expected better class-room work than he had done before and were not satisfied with his former standard. It is a great blessing to young people to know that their friends expect a good report of them in whatever they do. For a scholar in the high school to feel that his principal, teachers, and school-mates, and his community friends, expect a good quality of school work from him, is a wonderful stimulus to his doing what is expected of him.

Meyers felt that he must meet these expectations. Then too he now had faith in his ability to do better school work than he had done and determined to do it. And he did it. Not that he became a brilliant student, for he did not. His grades were only fair, but they were not that before. He finally graduated from the high school having made an excellent record in a few of his studies and only fair records in others, and with the highest esteem of the faculty, the scholars of the school, and of those in the community who knew him.

The two things the declamation contest did for him were, first, it made him conscious of his power or ability to do work in this line that called forth commendation and that awakened in him faith in his ability to do other school work if he only put forth the effort; the second was that he must not fail to meet the expectations of his friends; his pride was touched in a good way.

Again and again I have seen that when a high school scholar is indifferent to his work, practically doing nothing, that if something can arouse an interest in one

study so he does what he knows is creditable work in that subject, he can be led to be interested in other subjects or studies, and finally to good work in all his high school studies. This is especially true if he has had but little faith in his ability to do good work in any study.

Meyers continued his school education until he graduated from a higher institution of learning. His scholarship in this higher institution was not of the highest; but it was of sufficiently high grade to give him a diploma from the institution, an institution that never gives diplomas to those who do not deserve them.

At a meeting of the Superintendents' Department of the National Educational Association a few years ago, I became acquainted with the State Superintendent of Public Schools in the state where Meyers was then teaching. I had lost track of Meyers, and so did not know where he was located. In the course of our conversation, the Superintendent told me that one of my former scholars was principal of a large elementary school in a certain city in his state, and that he had made a great record; that he was considered the finest principal in that state in his ability to deal with boys and hold them to their school interests.

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Frank K—— entered the high school at fourteen years of age having made a good record in his grammar grade studies. He was rather small for a boy of fourteen, and gave no indications whatever of having entered the stage of puberty, but was in excellent health. He came of good parentage and was well cared for in his home.

The first year in the high school he carried all his work but made no high grades. The second year in the

high school, he was listless, dreamy; and while he passed in all his studies, his grades were so low it almost seemed that he had been passed "by grace."

The second high school year he was evidently undergoing great physical changes. He made quite a growth in height, although he never attained a height of more than five feet five inches.

He had always been neat in his dress, but his third year in the high school he was one of the most dressy boys in the school, caring more for the brush of his hair, the color of his neckties, of which there were many, the crease of his pant legs, and the shine on his shoes, than for any of his studies that the teachers forced on his attention.

Physically he had passed from boyhood to youth, and the emotional and the mental characteristics were those of this stage. To look at his hair one would think he thought the hairs of his head were all numbered, by the girls, they were so exactly combed. In the somewhat select dancing party, he found his greatest pleasure. But he was the despair of his teachers. They called upon the principal for help to hold him up in his studies, and the principal called upon the parents, but all to little effect. In some of his studies he failed completely, and in the others made only passing marks.

When his third year closed, he did not expect to re-enter school for his fourth year; but his parents still hoped he would change his mind and continue in school to his graduation. Two or three weeks before the opening of school in September, he called on me at my office to tell me he was thinking of returning to school and to ask what I thought he could do. He asked if I thought it would be possible for him to make up all he had lost the year before and graduate with his class.

I replied that it was "up to him," he *could do it* if *he would*, but that it would mean a year of close, hard work; that he would have no time for any other interests; that all outside interests would have to be given up that he might have time for the work he would have to make up; but that I had no question of his ability to do it if he only would; that we would give him the opportunity and every help possible, but that he alone could say whether or not he was willing to pay the price of graduation.

I then said further: "Here you are, Frank, a young man of excellent physical health, good mental ability, of polished manners, a representative of one of the best of homes, willing to work at anything you can find to do to earn money, but too intellectually lazy to finish a high school education. You are a young man of good moral character. We all know how finely your brother did in high school. You are as well-equipped mentally as your brother, but you do not seem to be willing to hold yourself down to hard study as he did. There is no need of my telling you of the value of a high school education for you know this without words from me. It seems to me it is only a question of your willingness to hold yourself strictly to hard school work for a year in order that you may graduate next June. It's a test of your 'grit.' A fellow with plenty of 'grit' would never question as to whether or not he could hold out, he would simply start in to do it and would do it. He would never for an instant weaken himself by wondering if he could do it. The teachers have but little faith in you as a student, in fact, they think you are a 'dead beat' in class work. You *can* and *must* change this. You must do a grade of work that will command their respect.

“To graduate next June is a big undertaking, but *I'd clench my teeth* in determination to do it. Teachers may have an incredulous smile when they learn you are counting on graduating next June; but all this will change when you show them you are doing the work.

“*Don't be a quitter*, come back and show your mettle.”

He left the office pretty well decided to make the attempt. On the day for enrolling seniors he was on hand to arrange his work. I do not think there was a teacher in the school who had any faith in his carrying the studies he was permitted to take; but for some reason I believed he would do it. The first month had not passed before all knew he was a changed boy. When at the close of the first report period, five weeks, the teachers put their grades on the cards to be sent to parents, they would say: “Look at what Frank's done. That's great for him!” And as month after month went by, he rose higher and higher in the esteem of his teachers.

When he received his first report card with his grade, I looked at his report, grasped his hand and said: “Good, Frank, I believed you would do it.” He smiled, that was all.

His parents were amazed at the change in him. Other years, he never studied at home however hard the parents pressed him to do it; but now said the father: “We never speak to him about studying his lessons. He is at them often before we are up in the morning, and we leave him working at them when we go to bed. He does no running around at night at all. The one thing he is centered on now is his lessons. My, but we are pleased now when we look over his report card. He seems mighty contented too.”

At the close of the year in June, Frank graduated, respected and admired by all the school teaching force for what he had accomplished. He carried the heaviest work of any scholar in the high school, and ranked high in his grades.

With the physical changes of youth accomplished, the mind took on mental vigor unknown before, and like the young child learning to walk, every attempt to do the desired thing brought consciousness of power to do the desired thing. The part the school did was to hold on to the boy until it induced him to make the attempt.

Sometimes we school people are at a loss to know how to keep a hold on some high school scholars until we can induce them to put forth an effort in the right direction.

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A year or two ago, I heard a dean from one of our great universities say to the students of a large high school that it is a great handicap to a high school boy to be pretty, or good-looking; that the homely-looking high school boys have by far the better opportunity to make something worth while of themselves as they are not drawn away from the serious purposes of the school by the too-great attention that is showered on those who are good-looking. The school laughed heartily.

I'm inclined to believe there is some truth in the dean's statement.

I followed Harmon G—— through the grammar grades of the elementary grades on to his graduation from the high school. In the grammar grades he was never a brilliant pupil, far from it, he ranked always as one of the weaker members of his class. But he was a beautiful boy, always regular in attendance, attentive

to his work; of fine manners, and a very likeable disposition. He was greatly liked by all his teachers, and by all who knew him.

He came into the high school at fourteen years of age, and the first year made a record in perfect accord with what he had done in the grammar grades. His teachers were disappointed that he did not do a better grade of work. From his appearance, they expected more. While he was very boyish-looking, he had an exceedingly bright face and fine eyes that caused the teachers at the beginning of his first year in high school, to expect him to show himself one of the better students in his class; but they soon learned that he was one of the weaker ones.

He was in our high school two years when he left us to live in another city. When he left us at the close of his second year in high school, he was short a semester in each of two studies in which he had failed. He was in the other city high school a year when he returned to us. Now all his boyish look had vanished and he was an unusually handsome youth, one who attracted attention wherever he went, and especially was he a favorite with a certain group of high school girls. But he was still only an ordinary student. His report of credits from the school he had been attending was much the same as the record he had made with us. However, he was with us only a few months, when changes in his plans took him from our school to another before the close of the semester. This broke up his work. At the opening of the next semester, he returned to us. This changing about which could not be avoided, lost him much time. He was somewhat out of heart about ever completing a high school course. Social affairs outside of school had great attraction for him and helped to make him dis-



satisfied with the thought of lengthening the time to complete a high school course.

As the semester moved on, he did not seem to be making much headway with his school work. He was trying to get his father's consent for him to drop out of school and take a job of work in a store. I happened to meet the father one evening about this time. He asked to speak with me about Harmon.

He said: "I want to ask you *one* question. It is this: If Harmon were your boy, would you permit him to give up his school and never finish a high school course?"

I replied: "No, I *would not permit him* to give up his high school. He is too fine a boy not to have a high school education."

He replied: "That's all I want to know. Harmon will not leave high school until he graduates."

The following morning Harmon came into my office to talk over his work with me. His father had told him of our conversation, and he knew that he must plan to complete his high school course. But he said he did not believe he was ever going to be able to learn geometry, that he could not see through it and would like to give up the study. I knew he could learn geometry for I had followed him in his mathematics sufficiently to know he was not "born short" there. I made this arrangement with him that he should prepare his lesson for the next day and that I would hear him recite it at 7:30 in the morning at my office. I was to try him and see what the trouble was.

Let no one think for a moment that he would consider it as anything unpleasant or in the way of a punishment to recite the lesson to me. We were friends. I

was anxious to help him. He was pleased to come to recite to me.

He recited the lesson. It was well prepared considering the fact that he had been giving this study so little time in the past that this lesson was for that reason hard for him. He was clear in all his reasoning and instead of showing an inability to master geometry, he showed excellent ability providing there was the proper preparation.

He said he had felt like quitting for he had never been anything but a "tail-ender" all the way through, and that he had gotten tired of forever being the poorest in the class. But since his father's wish was that he should complete his high school course, he would have to do it. Then he added: "I'm tired, and sick of always being the dummy in the recitation, but I guess it's because I haven't any ability to do good work."

I replied: "I'm glad you're getting tired of being one of the poorest in your classes. You have good ability, but you don't use it. In the geometry lesson you have recited to me this hour, you show as good ability as I myself have and that is the subject in which I ranked highest as a student in all my high school and university work.

"The one trouble with you, Harmon, is you do not give time to your lessons. You have never given your high school lessons a fair show. You clerk in the store before school in the morning and after school in the afternoon and on Saturdays; and you take much time of evenings for your own social pleasure. All of this is all right in its place, but if you are to do creditable work in school, you must find some way to get more time for study. You can, by giving the proper preparation to your work, take your place in the estimation of the

teachers and fellow students as one of the best students in your class.”

Before he left my office he said he was going to do everything in his power to be known as a good student rather than a dullard.

He did improve, and closed the semester with a record in grades far above what he had been making.

The next year he was permitted to carry some extra work, that he might finish the course in June. He was all school business now. Lessons first, then other things. He was no longer ashamed of his poor recitation standing, for he had become one of the best reciters in all of his classes. Toward the close of the second semester each year, it had long been customary for the senior class to give a play. This year when the dramatic teacher had tested the seniors for their fitness for places in the play, it was found that Harmon had been placed first in her judgment for the leading character; but nothing had been said to him as it was a question whether or not he would be permitted to take the place as he was carrying extra work. But when his case was referred to me with the assurance from all his teachers that he was above question in all his work, I gladly said to give him the place; that it would do him good. When I met him the next day, I gripped his hand and said: “*No longer a tail-ender, Harmon.*” He looked pleased and asked: “Do you think I can fill the place?”

He not only filled the place of the leading character, but filled it in a really brilliant manner that captured his audience and called forth rapturous applause.

\* \* \* \* \*

At the opening of school one September, among the first year scholars was a little, poorly-clad girl, a

stranger to all of us, as she had come to us from another city where she had completed her eighth grade work. She was so very poorly clad that she drew forth our pity.

She selected in her elective studies those leading to the business course. The first year and the second passed on with but few words said of our little waif-looking scholar. She was always in her place doing faithfully whatever was assigned her to do, though her work was sometimes below passing. Once or twice I saw her in tears over some failures she had made. The teacher of shorthand said Amelia was a tremendous worker, but did not seem to show much ability. Everywhere her work was only ordinary.

The third year came and found her again in school with some improvement in her appearance, though she still had that uncharitable charity look in clothing. This year she was the same industrious, untiring little person, but at the close of the year, she failed to pass in the second semester of shorthand. She had tried and tried, oh so hard to do the work, but still was below the standard for passing. She was assured, however, that she would be permitted to take up the advance term in shorthand when she returned in September with the privilege of trying to bring up the work in which she had failed, so she could take an examination in it as there would be no class in it until the second semester.

September found Amelia again in school, but so changed in her dress that she could scarcely be recognized. The shorthand teacher came to me to tell me of Amelia. As soon as school had closed in June, Amelia "hunted" herself a job. "Hunted" is the term, I think. She not only got the job, but she made good in it, and was now again in school clothed in

simple, becoming garments that her own efforts had purchased.

And then the shorthand teacher said: "And Amelia says she is going to graduate in June. Poor child! She can't do it, but she says she's got to do it, so I don't know what she may do, but graduation for her this year looks to me like an impossibility. There's last semester's shorthand to be made up, and I doubt if she can carry the shorthand of the present term. But I've promised to give her an examination on last semester's work whenever she is ready, though I do not see how she can pass it for she was very poor in it last semester. It is true that she has been doing shorthand work all summer, but of a very simple kind. Still, it would help her some. Poor child, I wish I could help her. She is so gritty and determined."

The principal told me of Amelia. How she had come to him with her plans for graduating and how he had tried to help her to see it was an impossibility for her to graduate the coming June; how she refused to see it as an impossibility and replied: "*It's got to be done. I've got to do it.* This is my last year in high school. Please let me try to do the work as I have planned and *I'll do it. It's got to be done. I've got to do it.*"

He could not refuse opportunity to so earnest a little body, so opened the way for her to do all that she might prove able to do, with the assurance of graduation if she did the work. He felt confident that she could not do the work required to complete the course, so cautioned her not to take it too seriously if she found herself unable to do all she had planned.

But she was not thinking of failing, and replied: "I'm going to do all the work. *It's got to be done.*"

Long before the close of the second semester all knew that Amelia would graduate. Amelia had known it all the time, but the rest of us came to know it long before commencement time.

How happy Amelia was all the latter part of the year, how her face beamed! And her hair, that was a somewhat tously, krinkly mass, when she entered high school, was now an adornment, shimmery, silky, well-kept, naturally wavy hair, tastefully, loosely, wound about her head in school-girl fashion. All the social functions that marked the close of school were a joy to her.

As she stepped forward to receive her diploma commencement night, the large audience did not know, but the superintendent, principal and teachers knew, that she who stood at that moment taking her diploma into her hand, had done the greatest amount of work, work of fine quality, of any student in the high school that year.

Amelia said: "It's got to be done. I've got to do it." When in behalf of the Board of Education, the diploma was given her, by that act we said: "You've done it, Amelia."

Amelia is today a successful typist, holding a good position.

Amelia awakened, but I do not know how she came to a consciousness of increased power. The school gave her every opportunity for the accomplishment of all that "had to be done." What if the school had not given her opportunity?

I would not have anyone think that we permitted every scholar that wished to "load up" with a heavier program of studies than is regularly provided for in the course of study, to do it, for we did not permit any such

thing. The greatest care was exercised by the principal in making out the program of studies for each scholar. Once in a while a scholar was permitted to take fewer than the regular number of studies for reasons that the principal considered justified the lighter work. Many scholars who were regularly employed earning their living had the privilege of coming to the high school for one lesson, two lessons or more, being present for recitations only. But light work was never permitted to be made an excuse for wasting time. The whole thought was to make the school meet the needs of all the scholars.

Sometimes it seemed wise to give very heavy work in order to secure undivided attention to school work. There are those who do their best work when the work presses heavily to the exclusion of other things. Ordinarily, where a student failed to pass in some one of his four studies, the regular number for one semester, he was not permitted to try to carry five to even up what he had lost until he had made a good record in the regular number of studies for one semester; but now and then there were cases where it seemed best to assign an extra study even where there had been failure to pass in some one study the preceding semester. This, however, was never done without due consideration. Too light work is sometimes the cause of failures to do good work; too heavy work may cause failure. Assignments of subjects for a term or semester should be made with as complete a knowledge as possible of the scholar's ability and of the probability, sometimes of the possibility of his using his ability for the accomplishment of the work.

## CHAPTER XIII

### ON THE WAY TO AND FROM SCHOOL— GATHERINGS UNDER SCHOOL NAMES

At one of our school board meetings one evening, one member of our board who was at that time a judge of one of the courts, asked me what authority I claimed over the conduct of school children on the way to and from school; and at other times than during school hours.

I replied that I knew no law that stated my authority on the way to and from school; but that I had always claimed the right to demand conduct on the way to and from school that would in no way interfere with the interests of the school; and that I held it my right to correct, even to administering punishment, for conduct on the way that interfered with the best interests of the school; that after pupils had reported at home, I claimed no responsibility for their conduct until they started again on the way to school, unless after reporting to their homes they came into the street to interfere in some way with other school children who were on their way to or from school; that sometimes a boy hoping to escape school control for his acts, would hurry home and report, then go out into the street and fight some other boy on his way home from school; that when this happened, I always claimed the right to demand of the parents that they see to it that their boy or their children did not interfere with school children on the way to and from school. In other words, I claimed the right to hold the parents responsible for their children's conduct after their children had reported at home, insofar as it affected the schools.



The judge replied that any court would sustain my stand in the matter, that my line of action was perfectly safe.

As to the second part of his question, "When not at school?" I made another reply. I answered that when scholars, more especially high school scholars, but applying the term scholars to both elementary and high school members, were gathered together under school class names, or school society names, or school club names, or simply as bodies or groups of school pupils or scholars, since their activities were considered as functions of the school, as superintendent of the schools it was my right and duty to require all of these various groups of young people using the name of some school organization, to conduct themselves in accordance with the wishes of the school authorities, the same as if they were in school during the six hours of the school day. This also was said to be a fair, safe position to hold.

I never had a parent to object to my assuming authority over the conduct on the way to and from school as stated. In accordance with these views of the school's rights, the conduct was always regulated.

This gives the school a restraining power that has a wonderful influence on the conduct on the way to and from school; and that keeps the rowdy element from gaining the ascendancy in the gatherings held under various organizations of the school.

A number of years ago I made a mistake in punishing a boy for an offense when the boy was wholly responsible to his parents under my own statement of responsibility. The case was as follows: One morning, the principal of one of our elementary schools phoned me that Alfred G—— had unmercifully beaten up one of the boys on the way home from school the after-

noon before, saying she would like my help in straightening up the affair.

I replied that I would be at her building as soon as I could leave my office, for her to do nothing until I came.

A little later, when I called at the school, the principal brought the two boys into the office and in their presence told me of the "fight" giving all the information about it she had been able to gather. This principal had always been very careful in looking into any trouble that might come up, and very trustworthy in her statements about any happening, so on this occasion I received her statement of the case as about correct; but to get the facts as near as possible at first-hand, each boy was given the opportunity to tell his story, to give his version of the affair.

In the main, the three stories or accounts of the fight agreed. One boy said that for several days he had been trying to keep out of the way of the other boy but, said he: "Yesterday, goin' home, he caught me and pounded me awful."

Anyone looking at this boy would believe every word he said for he was a "well-pounded up" specimen.

The other boy said that he had been waiting for a chance to "lick" the first boy, and said he: "I caught him goin' home yesterday after school, and surely I licked him a plenty."

The principal said "going home from school," the boys both said "goin' home" so there seemed no disagreement on this point.

The boy who had done the "licking" was a sort of a bully, a fighter feared by many boys of his neighborhood, and had given not a little trouble by fighting on the way home from school. Everything had been done

to keep down his fighting except to administer corporal punishment. So I did not waste much time, but said to him that as he still continued to fight after he had been corrected, time and again for it, I was going to give him a strapping, and that he should remember after this that every time he fought some boy on the way to or from school, he would have to meet me and that the punishment, whatever it might be, would not be light.

I then gave him a stinging strapping, one that no boy could laugh at or would care to have repeated.

This boy as I have said, was a sort of bully. He was in the sixth grade, but was large, and stronger than many boys in the higher grades. On former occasions, we had been in touch with his home people and had found them helpless when it came to controlling the boy, so this time, I took charge of him without notifying them.

After the boy had washed his face, and straightened himself up, the principal returned him to his room.

I thought then that the affair was settled, and that I should hear no more about it; but that evening I was called to the phone, and a voice said, "This is Mrs. G——, and I want to know why you whipped my boy today." I explained what had been done by her boy, and told her just why I had "whipped" him.

She replied: "But my boy was not on the way home from school, he had been home and had put on his old clothes and was out playing when the other boy came along and my boy licked him. The other boy had been home too, and had been sent over to the grocery, and was going home from there when he got licked."

Now I knew the woman and had no occasion to doubt her words. So I replied that both boys had spoken of being on the way home, and had said that it was after

school; that neither one had said he had been home; that had I known they had been home, I would not have had anything to do with their fighting; that I had all I cared to look after without mixing up in fights that were none of my business.

She listened to what I had to say, and then replied: "Mr. Stableton, that's all right. It won't do him any harm, the licking won't. So it's all right." And hung up the 'phone.

The fact is, she was really pleased that he had been punished for his street fighting, even though she seemed at first to resent my doing it.

Her statement of the case was correct. The boys had both been home. It was *not* my business, and I should never have made it my business had I been sufficiently careful in the first place in getting the facts. However, it taught me a lesson, the importance of being certain of all the facts in such cases before assuming authority to administer punishment.

The boy continued in school, but his fighting was a thing of the past. It was good for the boy that I punished him; but it was bad for me to be so careless as to punish a boy when his offense was none of my business.

There is no other authority that can so well control fighting, gang attacks, bad language, and many other offenses on the way to and from school as can the school. The vigilance of the teacher and the principal, together with the certain support of the superintendent in bringing all offenders to account, holds these offenses at the minimum. The very certainty that the principal "will get on to it" as the boys say, causes many a "would-be offense" to be put off until Saturday and by that time it is forgotten.

Policemen usually regard schoolboy fights and most of the offenses of which we are taking notice, beneath their dignity, as too trivial; but school teachers know that the lives of some school children would be made miserable through fear of some individual boy, sometimes girl, or gang, on the way to and from school did not the school exercise control. The timid, in some cases, could not in safety go to and from school without some other protection, did not the school protection make safe the way.

I remember once when speaking of the responsibility for conduct at school gatherings, before a county association of teachers, one teacher asked: "Mr. Stableton, if your high school senior class was to give a party some evening at a private home, would you consider it any business of yours whether or not the members of the class conducted themselves in a proper manner?"

I replied that I most certainly would consider the conduct of the seniors at a party held in the name of the senior class of our school my business as head of the school; that a permit to use the class name would be granted only where there was assurance that the conduct at the party, the character of the party, would be such as the school would approve; and that no high school teachers would act as chaperones without the sanction of the high school principal or superintendent; that the sanction of the principal or superintendent would be given only when the party would be of the kind to reflect credit on the school.

Our high school teachers were asked not to chaperone parties of high school students or other young people except those that had received the approval of the high school principal or superintendent. This request was first made because some "outside of school"

parties chaperoned by high school teachers had not been properly conducted, and the fact that high school teachers were the chaperones, had caused the high school to be held responsible for them when, in fact, the high school was in no way connected with them except that high school teachers had chaperoned them.

It is not asking much of high school teachers to ask them to chaperone only approved school parties and it shuts out confusion of responsibility.

I wish here to give a little history reaching back to my second year in Bloomington, as I think it will make clear the plan under which high school parties and gatherings of all kinds were held. For eighteen years, the plan has worked admirably.

During my second year in Bloomington we had some unfortunate happenings connected with our high school parties. At that time there was no attempt made to control them, and as a result parties of various kinds were held in the name of some class or other organization of the school.

These parties were held in halls or private homes, and while bearing the name of the high school, they were wholly from under the control or direction of the school authorities. Objectionable characters from outside the school for whose conduct the school had no right to assume responsibility, but for whose conduct the school was held responsible by an uninformed public, were often present. The whole situation was most unfortunate for the school.

Finally a party was held at the home of one of the junior girls,—what I would call an old-time “class fight,”—that caused the members of the board of education to say when consulted, that the board would stand as a rock back of any effort we should make to

bring the social affairs of classes or organizations bearing the name of the high school under our control. At the party mentioned, a number of the senior class, backed by the rabble of the street, and I might say, at the invitation of the high school girl, a junior, at whose home the junior party was held, for she had said to some of the seniors the day before that she did not care if they tore the house down, caused serious trouble. The fact was she wanted "a big time," and they most certainly had it. Some of the windows of the house were broken, the cellar was despoiled of a quantity of canned grape-juice, and the whole affair was rowdy in the extreme.

First the matter was placed before the board. I took this precaution from the fact that the privilege or, as some put it, the right to hold class parties at private homes, without the consent of the school authorities, had been established by a precedent of so many years standing that in attempting to make a change, I felt that I must first be sure of not undertaking more than the board would grant me the authority to carry out.

The senior class was called together and with the high school principal present, the superintendent talked over the situation with the class. Nothing unkind or upbraiding was said, in fact the opposite. He stated that it was not flattery to say that the senior class represented the best selected group of young people in the city, and that no better young people could be found in any city; they were those who had been sifted through almost twelve years of school training, and that their very willingness to hold on to the school work, and their determination to complete the high school course, marked them as among those who would in a few years be leaders in the community.

“But today,” said he, “we are in trouble, not because any one has so planned, but because the spirit of fun has carried some of us to where our fun has trespassed on the rights of others. It has become rowdyism. Our school, in the eyes of the public, is disgraced, and it is being questioned by some whether or not a high school is worthy the financial support of the community when such things are done in its name.”

After setting forth the situation as clearly as he could, he stated that the woman at whose home the strife had occurred, was going to enter suit if the damage to the property was not made good at once. He advised the class to appoint a committee to wait on the woman to arrange to make good the damage. This was done and an adjustment was made on the payment of a few dollars by the senior class.

When this trouble was fully settled, the high school principal and the superintendent again called the senior class together, and then the junior class, and explained to each class separately, what would be expected of them in the school social affairs in the future, and how an attempt would be made to prevent trouble. He read the rules instituted at this time. These rules stated that no school parties, school class parties, or gatherings of any school organizations, could be held except with the consent of the high school principal or the superintendent of the schools; and that permission would be granted only when there was assurance that the affair would be conducted in keeping with the best interests of the school, as determined by the high school principal or superintendent.

After reading these new rules, which made a complete change in the control of the social affairs of the school, he explained quite fully the spirit and manner



in which the rules would be administered. He said first that he believed in school parties, class parties, more, rather than less, social life for high school scholars than was then in the school; that he considered the social life of the high school scholars a very important part of their education just as important as algebra, history, or other studies that were recognized as essential parts of a high school education; that the superintendent, the high school principal, and the high school teachers, would give every possible aid to make the class parties and other parties of the high school the most beautiful, the most enjoyable of any parties in the city; that the intent was to give the social life of the school its proper recognition as a vital part of the school work, and to take it out of the class to which it had so long been consigned, the class of attendant evils, chronic evils that could be doctored but could not be cured; to dignify it so that no school program could be planned that did not give to the social life of the school due thought and consideration.

The high school principal spoke along the same lines.

The superintendent then said that it would greatly please the high school principal and himself if the class would vote as a class to obey the new rules; that there would be no unkind feeling on the part of the principal and superintendent, if, after discussing the rules in a class meeting, the class should not take such action; but that the rule would be enforced just the same except that the class by taking such action might save some impulsive members from doing things that would be unfortunate for them; that it was in the class' power to hold back impulsive members, good, likable, bright, but impulsive scholars, from violations of the rules that might for the best interests of the school, cause them to

suffer even to the extent of losing their places in school.

Then turning to the class president, the superintendent asked him to take charge of the class while the superintendent and high school principal withdrew, that the class might discuss the superintendent's proposition.

In a few minutes, a committee from the class brought the class president's invitation to the superintendent and the high school principal to return to the class meeting. As they entered the meeting, they were greeted with a hearty welcome. The president then said he was pleased to report that the class had voted to obey the new rules and to support them.

The superintendent and principal thanked the class for the action taken, and again promised that everything possible would be done to make the remaining months of their closing year, socially, the best they had known.

The senior class meeting was followed by a junior class meeting where the new rules were explained and the same proposition of cooperation put before the class that had been considered by the seniors. The juniors voted to obey the new rules and thus gave the weight of the class' influence in favor of them.

While we had no class organizations below the junior class, we thought it best that the new rules making somewhat radical changes in the social affairs of the school, should be presented and explained to the entire body of scholars. This was done, but the scholars other than seniors and juniors were not given opportunity to take any action on endorsing them. When seniors and juniors lead, the scholars of lower class rank readily follow.

Now it was our part to make good in helping with the social affairs as never before. This senior class that had set the example of voting to support the high school

rules, was given the most beautiful Senior-Junior Party that had ever been given a class. It was important that the new order of things should make a great impression as something worth while, then the following of it up year after year would fix it as a habit of the school. The Junior-Senior Party was made a striking affair, but the Senior-Junior Party was *the* party of the year. All other school social affairs were given their share of attention, so that at the close of the year the scholars felt that the change had brought them enlarged pleasures.

The following September, the senior class, after hearing the rules read and an explanation given, voted to obey the rules. The junior class then took the same action.

This presenting the rules to the senior and junior classes and asking them as classes to pledge to obey and support the rules, asking, I say, but in no way offering any compulsion, became a regular custom, so that each September from then till now, it has been done. Never once has a class failed to give its pledge, and never once has a class broken its pledge or even wavered in holding to it. Only in a very few instances have individuals broken the class pledge, but in these cases the classes have given the offenders no support, no sympathy.

Once when two or three scholars in our school had committed an offense that was a violation of their class pledge, a schoolman from another city asked: "If two or three members of one of the classes that has pledged itself to support the rules, have broken them, what does the class pledge amount to anyway?"

I replied: "While it is true that two or three individual members have broken the class pledge, the fact that their class gives them no support, no sympathy, but looks on them as having proved false to the class, makes

their offense a very simple thing to deal with. Not to be recognized by their class for wrongdoing takes away all glory and adds bitterness to the punishment of the offenders. Oh, with us the class pledge has amounted to everything." Nor did I overstate the facts.

When this spirit moves the seniors and juniors it is contagious and the other scholars follow in the lead. With this spirit in the high school, the social and other affairs that rightly come under the jurisdiction of the school can be managed in a very satisfactory manner, and with but little worry so far as the conduct of the scholars is concerned if the responsibility for such affairs is held largely in the hands of the principal and the superintendent. But it is necessary for the principal and superintendent from time to time to make clear to the teachers what is expected of them in order that they may not unintentionally complicate what otherwise are very simple matters of administration.

## CHAPTER XIV

### ATTRACTION OF THE OPPOSITE SEX

Youth is the time of life too when the attraction of the opposite sex comes to many boys and girls with the strong pull of a mighty magnet. I think it was Samantha Allen who said that she always knew that when love came to Sweet Cicely it would go hard with her; and it did. So it is with many boys and girls, "it goes hard with them." It is perfectly normal that it is so. We are told today by some physicians that it is not necessary that all children should have measles, and a number of other childhood diseases that in the past we thought all children were heir to; but no psychologist has ever yet told us that there is any way to prevent the attraction between the opposite sexes at this time in life.

The other day a young man hailed me as I was leaving high school and offered me a ride home in his auto. As we started on the way home, he said to me: "My little boy will be six years old next July, so will be ready for school in September."

This was not a startling announcement, but it caused me to think back not a great many years before when the father of this young man, then one of the leading business men of the city, spoke to me as I was passing his place of business and said: "Mr. Stableton, I don't know whether or not high schools are good things. I'm sure the ward schools are all right, but I'm *not* so sure that high schools are worth while." I listened very attentively to what further he had to say. "Now there is my boy," said he, "He did fine work in ward school, and tended to business; but as soon as he entered the high school, he wanted long pants, to run with the girls, and

to go to parties, so I don't know whether high schools are good things or not."

All I could say was that he must remember boys cease to be boys and begin to be men at about a certain age, whether in high school or not.

As I sat with the boy in his car and heard of *his boy's* being almost ready for entering school, I could but think that the father's concern over the very natural, normal characteristics of the development of youth, had not in any way stayed the boy's onward movement from boyhood to youth, from youth to early manhood, and to fatherhood.

Those of us who live in the school with boys and girls of this time of life, must understand that all these outcroppings of a strong instinct are not evil, however silly and foolish they may sometimes appear; and that it is ours to guard and nurse them through the first attack. As a rule, if there is a second attack a little later common sense plays a part.

How prone fathers and mothers are to forget, was brought to my mind one day when a father and mother called to talk about their boy. He was in the throes of his first "love-sickness." There was nothing at school in his conduct that was giving the school any concern except that his grades, while not failures, were lower than they should be. But his parents knew his whole thought was centered on a girl. The "phone" calls back and forth on their home phone had revealed the situation to them. The father was very indignant and out of patience with him, and said the boy had no right to be thinking of girls at this time in life; that he had more important work at hand. The father, indeed, was much stirred up; but the mother remembered, and smiled and said: "Papa, *you* needn't say anything,

when you were no older than *our* boy is and I was only fifteen—you were just as silly about me as our boy is about this girl, and you wrote me notes *all* the time.” The discussion or conference soon ended.

Here is an unusual case, call it what you will:

The boy was a member of our high school, about seventeen years of age, apparently finely-developed physically, mentally and morally, a fine athlete and of fine carriage and bearing; the pride of his home and admired by all who knew him; and as might be expected, a great favorite with the girls. To put it in common phrase, he fell desperately in love with one of the high school girls; she was equally smitten with him; but, as there was nothing in their relations at school that could be criticised, I took no interest in the affair, supposing it was one of those infatuations that, like some childhood disease would run its course in a few weeks and that all it needed was to give nature time to apply the proper restorative; but not so with his people. They believed it best to oppose his fancy; not by unkindness, for he was the idol of his home, but by talking with him, they tried to break the infatuation; but this seemed only to add fuel to the flame until the flood of emotions was too great, and he was, apparently, “beside himself.”

One morning, I missed the young man and his two sisters from school. The work of the morning had scarcely begun when I was called into the corridor and informed that the young man had run away from home; that his love affair was the cause of it; that he had gone west over the U. P. railroad, riding on the blind end of a baggage car; and that he had left a note, written in his girl friend's handwriting, telling why he had gone. It was the middle of January and the thermometer reg-

istered twenty-five degrees below zero. His parents feared he would be frozen, and had wired the different stations west on the road but had received no word. They said they knew the girl would hear from him, and asked me to find out, if possible, from her where he was.

The second morning, when she came in, I asked her if she had received any word from him. She replied that she had, that he was in a western town and all right. She was very nervous and excited, so much so that I thought she had not given me a correct report. That forenoon our county supervisor of the poor received a telegram from the supervisor of a county farm farther west, saying that a young man from our county, with both feet badly frozen, had been taken to the county poor-house in that county, and asking what should be done with him. It was immediately inferred that he was the boy who had run away. His father came to the school and asked me to interview the girl again and find out if possible what she knew. I called her into the hall, said to her that word had come that made the boy's people think he was in a bad condition from frozen feet and in a county house farther west; that I believed she had word from him that she had not given me; and that she ought to let me know in order that his people might go to him if he needed them.

She burst out crying, and, snatching a letter from her bosom, said, "Here it is; here it is," and handed me the letter. I read it. In it, he told her that he had stayed on the baggage car until both his feet were frozen solid; that he feared he might lose them; that he was then in the county house; that no difference what happened, he would never come back home. The remainder, and far the greater part of the letter, was taken up with his avowals of undying love for his



darling, his own. It was a boy wailing at the feet of his idol. It poured forth such a volume of endearing terms that I hesitated to read it, but read it that the father might know.

The father went for him on the first train and brought him home. Both feet were badly frozen, and in a short time it became necessary to operate on both of them so that he was left somewhat of a cripple for life.

I asked the girl why she had helped him to run away in such cold weather. "Oh, Mr. Stableton," she replied, "I did not know what to do; he got so I was almost afraid of him; he threatened to kill himself, and even did try to kill himself with laudanum, so when he said to me he was going away, I could not keep from helping him." A few nights before he ran away he had taken a heavy dose of laudanum and gone to the girl's home to die, but she and her people worked with him and prevented the drug's being fatal.

The boy had said he couldn't stand the way he was being treated at home any longer; yet, except that his people objected to his paying so much attention to this girl and spending so much of his time at her home, he was the pet of his own home.

The boy was confined to his home for a few weeks; but as soon as he was able to be about on crutches, he returned to school. By this time the infatuation had lost its hold on him. He and the girl finally graduated from the high school in the same class; but they were never again anything to one another. He, more than once, talked the whole affair over with me and always said that he was willing to go limping through life, if it were necessary to escape marrying the girl in whom he had ceased to have any interest. He afterwards

graduated from one of our leading medical colleges. Both he and the girl found other life partners.

Love affairs are just as natural to boys and girls as is hunger. Now and then a boy or girl seems to be immune, but later on even this one is affected.

It is the racial propagation instinct that unfolds at this time, and with some for a while, it is all-absorbing, all-overpowering. When it is strong before the judgment is developed, indiscretion and what we sometimes call silliness, are characteristics of the individual. Then great care should be exercised by parents and teachers; not that these boys and girls are evil in any sense; but they are wholly under the sway of their feelings; their judgment has not yet come to them, so the good judgment, we sometimes call it common sense, of parents and teachers must be in place of their own which will come later. And how tactfully this judgment must be proffered them, else the helper will fail in his mission. I remember, a number of years ago, when I was teaching in a western college and living in the college boarding-hall, the case of a young couple that possibly brings out the point I would make clear.

The girl and the boy were both students in the college preparatory classes; the girl roomed in the boarding-hall, the boy, in a private home. The preceptress kept in close sympathy with the girl and held her confidence. The girl was quick and impulsive, moved almost wholly by her feelings, and as the young man was her first (young man) friend, he filled a large part of her horizon. They were not crossed by the principal or preceptress, but every care was taken that they should meet as young people worthy of the confidence of their school guardians; they felt themselves worthy of every confidence for they were conscious of the fact that all

their intentions were pure and good, and knew not that their judgment was still a somewhat minus quantity; but they met under conditions that reduced, to a minimum, the opportunity for any indiscretion that would call forth unfavorable comments. The girl felt free to talk with the preceptress confidentially about the young man. The preceptress was a woman of mature years, whose experience enabled her to be helpful. Finally the boy's father, having heard of the affair, wrote him a letter, taking exception to his paying attention to the girl, and said the affair must stop. This angered the boy and troubled the girl. She went immediately to the preceptress and told her what had taken place, and all in tears, said she knew she could never love another as she loved this young man; and then asked her friend the preceptress if she had ever felt that way. The preceptress, with a good, comforting smile, said, "Yes, dear, a dozen times."

But the preceptress was wise in that she caused the girl to know that she was not opposed to the friendship and would do nothing to break it off. No opposition from her school friend, but only a word of friendly advice to be really womanly and not to worry because the young man's father did not seem to approve the friendship.

The preceptress well knew the way to accomplish the thing the father desired, was not to intensify the interest by opposing it, but to treat the young people with every consideration and hold their confidence, thus, without making too much of the affair, giving time for nature to effect a cure, which it did.

A few years ago, two young people of our high school were so taken up with each other that some of the teachers and the principal feared they would make

themselves the laughing-stock of the school. As I knew the boy, and had known him intimately for a number of years, I called him into my office one day and asked him if I might, as his friend, guard him on a matter that he, possibly, might think none of my business. He blushed, and replied that certainly I might, he would be glad to have me do so. I then said that I had noticed that he and one of the girls had become quite good friends, that I had not one word to say against the friendship, for I respected them both; but, that as a young man who cared for the respect in which his girl friend was held, he ought to watch himself and not permit himself to meet her *accidentally* too often, as they went to and from school; and as I knew her people did not object to his going to her home, I advised him to visit her at her home and not to be walking the streets with her after school hours; that people were making remarks that were doing her injury; and that I knew he, as her friend, would do everything in his power to protect her from gossip. In this manner, we talked over their relations and the points that he should consider, for *her sake* especially, and also for his own. I talked to him as a young man, my friend, and he responded as I wished. He thanked me for my words of interest, and what was more, while the friendship did not die out at once, their relations in and about the school and on the street assumed a more dignified form that could be but little criticised.

Most all of these little affairs between boys and girls of this age, so far as their conduct relates to the school, can be handled most satisfactorily by rightly appreciating the spirit, and while not condemning that which is but the outcropping of the instinct for the preservation of the species, still directing, until fully-developed

powers enable the youth to act with some judgment, even in these things.

When I speak of properly guarding the interests of grammar grade pupils and high school scholars, I mean that we should make all the conditions and surroundings at school, as conducive as possible to the free, wholesome mingling of the two sexes. We must always remember that the public schools have representatives from the homes of "all sorts and conditions of men," and that in the advanced grammar grades and the high schools, we have them at the period of life when inherited tendencies crop out, and the sex instinct is uppermost, at least for a part of this period; that many have little or no judgment, but are moved almost wholly by their emotions.

In the one-room school in the rural district, the teacher should always be at the school first in the morning to welcome the pupils as they come; and at noon, as many of the scholars eat their noon lunch at the school, so should the teacher; at the close of school in the afternoon, the teacher should be the last to leave the building and see that it is properly closed. The teacher's presence all the day long suggests the right conduct on the part of the members of the school, and gives no opportunity for any improprieties that might bring criticism on members of the school or the school itself. Yet the school has enjoyed the teacher if of the right type, from the early "Good-morning" to the afternoon closing, "Good Night."

Not long ago, I was riding with a friend in the country. It had rained a part of the afternoon, and was still drizzling when we approached a one-room school that had just closed its work for the day. We met the teacher, a young man protected by a raincoat,

a short distance from the school, going to his home. A number of the younger boys and girls passed us on their way home; but when we came near the school-house, we saw several of the older ones standing inside the school-room door, apparently waiting for the rain to cease drizzling. The teacher had evidently put on his rain-coat and gone home, leaving a few of his grammar grade pupils alone in possession of the school-house, a school-house with no dwelling house in sight. Later on, I came to know that this young man was counted one of the best young teachers in his county, and was held in high esteem by the patrons of his school; but he failed to realize the whole responsibility that was his or he would never have gone home at the close of the school day leaving a handful of advanced grammar grade pupils in the school building out of the sight of human habitation, to wait for the shower to pass by.

In the small town school, the same care as in the strictly rural school should be exercised. When in the town or city school the principal has planned the movement of pupils or scholars about the school so that they are almost continuously under the observation of some teacher, from the time of entering the building to the time of leaving it, under the eye of some teacher who is interested to be helpful, not one who is continually on the look-out for some offense to report to the principal, there is not apt to be anything serious to be corrected or even criticised. Usually, where the proper care is exercised by the principal and his assistants, and the right spirit prevails in the school, if little indiscretions are seen, a word of friendly counsel, kindly given in private, is all that is necessary to hold the conduct of all above criticism.

Our principals were always first on hand at the buildings, and they always saw that all pupils and scholars were out of the buildings at the proper time in the afternoon. The noon hours where pupils ate their lunch at the school were provided for in a way not to make it a burden on any one teacher.

In our elementary schools, our principals were women of rare qualifications for the positions. They so ably managed their buildings that the life of the school was about as helpful to grammar grade pupils as it could be made. There was oversight of them in their mingling together, but it was a sympathetic oversight, and not a nagging, spying on them. Boys and girls know the difference in these, even if they cannot express it in words.

Sometimes a principal would ask: "Mr. Stableton, have you noticed Henry's or John's (as the case might be) hair, and necktie?"

As I would look in the direction indicated, I would see a transformed head of hair, and a flaming new necktie.

"It is all because he has taken a fancy to that tastily-dressed girl in the corner to your right, Jane Smith, and he is trying to appear well in her eyes. Why, even his finger-nails are cleaned up. We teachers think his 'first fancy' is having a fine effect on him. We can see by many little things that he thinks Jane is about perfect, but there is nothing in his conduct to criticise. He has always been so careless that we are glad to see something so completely change him for the better." After the principal had thus called my attention to the transformation and its cause, she would pass on to other things.

Boys and girls at the time of their "budding fancies" are safe in the hands of able principals who have an appreciative understanding of them, principals who, unknown to the boys and girls, protect them and thus avoid the impossibility of correcting them.

In our high school, the principal planned the management of his building with greatest care to give ample opportunity for the democratic mingling of all the scholars with the least possible opportunity for indiscretions that could be criticised. Possibly if you will permit my using the term so well understood by all, yet a word not found in the choicest diction, I would say with the least possible opportunity for acting "spoony."

The principal well knew that where a number of scholars are mingling openly, and especially if there is a teacher whom they hold in high esteem present with them, there is found little or no objectionable conduct; and with this in view, he planned the movements of the scholars in and about the school, and wherever gathered together under school names.

All rooms and parts of the building when not in use were locked. The principal and his secretary, as well as the assistant principal, were in the office of the principal each morning a few minutes before the time for the admission of scholars. Shortly after the arrival of the principal and assistant, the teachers called at the principal's office for the keys to their rooms, passed to their rooms, or to those parts of the building of which they had oversight for the period before class work began. All parts of the building, the class-rooms for first-hour classes with teachers in charge, the study-halls with a teacher in each, the laboratories, a teacher present, the corridors or halls with teachers here and there, each with a definite part of the hall to look after, were thrown



open to scholars. From the time of opening these parts of the building to them, to within fifteen minutes of the set time beginning first recitations, they were free to move about, visit or chat as they pleased. All that was expected of them was that the boys be manly and the girls womanly in their conduct. It was a rare thing for anyone to forget self-control so far as to be spoken to.

Fifteen minutes before first hour recitations, the hall clocks gave the signal for all to leave the corridors and pass into their first hour recitations, or to their seats for the first hour in the study-halls.

At the close of each recitation hour, there was the same free mingling as the scholars changed from classroom to classroom. Here and there about the halls were teachers speaking pleasantly to passing scholars, seemingly a part of the very happy throng, suggesting by their presence the right conduct on the part of the scholars. And so on through the day, freedom of movement, but always under conditions of safety.

Teachers were given a certain time after the closing of school at 3:30 o'clock p. m. for conference and "make-up" work with the scholars. At the close of this "make-up" hour the clocks sounded the signal for teachers to dismiss and send from the building all scholars.

The principal aimed to have the building free from scholars before the shades of evening darkened the building. The mid-winter make-up and conference hour was much shorter than that of the fall and spring months, as with us, it was sometimes almost dark at 4:00 p. m. in January.

Before the teachers left the building, they returned their keys to the secretary in the principal's office.

Of later years, there was a great increase in the number of students from rural schools attending our high school. The principal found in enrolling them for school, that some who came in of a morning and returned home after the close of school each day on an interurban car, must either come on a car arriving soon after seven o'clock a. m. or one that arrived after 9:00 a. m. In some cases, he could and did arrange the programs of recitations for the scholars to come on the later car. In other cases, this could not be done. The question at once came up as to how those arriving at the school about 7:30 a. m. could be cared for until the time for the principal to be in his office. But two places in the city were open at that hour for boys, the Y. M. C. A. and the poolrooms; for the girls, no place at all. As the superintendent's office was in the high school building, and he was always in his office at 7:30 a. m., he offered the use of his outer office for the accommodation of these early-arriving scholars. His office was open to the public at this hour, and had its own entrance which made it unnecessary to open any other part of the building. These scholars came immediately from the car to the superintendent's *outer* office, where they studied until the principal arrived and admitted them to his outer office.

The high school building was much used of evenings for parties, and other gatherings of the school. On these occasions all parts of the building not used for the party gatherings were locked up.

But, says some teacher: "It looks to me as if you did not trust them at all, and that the scholars would get very tired of always having teachers around."

I would say in reply to this statement that it is because we did trust them, *intelligently* trust them, and

had faith in their goodness that they were given, at the habit-fixing time of life, every opportunity to practice the right conduct until it tended to fix itself as a habit of right conduct; that as far as their tiring of having teachers around, that depends entirely on the teacher or teachers; there *are* teachers who would make themselves so offensive to the scholars as to ruin all; but on the other hand, there are teachers, many teachers, who intelligently make themselves so acceptable to the scholars that their presence is always, at any party, or gathering of high school scholars, hailed with delight. In the presence of *these* teachers, the scholars always measure up to their best. The scholars know that these teachers would not be satisfied with poor class work, nor with anything short of the best conduct; and they also know that a party never lags in interest with these teachers present to help in entertaining. It all depends on the teachers whether or not the scholars tire "of having them around."

## CHAPTER XV

### WHAT WOULD YOU DO WITH THEM?

John King in the fifth grade was a good reader and an unusually good thinker for that grade, but could not write sentences at all. On through the eighth grade, it was the same, an intelligent reader, excellent in arithmetic, except in written form, finely posted in geography and U. S. History, and the leader of his class in civics, but wholly unable to put anything into written form. He would try when written lessons were given to write out what he could recite well orally, but all that he put down was a mere jumble of misspelled words, not sentences. He was not promoted to the high school but was permitted to enter the high school to get all he could out of it.

It seemed impossible for him to "think out" through his fingers, if I may so state it. All the efforts of his teachers to develop this power in him had so far been fruitless. Some very expert teachers had tried to teach him to write sentences, but they finally gave up the task as hopeless. It seemed that while he was trying to write, only a word now and then could get out from his thinking center by way of his fingers, and be recorded or written down, that these single words dropping out at odd times had no connection, and as a result, he never wrote in sentences.

Once a number of years ago in talking with Mr. George P. Brown, who was at that time a well-known and distinguished writer on education, he said to me that it was so much easier for him to write out his thoughts than for him to speak them. "I think," said he, "That the bridge of nerve fibers that connects the

thinking center in my brain with the motor center that controls my fingers is much more perfect and contains a larger number of nerve fibers than the bridge of nerve fibers that connects the thinking in my brain with the motor center that controls my tongue. At least, my thoughts flow out very rapidly through my fingers, and very slowly through my tongue, so slowly that it makes me very deliberate in speaking; but my fingers give instant expression to my thoughts. Or it may be, there is a better connection between the center that controls my fingers and the muscles of my fingers, than there is between the motor center that controls my tongue and the muscles of my tongue.”

I am not passing on the correctness or incorrectness of Mr. Brown's thoughts concerning himself, but refer to his talk because his talk with me led me years after to try to think out some possible cause for this boy's not being able to write out his thoughts. But before giving my thoughts as to the possibility of the cause of his difficulty, I will tell something of his high school history.

John King was greatly interested in athletics, and as a grammar pupil had made a fine record in football and basketball. In the high school, no scholar was eligible to play on any athletic team unless he were carrying three of his four studies above a passing grade. John King's heart was set on making the football team. He gave close attention to his lessons and was above in three studies so that he played on the football team the first semester. In English, he was marked low.

His English teacher called on me to talk with me about him. She said he recited the oral parts of the lessons well, that he knew the stories so well that he could answer any questions or give the stories complete. “But, Mr. Stableton,” said she, “In all the time he has

been in my class, in all the written work I have called for, I have never been able to get a single English sentence from him. He always writes but there is nothing but poorly-spelled, non-related words, in what he writes. He called to see me about his mark and felt very badly because it was so low. I told him that his written work had not been up to standard and that it was the cause of his low mark."

She then asked to know about him and how he came to be in the high school with no power at all to write English. She was troubled to know what to do and was looking for help.

I gave her a full history of the boy's case. She was greatly interested, and said she would do her best to help him, but did not know what she might be able to accomplish.

She was a teacher who never failed to do her best by every scholar that came under her instruction. She was an unusually talented teacher of English, able to a degree seldom attained by teachers of high school English.

The second year he was in the high school, another teacher of English, hearing of his case, said to me that she would like the privilege of teaching him, that she was sure she could bring up his English written work. This teacher was also a very strong teacher. I was pleased to have her interested in the boy's case to the extent that she would like to see what she could do in teaching him to put his thoughts down in writing. I spoke to the principal and he transferred John King to this teacher's class. She left nothing undone that she knew to do to teach him to write sentences and express his thought in written words. She was very enthusiastic when she began the work, but at the end of six weeks hard work with him she said to me: "I've taught

him nothing. He has put forth every effort he can in trying, but he is not any better off than when he came to me. He simply cannot connect up his thinking with his writing, and I've come to believe that he cannot be taught to do it." He continued in the high school three years and did fine oral work in Geography, History, Civics, some parts of English, in fact, in all oral work, but never developed the power to express himself through the medium of writing. While this lack of ability to write out his thoughts handicapped him more or less, still he gained great good from his three years in the high school. The three years were well spent.

All this time, I had been thinking a great deal of his case. The last year he was in school, in thinking of this case, I recalled to mind what Mr. George P. Brown had said to me some years before of his powers of expressing himself. I wondered if the boy's shortage of power to express himself in written form were not due to a lack of some kind in the nerve fiber connections from his thought center to his motor centers controlling his fingers, or out from the motor center to the muscles that move the fingers; while the fact that he could express himself by means of spoken words would seem to indicate a better nerve fiber communication from his thought center to his motor center controlling the organs of speech and out from this motor center to the muscles moving the organs of speech. If this were true, no teaching and no effort on his part could help him. No new nerve fibers could be caused to grow to give a better outlet through his fingers.

I have already mentioned that he was a fine athlete, fine in both football and basketball. He was skillful indeed in putting the ball into the basket. His control of the larger muscles of his arms and hands, and to some

extent the large muscles of his whole body, but especially those of his arms, and hands, was very perfect.

It occurred to me that as he thought so accurately through these larger muscles in ball games, might it not be possible for him to learn to write wholly with the arm movement and thus be able to express himself in written form? With this thought in mind, I called him in one day and talked with him about trying to train the larger muscles for this purpose. But the close of the year was near and, as he did not return to school the next year, I think he never tried to use the larger muscles for this purpose.

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Jane Moore was a member of an eighth grade graduating class, in all her studies but two, at one of the elementary school buildings. Her principal, who was also her teacher, and I, were arranging a list of those who would be graduated. When we came to Jane's name, the principal asked what I would recommend in her case. Jane had come to us from a rural school three years before as a seventh grade pupil short in arithmetic. Later on, we found that it would be necessary for her to give three years to the work of the seventh and the eighth grades other than Arithmetic. Now that the three years were almost past, the question of what should be done for her came up again. When she came to us, she knew no arithmetic more than addition, subtraction, multiplication and division of whole numbers; and in the three years we had been able to add but little to her knowledge of this subject. She was a fine penman, good in her eighth grade English, an excellent speller, only fair in U. S. History, and short in civics.



I replied that the only question in deciding what we should do for her was the question of which would be better for her, another year in the eighth grade repeating the work, or *to be placed* in the high school, *not promoted* to it, where there was more work that would interest her, and that she could do, such as English, Art, Domestic Art, History, and other subjects; that I was in favor of placing her in the high school; that she was a girl past sixteen years of age, so should be associated with scholars older than the incoming eighth grade students if she were to gain anything from her school associations.

The principal was pleased with my decision. She said the girl had gotten all she could get from the grade work and needed a change; that the new interests in the high school would appeal to her strongly, and that she would get great good from the high school.

She said further that Jane had been a very unhappy girl all the year because of the faultfinding of her home people; that Jane's people were very wealthy and had moved into the city to educate their children; that Jane's not being able to keep up in school work with the neighbor girls had made her mother very bitter.

I called at Jane's home on my way back to my office and told her mother what we thought best to do if it met her approval.

She thanked me for the interest taken, and said she would be pleased to have Jane take advantage of our offer.

After giving me this reply, she told me how disappointed they were that their children were not capable of taking an education; that they had moved to the city to educate their children and had found that their children could not learn as other children did.

Jane spent three very profitable years in the high school, selecting the studies that appealed to her in the lines where she was capable of doing good work. She did work that commanded the respect of both teachers and classmates.

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Julius Clark was a member of a June 8-A class in one of our eighth grade buildings. He was a youth of fine physique; honest, bright of face; big brown eyes that looked straight at you, and sparkled when pleased, but painfully slow at learning.

He was sixteen years of age, repeating a part of his work, and still below passing. He was not feeble-minded, but was unquestionably slow at learning from books.

He was the finest athlete in his school, and bore himself so well toward the other boys that he was their unquestioned leader. His teacher remarked to me one day that Julius would never know how greatly she was indebted to him for the easy discipline of her room; that what Julius did was always right in sight of the boys, and that Julius always did right; that while she had a large school and many of them boys, with Julius there she never felt a care so far as good order was concerned. Yet with all this strength of personality, Julius could not be marked as passing in his 8-A studies.

After talking with his teacher and principal, I called Julius into the principal's office and told him that we thought it best for him to be *placed* in the high school the coming semester; that while he was below passing in his studies and for this reason we could not give him an eighth grade certificate, still he could enter the high school in September; that we believed it would be better for him than to continue longer in the eighth grade.

He was pleased to know he would be permitted to enter the high school, and asked if his not being up with his eighth grade work would keep him out of athletics the first semester in high school.

I replied that his eighth grade work would not count against him in athletics, but that he must be carrying three out of his four high school studies to be on an athletic team.

Julius entered high school in September, and was out on first call for a football practice game, hoping later to win a place on the high school team. He proved one of the finest of the new boys out for football, and in the final tryout, won a place on the team.

It was now up to him to keep above passing in at least three of his four studies or give up his place on the team. He kept his place on the team and he kept it by devoting all his powers to *but two* things, his studies, and his athletic team work.

The first year he passed in three of his four studies and had his full part in the high school athletics. His grades were not high but they were well above passing; and they were not won without earnest effort.

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A number of years ago when I entered upon the superintendency of the schools in a certain town, I found a peculiar condition existing in the 8th grades. The classes in these grades were so large that they were unwieldy; and in one of these classes, I found a number of big boys and girls from 15 to 17 years of age, with no interest whatever in the school work. I looked at them. They made me think of wild animals confined in a cage. I knew that something must be done and done quickly or a number of them would leave school. I studied the

problem. For nine and in some cases ten years, they had been fed on a mental diet of reading, spelling, arithmetic, grammar, and a little history; from 6 years to 17 this had been their diet. It struck me that the only way to put life into them would be to change their food. I called their parents together and laid the case before them. Here was a number of young people who for nine or ten years had been fed on the same diet until it had become so distasteful to them that they refused to take it; what should I do? Let them starve mentally, or give them a change of diet and bring about vigorous mental activity? I admitted that there were many problems in the arithmetic that they could not solve, and many constructions in the grammar that they could not dispose of; but what should we do, hold them longer to these studies and drive them out of school, or give them the first year studies of the high school and thus save them to four years of school training? I said to the parents that admitting the shortage in their work, still I believed the only thing to be done was to give them the new work; but that I wished the parents to speak freely and say whether or not they approved of the plan.

One gentleman, who for a number of years previous had been on the Board of Education, and whose two sons were among the number we were considering said: "I am ready for you to try anything with my boys. I am all out of heart about them. For years I was a member of the Board of Education, I blamed the teachers, then I blamed the books, then the superintendent because my boys got along so slowly; then I blamed myself. Last year I asked the superintendent to examine them closely and tell me what he thought about them. So the superintendent took them to his office, talked with them and questioned them, and then told me that the fact was

the boys were dull and could not learn much, so I have come to the conclusion that he is right, and that they are dummies. If you can do anything to interest them and keep them in school, I'll be only too glad, but I've about given up hope." These two boys were given a change of diet and immediately began to thrive, and finally graduated from the high school.

Another one of this same class: My first introduction to this boy was one day, when an old woman who lived near the school called at my office and laid complaint against him for tearing down a part of her fence. I spoke to his teacher about him and requested her to send him to me at noon after the other pupils had passed out. In speaking of him, she said he was the worst boy in her room and that she dreaded him more than all the others put together. At noon I met him, and told him what complaint had been made. He confessed that he had committed the offense, and said that he would do nothing of the kind again. He was a regular Hercules, sixteen years of age and in the grammar grade. The thought came to me that he needed more work, and that he too had ceased to be interested in the things he had studied for ten years. I put him into the first year in the high school and he worked like a steam engine and made a splendid record in his studies. Hard work in the things that interested him was his salvation; the day that his work was lightened up he was hard to control, but by working him so that he had no time for anything else he did high grade work and was happy and bothered no one. He could do, and did, more work than the regular course called for; he had to be loaded to keep peace; work, hard work, was his only salvation; but not the work of the grammar grades. This boy finally graduated from that High School. The four years' training and study im-

proved him an hundredfold. Did it pay to put this boy on the mental food suited to his needs, or would it have been better to try for more thoroughness in the grammar studies which did not appeal to him at all?

I would not decry thoroughness in the common branches, but there comes a time when the mind demands a change, a time when mental food of a very different character can be assimilated, and if the mind is deprived of this food it fails to develop as it otherwise would.

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Often a school has pupils coming from other schools, schools in the same state or other states. Sometimes these pupils fit nicely into the grades, sometimes they do not. When they fit easily into the grades there is no loss of time, and when they do not fit regularly into the grades there should be no loss of time. For a number of years, we followed the plan of assigning irregularly graded pupils, part work in one grade and part work in another. In this way, we prevented loss of the pupil's time, and additional expense to the school district. Whenever a pupil repeats a study simply for convenience in classifying the pupil and not because of his own need of it, his progressive movement in his education is interfered with, his interest is lessened, and unnecessary expense placed on the school district.

A school is not less orderly where some pupil recites a part of his lesson in the sixth grade and a part in the fifth, or some other grade, than the school where the pupils are required to recite all lessons in the same grade; the school is not less orderly, but it has a *new kind* of orderliness not based on the mechanical movement of the school, but on the highest interests of the pupils. It is a higher type of orderliness.

We not only extended this time-saving opportunity to those coming to us from other schools, but also to our own pupils. However, this is true that with our semi-annual promotion, we were able to bring together in each half-year grade or working section, (a grade is nothing more than a convenient working section of a school), those whose attainments and rate of movement were so nearly the same that need of placing pupils partly in one section and partly in another was not so great as it is in some schools.

Our schools were made still more adjustable to needs of individual scholars by special promotions at any time during the semester. Our whole plan, semi-annual promotions, with special promotions at any time during the term, together with assigning a part of the work of some pupils in one grade and a part in another, was in reality a system of promotion by subjects rather than by grades or classes.

With us, it was no uncommon thing for scholars to take a part of their work in the eighth grade at their eighth grade building, and the other part consisting of high school studies in the high school. In most of these cases, the classes were so adjusted that these scholars could spend the first hours of the forenoon at the eighth grade building, and the remainder of the day at the high school. It was no inconvenience to anyone. The relations between the elementary schools and the high school should be close. They are but parts of one school system.

## CHAPTER XVI

### ATHLETICS

To appreciate fully the great value of athletics to the scholars of a school, we must not fail to see that athletics and gymnasium work are but two parts of physical culture, each with its own distinctive aims, and that in many respects the one part can never fully take over the work of the other.

All students in a high school must take the gymnasium work just as they must take other required subjects. Its object is to develop a healthy body and a healthy mind, correcting, as far as possible, any physical defects, and giving all grace and beauty of movement and form.

Athletics have different aims, and in these aims touch every student just as surely as does the gymnasium work. Athletics give opportunity for team games or contests that are instinctive at this time in life; they give opportunity for hero worship that so delights the heart of youth. Athletics are a great safety-valve for the hilarity of youth, giving free outlet with least possible danger of harm; here nationality, religion, wealth, and social position, sink out of sight as in no other activity of the school. In the flaming heat of enthusiasm for our team, our school, the heterogeneous body of scholars is welded into a homogeneous democracy that can scarcely be equalled.

That boy who just now made that touchdown lives in a little home on the border of the slum district; that boy who just made that fine run is from the wealthiest home in the most pretentious part of the city; but the



scholars care naught for these things. The boys are of "our team," of "our school," they are "ours."

Hear that yelling? How it rends the air! See that high school crowd as they lean forward with fists clenched yelling, "Go it!" "Go it!" as the ball nears their goal. As it passes their goal, see them rise, hats in air, arms gesticulating, as they frantically follow their yell leader in vociferously giving the high school "yell."

Do you think no one gets anything out of the game but the members of the team? *Don't you think such a thing.* What of the little yell leader, whose gyrations would do credit to a circus contortionist? What of those high school boys and girls whose enthusiastic yells furnish the inspiration that stirs their team to victory? Do they not work? Try it and see. Do they not get anything out of it? What gymnasium teacher ever led them in such an exercise of inhaling and exhaling God's free, out-door air? What gymnasium exercise ever caused the newly-vitalized blood to course so rapidly through the body from mere joy? *Never one.* Yet joy is wholesome for young life.

The high school football game is a place where *everybody* works, even "father." I have seen "father" on the bleachers, hat off, arms gesticulating, yelling with perfect abandon, trying to push *his boy's* team to victory.

Football, basketball and other forms of team games are with us to stay. There was a time when I feared the dishonesty so often practiced by some high school scholars, by some teachers, by some principals, and even by some superintendents, might long delay their proper recognition; but of late there has been vigorous action taken that has greatly cleaned up high school athletics, and at present all indications point in the right direction.

During the early adolescent years the gang spirit is an instinct. It is this instinct that binds together the members of a class, or other school organization, and in a still greater body the scholars of the whole school. Loyalty to one's school, or class, or other organization, has a mystical sacredness about it that seems to charm and hold the members. And woe is it for him who by proving himself false, violates its sacredness.

One evening, a few years ago, at a contest basketball game between a team from a neighboring school and our high school team, one of our team who had been *much* honored for his fine athletic work, probably *too much* honored, was accused of playing to the galleries, of making spectacular plays for *his own glory* when he should have been doing team work for the school.

The school never forgave him. There was no eruption of feeling against him, but the scholars ceased to do him honor. One of the girls was heard to say to another, the next morning, "He's a *mean thing*. He played for himself instead of helping the team play for the school. He's a *mean thing*." To put self above his team and school, was unpardonable.

No high school athletic team ever plays for the team, it plays for the school. And the school, when the team comes home from some great victory with the "bloody scalp" of some formidable rival school dangling at its belt, feels it must give expression to its high appreciation of the distinguished honor conferred on it by the defeat of its rival on the athletic field, and so calls a meeting of all the scholars and the faculty that they may hear the report of the victorious team, and receive it with shouts of joy and gladness, with songs of praise and oratorical flights of appreciation.

Once when our basketball team won the State Championship, a meeting such as had never been known in the athletic history of the school was held. It was a meeting of rapid action from 9:00 a. m. until 12:00 m., when with worn-out voices and tired lungs, all were ready to go to their homes for the noon lunch.

As soon as the high school principal and I received word that the State Championship in basketball had been won by our team, we began planning a great reception for the team, and an athletic rally. We knew the school would be at high pitch and would expect a "big time" as the school would call it, so we began at once to plan a great, big program that would provide outlets for all the boisterous, highly-wrought-up emotional life that we knew would be present, outlets that would lead the great flood of emotions into channels where it could pass off with perfect safety to all. We well knew that by preparing proper channels for carrying off the cloudburst of youthful emotion before it came, it could come in mighty volume and do no harm.

First, we decided the meeting should begin at 9 a. m. and continue until noon. The long session would give time for the flood of emotions to run off through the channels of safety. With a short meeting, it would be necessary to dam up, at least a part of the floodwaters of emotion and they might break through unexpectedly and do harm; but by giving time for them to drain off through the channels provided, there would be nothing to fear.

We then invited and pledged to be present the mayor of the city, all the leading athletic men of the city, the Y. M. C. A. secretary and physical director, three or four of the leading ministers, the members of the Board of Education, reporters from each of the daily papers,

the fathers of the members of the team, and many others.

The leaders of the scholars were asked for further suggestions, but said more had been planned than they could have thought of, that they could add nothing. These leaders quickly spread the word among the scholars that there was going to be a "big time," that it was all planned and would be *great*.

At 9:00 a. m. the several hundred scholars were in their places. All the prominent citizens who had been pledged to be present, and many others, were there.

The principal was in charge of the meeting. In a few words, he stated the purpose of the coming-together; and with great pride gave the high scholastic standing of each member of the team, and fine type of moral characters represented by each team member. Cheer after cheer, followed these announcements. Everybody cheered, for it is not often that every individual member of an athletic team represents the very best elements of a school as the members of this team did. It was, indeed, a great thing that each had a record in his studies and in school standing that he was pleased to have placed before that whole body of scholars and the many distinguished visitors.

No time was lost. The team was heard from; the school orators welcomed them and crowned each with glory; the visitors, the Board of Education, the school faculty, all furnished speakers. The speaking was interspersed with school songs, and punctuated with school cheers and yells.

There was nothing to be repressed. No one felt that he did not have a fine part in the great meeting.

It was nearing twelve o'clock noon when I quietly asked the members of the Board of Education present to give the school the afternoon for a holiday, and meet-

ing with favorable reply, I waited a moment for an opportunity and then announced that the Board of Education, in honor of the team's winning the State Championship, had authorized me to announce the afternoon a holiday.

Again the cheering, and yells rent the air. And then the principal quietly dismissed the gathering.

Thus closed a forenoon that would be a pleasant memory for a lifetime to everyone present; and to many, at the impressionable time of life, it was an inspiration whose fruitage the coming years would garner.

Someone has said that to win an athletic honor for a class or school often makes a hero of one who would otherwise be almost unknown, while he who wins many athletic honors, becomes an object of adoration, the whole school bowing to him, and his particular satellites circling around him, happy to reflect the light of his glory.

A few years ago, one of our football boys, after having played a splendid part in a winning game, came out of the game with a broken collarbone. He was conveyed home by an admiring crowd of fellow high school boys who were proud even to be near him. After taking him into the home, one of the boys said to his mother, "*Aren't you proud of him?*" The mother replied: "*Proud of him?* I don't see anything to be proud of. This only means another doctor bill to pay."

Another mother one day, in talking to me of her boy, a strong, physically healthy boy of our high school, said that she had told him that morning at breakfast that they were getting tired of hearing the praises of one particular high school boy sung at the table three times a day, and would like to have a change; and that the boy, very much offended, had replied that it didn't seem she could appreciate what *great* things his friend had done.

I smiled, but said to the mother that she ought to be thankful that her boy had chosen as his hero an athlete of clean morals and high ideals, whose influence over younger boys such as hers, could be none other than wholesome.

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I have said that athletics are a great safety-valve to let out the hilariousness of youth with but little possible harm. This is true, but there are evils attendant on athletics that need to be guarded against or serious consequences sometimes follow. Yet of late years, as I have said, these attendant evils are being reduced toward the minimum. The scholarship requirements now shut out the class that once came into high schools for the football season, a class whose presence was a great handicap to the work of the school. Principals and superintending officers are more careful than ever before to see that boys are up with all the requirements of the rules under which the game is to be played before certifying to their eligibility. However, there are still to be found some school principals and superintendents who, to say the least, are very careless in this respect and thereby do great harm.

Once before I became superintendent at Bloomington, when our high school boys played a high school team from another town, the principal from the other school came with the boys and signed for them certifying they were bona fide high scholars of that school, up with their work, and in every way eligible to play under the requirements of the rules under which the game was to be played. Everything seemed all right.

The visiting team won the game, and everything passed off pleasantly. However, it was but a few days

till we learned positively that two boys to whom the principal had certified, had not been in the high school that year, in fact, were not high school boys at all.

One year when our Bloomington High School football team was weak, after our manager and team had gone to another city to play a game and had seen the strong team that our team was "up against," our manager deliberately signed up false certificates of eligibility for some of our boys who had accompanied the team but were not eligible to play, and put them in the places of some of the weaker men on our team.

It is sufficient to say that this teacher never had another opportunity to commit a like offense. He ceased to function as manager of our team.

The matter of a coach has been a serious problem to principals and superintendents. The one who coaches must be trained for his work. He should be a member of the school teaching force, sustaining the same relation to the principal, superintendent, and board of education that the other teachers do. This makes him directly responsible to the principal and superintendent. This places the responsibility for properly conducted athletics in the hands of the principal and superintendent, and at the same time gives them absolute control. They select the coach, and on their recommendation, the board employs him. Their ideals of fair play, of honesty, of decency, are to mark all athletics of the school. A coach is selected with like ideals. This arrangement is the best possible. The coach inspires his athletics by putting the same ideals before them, not only by what he says, but also by his living up to his ideals in all he has to do with the boys. Only those in close touch know the wonderful influence a coach has over the boys who are under his training.

But where coaches are not employed as members of the teaching corps, where some young man about the city or town is picked up (picked up is the proper term) by the principal or superintendent, because he knows the games and can be secured for a mere pittance, as he makes it a side line to his regular business, the situation is fraught with danger first of all to the boys, then to the school, and to the whole community. In many of the smaller towns, this is the only plan that has been possible and the heads of the schools must make the best of the situation.

Under this second plan, the coach often plays for favor with the boys and fails to hold up to the ideals of the school. Sometimes he puts wild notions into the boys, notions that could not be carried out with the sanction of the school, so he brings a grouchy feeling against the school on the part of the athletes. I have seen good schools in small towns rent to pieces in their work by the unfortunate feelings brought about by badly-conducted athletics. The situation that sometimes arises where athletics seem "to run" the school makes me think of the old saying about the dog and his tail: "It is all right when the dog wags his tail, but the dog is in danger when the tail wags the dog." It is all right for the school when the school controls athletics, but the school is in danger when athletics control the school.

Sometimes the sporting element in a community becomes deeply interested in high school athletics, and even goes so far as to try to control the school athletics. When this happens in some of the smaller towns, confusion often comes into the school, interfering greatly with the efficiency of the high school. With the better organization of the larger high school, and a coach who



is a member of the high school faculty, this outside influence has but little effect.

Honest play should be the rule in all athletic games. But is it always the rule? Mr. J. M—— had a college record in athletics when he came from the university to teach in our high school so was deeply interested in our high school athletics, and because of his interest spent much time assisting the coach. In fact, he made himself in many ways very helpful. But we soon learned his ideals of fair play, of honest play, were far below the ideals of our school.

Our team was to play a return game with a neighboring team that was very strong, much stronger than our own. Mr. J. M—— was very anxious to see our team win the game. He had studied the neighboring team well. He knew that the best player on that team had a badly-injured knee and that the team with this one man off was about an equal chance with our team. So he said to our team boys: "Get after the crack player on the other team and put him out of business by doing up his injured knee. With him out of the way, you stand a good show to win the game, so do up that knee; do it one way if you can't another. You can do it in a way not to be called down for it; but be sure the first thing you really try to do is to put him out of condition. That's your winning card."

I was surprised and disappointed in this teacher's ideal of honesty in athletics, for I had had occasion to know of his high ideal of honesty in some other dealings. But this was dangerous to our boys all the more, because this teacher had been a star athlete in university athletics.

These are only a few of the many attendant evils that must be guarded against.

Another danger comes from handling the money side of athletics. In handling the money that comes from high school athletics, I think too often teachers, principals, or superintendents, as happens to be, tempt boys to be dishonest when they think they are trusting them. I have already spoken of my great faith in high school scholars and how, in some things, I would trust them far. It is no lack of faith in their honesty that leads me to say what I am about to say concerning the handling of the athletic money or other school funds; but rather it is my desire to help them keep their own faith in their own honesty strong by making conditions under which they handle the money of the school such as to reduce to the minimum the possibility of their being dishonest. There was a time when by permitting the loose handling of athletic and other school funds, I placed temptation in the way of many, and to my sorrow, some few yielded to the temptation.

What would be a temptation to some young people of *high school age* would be no temptation at all to them when they are a little older. The school should help to tide them over this period of uncertainty and thus increase the probability of their being honest men and women.

Where the high school is sufficiently large to employ a number of teachers, without offense to any scholar, a high school teacher can be appointed to take charge of the money, one known to have ability in organizing and keeping track of things. He should keep a record of all tickets printed; tickets given out to be sold to whom and how many, and the return of all tickets not sold as well as the money for those sold. He can call other teachers to assist him, and he can make use of scholars to help him in places where there

would be no possibility of their slipping out money for their own use.

Where the school is small and the principal has only school boys to help him with managing the games, it is better for all for him to give other parts of the management to the boys to look after, and he himself keep his hands on the money.

I could give case after case, some coming up in my own work, where boys were permitted to handle money in a careless way and so used for themselves money that should have been accounted for, and some cases given me by other school-men, that would be strong evidence of the need of more care than is often exercised in handling the athletic funds.

The conduct of the members of a team when on a trip to another city or town to play a game can usually be taken care of with but little difficulty, if the coach and manager are of the proper type; but where the coach plays into the hands of the boys of the team trying to win their favor and be popular, hoping thus to hold his job for another year, and the manager is either weak or indifferent, the conduct of the team while on the trip depends altogether on the character of the members of the team. I learned by experience that a principal or superintendent cannot look up too carefully the character of a coach before engaging him for his school. Sometimes it happens that their college or university training for the work of high school coaching wholly unfits them for the work they have been trained to do.

One year we employed a young man for high school athletic coach who had made a great record in college athletics, and had taken high school athletic coaching under a noted college coach who taught a class in high school coaching. He came to us highly recommended,

but he failed to make good. He had been with us but a short time when the principal learned that in trying to get work out of the boys on the training field he was continually cursing them, hurling one oath after another at them. The boys resented such language.

The principal had an interview with him and spoke of his language. He admitted that he had been cursing the boys on the training field; but said that he had never thought anything about it, that it was the same language that the coach at the college had used when training the class for high school coaches, and that he was only following his college coach when he cursed his high school boys in coaching them. He said he would give up the cursing and use language satisfactory to the school; but his ideals of athletics in general were too far below the ideals of the school, both of scholars and of faculty, so the close of the year terminated his stay with us.

A good coach, dependable to the limit, efficient in his coaching, high-minded, enthusiastic and inspiring, is a joy to the principal and superintendent; but a coach that is untrustworthy, unreliable, a coach with low ideals, and of improper language, even though an expert in coaching, is a thorn in the flesh to both principal and superintendent, and the sooner he is removed the better for all.

## CHAPTER XVII

### SOME CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE HEALTH OF GIRLS OF THE GRAMMAR GRADES AND HIGH SCHOOL

The first few years of a boy's adolescent period from some points do not need the same kind of hygienic consideration that should be given girls. Any undue exposure or nervous strain with girls of this age is liable to irregularities that may be far-reaching in their evil after-effects. Wet clothing or wet feet from coming to school in rain, or snow, or a chill from any cause, may have serious consequences. It is far better for girls of this age whose clothing has become damp or wet to send them home for the remainder of the day than to take the risk of injuring their health by having them sit in school with damp clothing. A broken attendance record is better than broken health. We sometimes put so great stress on regularity of attendance, and it is of *great importance*, that we forget to remember that there are other things that may greatly outweigh regularity of attendance. Health should always be first considered.

It is not an uncommon thing for a mother to insist on great pressure being put on her daughter when the girl is in a nervous condition that demands rest. And again teachers sometimes fail to appreciate that the highly-nervous girl, otherwise in apparently the best of health, may not be in a condition to bear great mental strain without injury. But if the words of those who have given careful attention to the study of the laws of the human body are of value, teachers cannot study too carefully the physical condition that needs careful at-

tention at this age. In general, with proper care on the part of parents and intelligent thoughtfulness on the part of teachers, the girls during this period can do a good quality of school work and their full share of it without injury of any kind. But without an intelligent understanding of these natural conditions to be met, these girls are sometimes taxed both at home and at school, and as a result, pay the penalty of the violation of the laws of their physical being, laws violated unconsciously by parents and teachers.

I would not be misunderstood, I do not wish anyone for a moment to believe that I am in favor of accepting inferior work or short work from girls of this age, for I am not; but I have learned from years of observation that some girls at this period of their lives are unduly pressed, by both the home and the school, on days when they should be quietly resting at home. Again it often requires an effort on the part of both teacher and parents to hold back highly-sensitive girls, ambitious to stand at the front in their classes. The very fact that they are in classes with others, has in these cases an undue stimulating effect; and so it remains for the parents and teacher to guard this in whatever way seems best. These cases, however, are the exception and not the rule. The following is a statement of how two cases of this kind were managed by the parents and teacher.

The first girl had always led her class with little effort and as the first indications of approaching womanhood came to her, she became very sensitive and nervous. She was in the seventh grade. Instead of being easy and contented in her school-work, she was anxious about it both at home and at school. Not a moment of time was to be wasted either at school or at home. One day's work was scarcely completed until she was worrying

over the work of the coming day; she was sure she was going to fail in the lessons on the morrow. The teacher grew concerned about the girl; said she was perfect in her work, but was painfully nervous. At home, her parents, intelligent persons, fully posted as to her physical condition, tried to take her mind off her school work, but all to no purpose, as she felt sure others would outrank her if she did not devote all of her time to the preparation of her lessons. The parents finally, after an interview with her teacher and her principal, on their advice and the recommendation of their family physician, took her out of school for the remainder of the school year. As long as she was in school, the incentive of standing at the head of her class was to her a stimulus that neither parents nor teacher, nor the two combined, could control. After being out of school a year, spending much of that time in the open air, with quieted nerves and renewed vigor, she re-entered school, content to do her best, day by day, without worrying over the failures that might possibly come on the morrow.

One day I was in the office of one of our elementary school principals when she was holding a conference with a mother of one of our eighth grade girls. The principal knew the condition of the girl's health and very kindly advised the mother to take her out of school for the semester or the remainder of the year; she said to the mother that her daughter was a fine girl, but was not able to do her work, that she was not at all well; that her falling short in her work was due to her not being well; that the wise thing for the mother to do was to let the girl drop out of school for the semester or until she had regained her usual health. She also advised the mother to go with her daughter to their family

physician and consult him as to what would be wisest to do.

The mother was very grateful for the kindly interest of the principal, but said that she could hardly give up the thought of her daughter's completing the work of the eighth grade that year. However, she acted on the principal's advice, and permitted her daughter to rest the remainder of the year. It is not at all probable that the girl's state of health was due to school work, but rather to the lack of proper attention at home, still it was well for the girl that the principal's intelligence directed the mother to the proper source for help, the family physician.

Girls of this age even more than any other, should be in the hands of teachers of strong, even, winning, commanding personalities; anything of the nagging or the faultfinding type of teacher is wholly out of place with girls at this period of life. These qualities in a teacher are out of place anywhere, but with delicate girls at this time of life, they are really harmful.

Since all girls do not pass through these earlier changes before entering high school, the same care in many cases is necessary to be exercised in the high school. A knowledge of the physical conditions as affecting the health of the girls, is of highest importance to all high school teachers. They should know that exposure of any kind, nagging, sarcasm, scolding, and anger on the part of the teacher, may produce very unfortunate results on the physical and mental health of some of the girls. In some cases, the nervous strain during a recitation where the girl sits in fear of the cutting words and look of the sarcastic teacher is so great that an attack of hysteria follows the recitation period.



A few years ago, a mother called to talk with me about her daughter, who was at that time in our high school. The girl had come into the high school a mere child, and was just entering upon the changes incident to her age of life.

In the high school, she recited to one teacher of whose severe manner and sharp words she stood in constant fear. While he did not have occasion to speak severely to her, she was always expecting him to do so. This recitation came the last hour before noon each day. As soon as the recitation was over, she would go home and for the next half-hour or more sit and cry in a hysterical condition, from the effects of the class strain. Nor was this the only one affected in this manner by this teacher. One morning at the close of one of this same teacher's recitations, one of the girls was so very sick that one of the woman teachers took charge of her in the teachers' private room. When the teacher kindly asked her why she had come to school that morning when she was so unwell, the girl replied that she would suffer anything rather than be absent from that teacher's recitation as she was deathly afraid of him and especially if she missed a recitation which she would have to make up to him.

The teacher was talked with in regard to his sarcastic manner and its injurious effects on delicate, nervous girls; but all to no purpose. He did not believe that their being afraid to be called down, as he put it, for poor work or irregular attendance was injurious in any way; but said that he was sure of one thing he could *make them afraid not to work*. As he could not see that his manner was injurious to those under his instruction, it was necessary to dispense with his services as a teacher.

These same girls under other teachers did excellent work, were not unduly nervous, nor in any way unfavorably affected by their work. They were of the highest class of students.

School work secured at so great a sacrifice of the nervous system of young girls is a curse. The evil effects, possibly, can never be measured. Yet some teachers permit themselves to fall into the habit of using sarcasm, of exacting in a severe manner lesson preparation instead of inspiring it, and so lose their usefulness.

We should study to know ourselves, to see if we are growing as true teachers, leaders, inspirers of those under our instruction; or if we are degenerating into mere whipcrackers, "lesson exacters," disagreeable class-room drivers. Teachers of this latter type too often think that they are the only ones who secure good work of the scholars; they often look upon the teacher whose strong, gracious manner is a masterful force in the class-room as in some way or other a sham, simply because they have so lost themselves to the higher forms of teaching that they cannot understand that the mightiest compelling force in the preparation of lessons is the thoroughly aroused *desire* and *will* on the part of the scholar; that that teacher is an artist of high order who arouses in the scholar the *desire* and the *will* to prepare the lessons in the most perfect manner so that the scholar enters upon the most difficult preparation with joy, and from day to day looks forward not only to the preparation and the recitation, but to all the work of the school with pleasure. All real teachers possess this power of inspiration to a greater or less degree. These teachers reveal to the scholars the "blessedness of drudgery," so that while girls of this age do hard

work for these teachers, work not in itself interesting, and labor with greatest care to be thoroughly prepared for the recitation, yet through it all, the joy of work takes away the nerve-wearing strain that breaks down the nervous system.

There is another type of girl whose health at this time needs attention. It is the nervous, giggling, simpering, smiling, boy-struck girl, sometimes possessing wonderful attraction for her *boy* friends. She has lost all power of concentration on her school work; all her force seems to dissipate itself through her smiles and her giggles, until there is nothing left for the serious purposes of school. But the step from her giggles and smiles to her tears is not of a span's breadth, and from her tears to hysteric sobs is so short that it cannot be measured.

Teachers may call her silly, they may call her weak, but she is theirs to care for; and she is not responsible for her condition. The real cause of these things that so break into her school work for a greater or less time, may be due partly to her inheritance, physical and mental; and partly to conditions surrounding her. Her nervous sensibility is so acute that if teachers fail to appreciate her as she is, and attempt the impossible, of making her what she cannot be, they may do her harm. Quiet, private talks with her, with a full appreciation of her helplessness to be other than she is, gives teachers their greatest influence with her, and enables them to tide her over the period of greatest instability.

If teachers realize that in these cases their work is to help the helpless, not to correct offenders, this mental attitude on the part of teachers makes possible a treatment of these girls that at least does not unduly in-

tensify the extreme nervousness to which for the time being they are subject.

Of course, these girls do not master their work, *nor do they receive credit for it*; but the time comes later in most of these cases when they again set themselves to their lessons with a will that accomplishes things.

Winifred Douglas was one of these nervous, giggly, simpering, smiling, boy-struck, boy-charming girls when she entered the high school. She had passed out of the eighth grade with marks that were only slightly above the passing; but now that she was in the high school, she was in a more excited state than ever, so giggly, so smiling, that it seemed all the mental power she had ever had was dissipated in smiles and giggles.

She was in the high school almost two years when her father, the business head of their home, died, leaving his business in a condition that did not promise well for the interests of the family. But Winifred, the smiling, giggling girl, stepped into her father's place, took the reins of his business into her own hands; straightened out the business of the office; made collections, paid bills, solicited and secured new business, and pushed the work with so much energy and business insight, that able business men who knew her work, referred to her as a young woman of fine business ability.

In her high school work, she was not much of a success; but in business, she succeeded where some of her ablest high school teachers would have failed.

I do not know what she got out of her high school; but I do know that she received right consideration and kind treatment from her teachers.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### A PERIOD OF RAPID GROWTH; A PERIOD OF LOWERED INTELLECTUAL POWER; A PERIOD OF STIMULATED INTELLECTUAL POWER

#### *An Open Way to Those Quick at Learning— Give Time to the Slow Scholar*

One Friday afternoon, the week of our mid-year examination, I passed from my office into one of the nearby recitation rooms to speak with the teacher, and on entering the room saw Morton Black sitting in a seat waiting his turn to receive the teacher's attention. He looked so woe-begone, so distressed, that I said, "Well, Morton, how is everything?"

"Not very good," he replied, "I've failed in almost all my studies."

I looked at him. It seemed to me in the half year he had stretched out a foot in height. His long, lank body instantly suggested to me the cause of his failure, so I replied: "That's too bad, but next semester things will come out better."

He had once been a good student, but his vital forces for a time had been occupied with building up the bony frame of his body to the neglect of his brain; later his brain would receive due attention. But the boy did not understand this, so was distressed.

A little later that afternoon, the principal came into my office. I called his attention to Morton, and asked him if he had thought of the cause of his failure. He said that he had not. I then said that I believed it was due to his rapid growth; that for the few months just

past he had been running up like a weed; that his vital forces had been so occupied with this work of building up a big body that there was probably little force left for brain work.

The principal replied: "I know you are right. He has been making a tremendous growth, and it has left him listless, and somewhat helpless to do mental work."

I said further: "Be sure to speak to his teachers about him that they may not say anything that would make him think they were scolding him for failing. Of course, he must repeat the studies in which he has failed; but he is very sensitive and must not be made to feel that he is being found fault with for having failed. He will soon be himself again and do as good work as in the past."

The principal agreed fully with me concerning Morton, and felt that care must be taken not to lose him while he was in this unsettled, and to himself, unsatisfactory condition.

Saturday evening, about five o'clock, Morton and his father called at the principal's office, but as he was not in, they came to my office to inquire for him. As they came into my office, the father looked like a thundercloud, and Morton as though he had lost his last friend.

The father asked for the principal. I replied that he had started for his home a few minutes before; that he would be pleased to have them call at his home. As the principal lived but a short distance from the high school, they decided to call on him at his home.

When they called at the principal's home, the father said that he had not come to find fault with the school, principal, or teachers, but that he was all out of humor with the boy. "Here," said he, "Morton has been in school regularly all the semester and now at the close is

a failure in almost everything." Before he could say more, the principal said: "I wish I could talk with you privately some time."

Immediately the father turned to Morton, handed him a street-car ticket, and said: "You go home, I'll be there soon." Then giving his attention to the principal he asked: "Now what is it you wish to say?"

The principal then related to him the conversation we had had concerning the boy. The father listened attentively. Then he replied: "I *know* you are right. Morton came to my office every afternoon at the close of school and gave his time to his lessons in my presence, and seemed to be interested in his studies and trying to do his work. *I know you are right*, but I ought not to have to come to you schoolmen to learn the condition of my boy at this time of his life."

Morton repeated the work in which he had failed, and before he graduated from the high school he had come back to his former power to do school work.

Since graduating from the high school, he has graduated from college and from a professional school and is now a young professional man of good standing.

\* \* \* \* \*

William Mathews was a fine student in the grammar grades. In his eighth grade work he was the leader of his class. He was thirteen, and a half, years of age when he entered the high school, still in knee-pants, and still more boy than youth.

The first year in high school he did good work, but not brilliant. During this first year he was making great changes physically. The second year brought still greater changes to him; and by the end of his second year, he was one of the tall boys of the school, six feet

in height. The last week in June of this his second year in high school, he told me he was not going to be in school the next year; that he was not going to school any more.

I was surprised, and asked what was the cause of his dropping out of school, of, as he said, "Quitting for good."

He then said that he had got so he *couldn't learn* as he used to learn, and so thought the best thing for him to do was to go to work. He said that he didn't know what was the matter with him, for he tried hard but couldn't learn.

I smiled and replied: "I'll tell you what is the matter with you; *you are all right*, but you have grown so fast the past year that all your vitality has gone to build up your body and nothing has been left you for brain power to do school work. As soon as you quit growing so rapidly, you will be able to do as fine school work as you ever did. There is nothing wrong with you at all but your rapid growth. You will be in better shape next September."

He returned to school in September, and in time was back to his former high standing in his work. He graduated from the high school, and later on from one of our great universities.

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Rufus Darby passed into the high school at twelve years of age. He was a very fragile child of brilliant intellect. When the changes of pubescence came to him, he grew tall very rapidly; tall, slim, and so stooped over, and pale, that he looked unfit to be in school or to do work of any kind; but the taller he grew, and the more stooped over and pale-faced he became, the more active was his intellect and the more brilliant his work.



I sometimes wondered if the hidden fire of some disease had anything to do with his unusual mental power at this time of his life; I followed him for a number of years, through the university to graduation, and on into business life, and saw him develop into a young man of good physique and fine intellect.

In an earlier chapter where I spoke of growth in height and its usual effect, I said nothing of this very common temporary lack of intellectual power that manifests itself at this period of life in many. The first two of the boys presented here bring this common occurrence into full view.

In the first two cases, for a time during the period of rapid growth, intellectual power was low; in the third case, the period of rapid growth seemed to stimulate intellectual power.

\* \* \* \* \*

Winston Durrell finished the eighth grade at twelve years of age, a mere child in everything but his ability to do school work. Physically not at all developed beyond his age, and while he was somewhat under-sized for a boy of twelve years, he was in fine physical health.

After he had completed his eighth grade work, I had a talk with his father as to the advisability of the boy's taking up high school work at his age. The father, a man of intelligence, said that he himself had developed very young, and that he thought it best to keep Winston moving on in his school work while he was in the mind to do school work, that the time might come when he would not be so willing to hold himself to school duties. He said further that the boy was in excellent physical condition and that his eighth grade school work had not taxed him at all, that he had given no time outside of

school to his work; that if Winston suffered any injury from doing high school work at his age, the school would not be considered responsible, that all responsibility would rest on the father.

Winston completed his high school course in four years, afterwards completed a university course, and later on a course in a professional college. He is today a young professional man of high standing.

The father chose wisely for his boy.

\* \* \* \* \*

The youngest pupil I ever promoted to the high school was but ten years of age. He entered school at six years of age, completed the work of the eight grades in four years, standing at the head of his class. He could easily have shortened the four years to three, but was held four years. He never studied at home. Once going over a lesson made him master of it.

When he began his high school work, I wondered if he would be able to do it; but there was no need of fear on this line. He continued with us to the close of his junior year, making a fine record all the way. While he did not shorten the years of his high school course as he had done in the elementary grades, he was known everywhere as one who never failed to measure up well in his work.

This boy was the only one in a family of four children that showed superior mental power. An older sister of his could scarcely learn at all, while the other children were only ordinary.

The school tried to give him the opportunity to move at what seemed to be his natural rate of speed. In this case as in others, the school gave an open road. Both of the boys just described moved on at their natural rates of speed.

I should say before leaving this last case, that Jesse was not in the least in his physical development beyond those of his own age when at ten years of age he entered the high school. In all his play and in everything but his great power to acquire knowledge and to do good, clear thinking, he was a boy of ten years.

\* \* \* \* \*

Wesley Baldwin entered the first primary at six years of age and graduated from the eighth grade at sixteen, a well-developed youth physically for a boy of sixteen, but of very slow power for doing school work. He was always regularly in school, but so slow at learning that his elementary school life was lengthened two years.

The same rate of movement marked him in his high school work so that he was six years instead of four completing his high school course. He was never absent from school, faithful in applying himself to his work, but slow at learning.

One of the high school teachers, in speaking of Wesley one day said she thought it a waste of time for him to take so many years to graduate from the high school, that he should be out of school at work. He was always one of the finest of the boys in school. He was in his twenty-second year when he graduated from the high school. After spending two years in college, he went into business, and from the very start has made a wonderful success of his business. He has proved one of the most successful graduates of that school. The very knowledge that he gathered so slowly has been the foundation of his success. He has made use of it all in a very practical way.

\* \* \* \* \*

Keep open the way for the scholar who is quick at learning that he may move at his own rate of progress; at the same time remember the slow scholar.

I once visited a greenhouse where the glass was low down over the beds. Many plants of the same kind were growing in these beds; the seeds of all had been planted at the same time; but some had outgrown others and were pressing against the glass and being ruined for want of growing space. These should have been transplanted to other beds where the glass was high above that they might have had room to reach upward. Just so with boys and girls in school, not only must they each be carefully tended, but at the proper time for each individual scholar, he must be transplanted that his development may not be retarded and that he may not lose interest in the work of the grades above him. The plant that presses too long against the pane is distorted and loses its value. Is not the same true of the boys and girls in school?

Give the slow scholar time without upbraiding him; keep close to him that he may not lose faith in himself. Do not lose him because he is not developing just as you think he should; give him time, hold on to him. A teacher once said to me in speaking of pupils in the eighth grade, "We get rid of all those of mediocre ability by working them out and thus save a class of fine intellects for the high school." When boys and girls are just entering the adolescent period of life, it would take an all-wise teacher to tell who are and who are not pupils of mediocre ability, so we should not attempt this impossible classification of what the future alone can reveal, but should hold on to all of them.

## CHAPTER XIX

### RURAL SCHOOL CONTRASTS

In one town where I was superintendent for several years, we received into our high school more scholars from one rural school than from a large number of other rural schools that were just as near us. The contrast in the number sent from this one school with the number from the other schools was so great that I was interested in knowing who in this district furnished the inspiration that led so many to seek a high school education. Other districts were just as wealthy and had in some cases larger schools, but their boys and girls were not interested in high school.

I soon learned that into the district that furnished so large a number of well-equipped scholars for the high school, there had come to live a few years before, a man and his wife with the hope that the free, open air of the country would restore the man to health. The woman had been an able teacher before her marriage, and in order to help with the finances of the home, now became teacher of the rural school near their home.

She was the inspirer of that entire neighborhood. Her school touched every home with a desire for something better than the past had given the boys and girls. From her school radiated an influence that made that rural school the most marked one in the whole country.

All the boys and girls of that district were in school. The school was a magnet that drew them in and held them when they were once in.

I came to know this teacher and then I saw the source of her power. She knew every individual in her

school; she knew the homes from which they came. She studied to know the possibilities of each one and by her enthusiasm and tactful handling of the boys and girls from twelve years to twenty, she had everyone inspired to do his best. She was uncommonly wise in her leadership of these older scholars, and as a result, their industry, interest, and spirit shaped the spirit and movement of the entire school.

She was not an unusual woman in her native endowment, but somewhere she had learned that while youthful life and energy cannot well be shut off, it can be directed into right channels and so controlled; and that to do this successfully, she must know the individuals.

I well remember one day, when she was inquiring of me about the high school work of some of her former pupils, I said that while a certain scholar was not failing, his work did not compare at all favorably with the work of another mentioned. "Why," she said, with apparent surprise that I should expect it to compare with the work of the other, "You ought to know his home. It is *fine* for one coming from where he does."

She knew him as we had not known him up to that time, and she knew how rightly to appreciate his efforts.

The debating or literary society carried on in her school was one of the best social centers I have ever known. So great was the interest that farmers with their families came for miles around to enjoy the social hour and the program of this rural literary society.

I often contrast this school in my mind with another that I knew quite intimately. In this latter school, the teacher was a young man, in scholarship finely-equipped, but in good sense and thoughtful interest, sadly lacking. His evenings were given to the parties that that year in that school district ran almost continuously from

week-end to week-end. He soon lost interest in his school work, was listless and almost sleepy during his school hours. In fact, all his physical and intellectual energy that should have been given to his school, were sapped by his unrestrained social dissipation, so that long before the close of the term, his usefulness was at an end. However, as no one of the district would take action against him, he was permitted to hold his position and draw his pay to the end. The year was worse than lost to the scholars of the district. A great wrong had been done them.

Not far from this school, was another, presided over by a bright, happy-hearted, purposeful girl. She too had an interest in the social life of her district, but how different an interest! From time to time she arranged for an evening social at the school house. On these occasions, the scholars were in part, entertainers, and much of the school work was placed before the visitors. The youth of the district were gathered into her school, and all the nobility within them was aroused.

When her school term came to a close and she went to another state to make her home, she went with the community's blessing.

The great fact of her work was that she established the right leadership with the youth of her school, and through them inspired not only the entire school, but the whole community.

I have given these rural contrasts for they taught me the possibilities of a teacher's work even in the one-room rural school.

## CHAPTER XX

### SOME OUTSIDE CONDITIONS THAT AFFECT SCHOOL WORK

The school work of adolescents is often greatly interfered with by outside conditions, many of them beyond the reach of school authorities or direct school influence. This is truer in the larger towns and the smaller cities than in the small towns. I judge it is just as true in the larger cities, though I can speak from experience only in the cases of the smaller cities and larger towns. With the opening of school in the fall of the year, begins the round of social events in the homes and at the clubs that mark the school year. Not the social affairs of the school, but the social events of the homes and the clubs. Mrs. Smith gives a reception Thursday afternoon and evening. Lucy Smith is absent Thursday afternoon and comes to school Friday morning with a note from her mother asking that Lucy's absence be excused as she was necessarily detained at home by her mother. Now, whether this be accepted as a legitimate excuse or not, the fact remains that Lucy's work has been interrupted; often mothers will claim illness. (?) And there are many evening social affairs in the homes, sometimes parties for young people including those who are beyond high school years as well as those who are still in school, social affairs, over which the school has no control, that affect the work of many high school scholars. All of these take the time and energy that should be given to the preparation of lessons, and so lower the school-standing of those who take part in them; and, to some extent, unfavorably affect the class work of the whole school. Not that the scholars who



attend these social functions are always failures, for often they do good school work, in other cases they strive only for a passing mark; but it not infrequently happens that they are among the most capable in school, and could, under different home conditions, rank high in scholarship. The trouble too often is, the social pleasures lower their aim in school work so that instead of their asking themselves, "What is the greatest possible good I can get out of this study or that," they, not in words, but in actions, ask: "What must I do to get a passing mark?" With any large number of this class of scholars in a high school, it requires great inspiration on the part of the teachers to inspire and maintain in the school, as a school, a high ideal of scholarship.

Sometimes teachers, seeing the great loss that comes to scholars from this life of the home, say that if they were the board of education, they would not permit this interference with school work by the home; that it is all wrong, and that either this class of students ought to be excluded from school, or else the parents ought to be compelled to change the home conditions. The teachers are sure that present conditions of social life outside of school are all wrong and should be righted; they are disgusted with parents for not having better judgment; and so, *fretting* over the shortages of our present social system, if they are not careful, they enter the ranks of the hopeless faultfinders, and thus unfit themselves for the position of teachers. The pessimistic teacher has no place in teaching adolescents. Conditions are not ideal; this is not Utopia, but a highly complex civilization, where conflicting interests cannot always be straightened out to the entire satisfaction of everyone. The teacher's part is to meet things as they are, in a bright, hopeful spirit, recognizing the limitations

of the work that is his, but leaving nothing undone that will add to the efficiency of his work in the field that is his. It is a great piece of wisdom to know the bounds of his rightful territory and within these bounds to see to it that the field is under a high state of cultivation. I am not so sure that those who fret because the present state of society is what it is, if they had their way, could improve on present conditions. The very work that teachers do, too often forbids their taking anything more than a one-sided view of the education of these young people. They see only the school side, often the poorest. They too often fail to appreciate fully the polished manners, the grace and ease that come to many of these young people as a result of their social mingling.

Many, very many, teachers, in both the high schools and the grammar grades, would be at a much higher market value had they, at the turn of life (during adolescence), had the opportunity of mingling freely in polite, social life. These polished manners *are* an asset, an asset that parents desire for their girls and boys, and for which they are often willing to sacrifice high percents in school markings. There is an education here that teachers cannot afford to ignore, even if parents do sometimes put it above its just value.

Then again, many outside social affairs are not of the type already described, but are almost wholly demoralizing. Take the high school boy who at school is a gentleman, but is poor in his work, carrying, above the passing mark only a part of his studies; yet he is a boy of good ability, well able to do above the average. His life at home and away from school is wild and "swelly," he is of the "fast set." So long as he is doing work that would pass in a boy of good home

habits, and his conduct is passable at school, and his influence cannot be shown to be injurious to the school, he has a right to be in the school, and the school is in no way directly responsible for his home conduct. It once in a while happens, when a boy reaches this stage, and the home is troubled and knows not what to do with him, that the home says, "See what my son or daughter has become since entering the high school," when the fact is that the high school has been the only restraining force for good that has touched the life of the boy since entering upon the period of adolescence. His home furnishes no stay and the boy is permitted by the home to be swayed by associations that sometimes entrap the more carefully guarded.

The safe plan on the part of the teachers is to recognize that the school has both privileges and duties in its relation to the scholars of this age as well as the younger ones; to consider that while the teacher may not order the home in all its appointments, that by coming into as close touch as possible with the heads of the home, he may advise with the parents and win their assistance in reducing to the minimum the outside social demands that break into the school work; that the school, in its relation to the home, in all the things of the home that detract from the school work whether they be with the consent of the home or not, holds only an *advisory relation* and that it does not presume to do more. This position always appeals to parents as fair and just.

Not only the parties and social affairs of like kind, but evening entertainments, theaters, moving pictures, and church services all take from the study time and the nerve force that must be given outside of school hours if the scholar's standing in the high school is to be above the ordinary. I know of nothing that more com-

pletely absorbs the attention of the scholars of a high school age than a warmly-contested political campaign, with its evening speeches and the pyrotechnics that go to arouse and hold the attention of the people and to call them together that the orators of the opposing political parties may have an opportunity to present the issues of the day. These are stirring occasions, and few are the boys and girls of high school age who have will-power enough to compel themselves to sit at home to prepare lessons while these attractions that stir the blood are calling them to come.

After a campaign evening, nerve force for school work the following morning is low, and restlessness, inattention, and grinning, seem to be at the flood. To the teacher, the day is often a trying one; but there is only one thing for the teacher to do, keep himself well under control. The teacher's self needs more attention on such a day than the scholars. Hold steadily to the work and keep in mind that another day will bring changed conditions.

But has nothing of value come to offset this loss in school work? Many have counted it one of the privileges of their lives that in their youth they heard Lincoln speak on some of the burning questions of his day. Was there ever a day in school that gave them the equivalent of one hour in the presence of *that one* of the world's greatest men? In the political campaigns of today, many of our ablest public men come to be known almost from one end of our country to the other through their campaign speeches, and the inspiration and education, not only concerning the issues of the day, but also in patriotism, that come to our youth in this way, are immeasurably great and good. History learned from the lips of our greatest living statesman is the key that un-

locks interest in much of the history contained in books. Political campaigns are not without value in the education of the youth. They do demoralize the classroom work to a greater or less degree, but they also do a work that school teachers cannot do.

Religious instruction is left to the home and to the church. Our public schools are made up of children from homes representing all creeds. It is not within the right of the public school teacher to teach in any way any particular creed. Religious instruction belongs to the home and the church.

When some of the churches in the city were giving special religious instructions to classes of their boys and girls preparing them for confirmation, I was always pleased to grant their instructors the privilege of sending these boys and girls a half-hour or hour late to school. This privilege was not always asked, but when it was, it was granted. To many, very many, parents, it is the most important of all instruction.

With some churches, it is customary to hold series of special religious services. In some churches, these special services take the form of revival meetings. Sometimes the Protestant churches hold a series of union revival services, employing an evangelist to conduct the services. It frequently happens that all Protestant Christian people of a community, for several weeks at a time, center their interests in one united effort of this kind. The community is deeply moved religiously. High school scholars are just at the age when religious teachings are most likely to impress them. As has already been stated, at no other time in life is there so great an opportunity for pressing home religious truths. It is the time when the mind first seeks to know the deeper meaning of life, the time when, if the right

trend be given to the religious thinking, little need be the fears for the future religious life; but the boy or girl set adrift in his religious thinking at this period, may ever after be hopelessly castabout. Parents know that this is the opportune time for a determined religious stand on the part of girls and boys. They may, or may not, know how deep-seated physiologically and psychologically, the reason is for the youth's deciding now the question of his religious life; but the parents do know from observation and experience, that deep religious convictions at this period are apt to give trend to the whole after religious life, and hence, are very solicitous that their boys and girls be regular attendants on these services, and actively engaged in the religious work of the meetings. As a result, the nerve strain on scholars of the high school and of the grammar grades is often very great, and the school work cannot fail to be, to some extent, affected. High schools feel the effect more than grammar schools. Because of shorter hours of high school sessions and the character of the work, high school scholars must ordinarily do more studying at home and of evenings than grammar grade scholars, so when their evenings are given to attending religious services, the lessons suffer; nor is this all—the lowered nervous vitality prevents the accomplishment of what is the usual work during the regular study hours in school. It is true also that the depleted nerves of some of those most actively engaged in the evening services make them so restless and inattentive that they constitute a real annoyance in school. This sometimes happens with those who have been the most reliable and trustworthy high school scholars. What can the teachers do under these conditions? Must they permit the work of the school to

be broken into by these religious meetings? Have the schools no right to be considered? There is one thing teachers can do and should do, they should hold themselves from fretting, and plan to meet the conditions that they cannot change. Help the scholars to so rearrange their study hours that the hours immediately following the close of school in the afternoon and before school in the morning may be devoted to the lesson that heretofore has been prepared in the evening. Much can be done in this way, and by following it up from day to day to see that the new arrangement is carried out by the scholars, *a great deal* can be done. But, even this planning with the scholars must be done in no fault-finding spirit or manner, or the teacher will defeat the very object he is trying to attain. A consultation with the parents, in some cases, wins their assistance in securing attention to the new study hours. But this and all other arrangements for study hours that can be made, do not make up for the deficient nerve-force left for school work. This can be met only in one way and that is, by not attempting to do more than can be well done. Careful testing soon reveals to the teacher about what amount of work can be done, and well done. This should be the measure for the time being, even if it does fall somewhat short of the usual requirements. It is far better to move a little more slowly for a time and keep up the quality of the work than to keep up the quantity at the expense of quality.

But I wish I could tell you how much, in the times of greatest outside distractions, depends on the teacher. The highly efficient teacher, the inspirer of girls and boys, at these times, arouses a determination in his scholars not to let their school work fall short because of their interest in the religious services, but to more

carefully systematize their time, and to give themselves more completely to the two things for the time and to the two things only. This teacher makes no complaint of shiftlessness in the preparation of the work; loses no nervous energy in grumbling about the unfortunate conditions that hamper his work; but, with steady nerves, a happy face, and a vigorous spirit says, "The conditions will require extra effort on the part of all, and I know we will make the effort." The scholars leave his room with the set purpose of doing as he has planned. *They must do it*, he *expects* it; and they in a large measure, do do it. True it is, he measures the assignments so as not to ask the impossible, but an assignment that measures up to the full of what he believes they can do under existing conditions.

In this teacher's classes there is no visible break in the work; recitations move on with their accustomed ready response, and bright interest. Contrast this work with that in the case of the poor teacher, the one who complains that outside distractions have ruined his work; step into this complaining teacher's recitation room and the very deadness of it reflects, not so much the influence of outside conditions, as the lack of power in the teacher.

However, the fact still remains that these outside conditions do affect, unfavorably, the classroom work of the scholars. The first of these two teachers spends an unusual amount of nerve-force to hold his classes to good preparation of their work. The second teacher spends possibly an equal or greater amount of nerve-force fretting over outside conditions that he cannot change. One is wise, the other, foolish. Just in proportion as the teachers of a high school or grammar school belong to one or the other of these two classes, is



the character of the school work affected, to a greater or less degree, by outside conditions.

The great arousing of the religious sentiment of a community so that for weeks the whole thought is centered on the higher things of life, on better living, on man's trying to measure up more fully to his right relation to his fellowman and to his God, is a wonderful force in the character-forming of the adolescent mind. Is it a loss of time, in the broad education of the youth, that his school work moves at a somewhat slower pace while this part of his education is being emphasized?

## CHAPTER XXI

### SOME COMMENTS

In the preceding chapters, I have stated the best-known facts of the physical and mental changes of adolescence, and have indicated the peculiar characteristics of the young people with whom we have to deal in the high school, and to a large extent in the grammar grades. Whenever we expect these young people to be other than they are, we are doomed to disappointment; but when we study to know them as they do not know themselves, physically, mentally, morally, and to some extent in their inheritance and in their environment, we put ourselves in a position to wield a great influence over them. It is our knowledge of them individually and also in the gang or mob form, that makes possible a sympathetic attitude in us who are teachers toward them that determines in them the right attitude toward the school and all its interests. When these adjustments are as they should be, the school is in a position to work out its problems along right lines and in the right spirit even though the work be but imperfectly done.

President Hadley said in his baccalaureate address a few years ago: "No matter how high the ideals for which we stand, we cannot expect others to follow us unless we have confidence in them that they will follow us. We cannot expect devotion if we return it with mistrust." Nowhere is this more true than in school work with adolescent boys and girls; yet it must be an *intelligent confidence* that we give them, a confidence based on as full a knowledge as possible of their condition of life; a confidence that is not full of *impossible expectations*.

The one thing that must never fail those of us who work with these young people, is that *self-control* that holds us to the right point of view. The young people may be swayed from their moorings by some passing emotion or mental whirlwind, but we, those of us in control, must not fail to see clearly the difference between the *deed* and the *doer*; the responsibility of the individual acting *alone*, and the responsibility of the individual acting under the impulse of the *gang* or *crowd*, or what in other terms might be called the *mob* influence. If we lose this point of view, we fail to distinguish between the *doer* and the *deed*; if we lose this point of view, we may hold for *individual responsibility* where it does not exist. This confusion in the minds of those in authority always does violence to the highest form of discipline.

If those in authority have the right self-control, they can condemn the *deed*, and yet have the kindest feeling for the *doer*. *Wrongdoing* is always *wrong*, but wrongdoers are *not* always *bad*. That which is done under the gang or mob influence may be very wrong, and yet the individual scarcely understands how he became a party to the deed, what the influence that led him on.

If the spirit of authority is intelligently *just*, there will be no condemnation of a spirit in the doer that is not there, or in other words, the authority will not impute wrong motives to the doers of the evil deeds, but while strongly condemning the *deed*, and requiring that every wrong be made right by those who did the *wrong*, will be in the kindest attitude toward the doers of the wrong.

When this is the case, the scholars may not, at first, appreciate the justice of their paying the penalty for the wrong-doing, but when the penalty comes not in the

spirit of retaliation or of getting even, but rather as the natural result of violated law, the natural result of the *wrong done*; while they may not at *first see* clearly, nor *feel* that it is just, yet in the end their feelings and intellects as well, will clear up and the lesson that wrong brings its own reward, and that too, whether the wrong is intentional or only the result of some sudden impulse, will be learned. I say *feelings* and intellect as well, placing feelings first, for it is true that the steady, kindly, unruffled *feelings* of those in authority first touch the boys and girls, and beget in them a responsive feeling that soon brings about the right mental attitude; and then the justice of all that has been done is recognized; and the great need of self-control more deeply impressed on all.

Sometimes it is necessary for the principal or superintendent, or both, to meet the whole body of scholars and hold them to a strong support of what is best for the school when some whirl of excitement might turn their sympathy to the side of the offenders.

Once in a while the principal, or superintendent, or both, must act quickly and with no uncertainty in warding off what might cause serious trouble to the school.

Ordinarily all matters of discipline and all school troubles can be taken care of privately, and the school know nothing of them; but once in a great while an act is committed which if not headed off might stir up the whole school as in the case of the rules and regulations for freshmen and sophomores; and when an act of this kind has been committed, if the school can be quickly "lined up" strong on the side of right, against the whole affair, the offense is easily adjusted, and the offenders failing to make themselves objects of interest, have no influence whatever on the school. Then their

discipline if they are members of the school becomes a very simple affair.

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When I was first beginning as a teacher, I thought the day would come when I knew just how to conduct a school, that it would never be necessary to correct scholars or talk with them about their duties and their conduct; that when once everything was gotten into the right condition, the schools, the scholars, would run themselves. It was years before it fully dawned on me that if it were so, the best teachers would soon be out of jobs; that the work of training the young is a continuous process; that as the finished (?) product leaves our factory at one door, the raw material is coming in at the other. Not long ago, I heard a lecturer say that in talking with a manufacturer of shaving soap, he had asked the soap-man if he did not waste a great deal of money advertising. He said to the soap man: "Everybody knows of your soap, and it seems a great waste to keep on advertising." But the soap man replied: "If it is true that everybody knows of my soap today, there is a new crowd coming on tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow, and for their sakes it pays all the time to keep on advertising."

When the right spirit reigns in a school, it should continue from year to year; but that right spirit year after year must exert its formative influence on this boy and that boy, this girl and that girl, this class and that class, as they pass up through the grades of the school, as they pass through the various physical and mental stages of their development. So long as boys and girls grow from childhood to youth, from youth to early manhood and womanhood, so long will the teach-

ing and the training of youth furnish the problems that grammar grade and high school teachers must try to solve.

My boyhood home was on the banks of the Ohio River. Year after year I watched the pilots on the tow-boats guide the great fleets of coal past the danger points in the river. Each new fleet was guided just as carefully as though no other fleet had been guided past the same dangers. So each oncoming class of youth must be guided just as carefully as though no others had been before them.

Whatever the conditions the future may bring forth as to high school teachers, for the present and for the immediate future, conditions will change but little as to the preparedness or fitness of high school teachers for their work. Many every year go into the high school as teachers fresh from colleges and universities, young in years, and with little training pedagogically for their work. Bright, scholarly young people, yet unbeknown (?) to themselves, ignorant of the work they are to do. Many of them in their experience socially are not so wise as many girls and boys whom they are to teach. In fact, it not infrequently happens that the high school teacher has had no social life before he takes up the work of a teacher, so that the social attention shown him by school scholars, is more than he with his lack of experience, is able to stand, and as a result, his indiscreetness greatly interferes with his doing his best work, and hence with the best interest of the school. This is not only true of young men, but of young women also. Sometimes promising young teachers lose their opportunities in a school by a lack of judgment that a little experience in social life would have given them. I have in mind, an excellent young woman, scholarly, and with ability to in-

struct, who by keeping company with some of the boys of the high school in the social life of the community outside of the school, so lost her influence as a teacher in the school that she was, in the end, in that school, a failure. She was a good woman but she lacked judgment as to the fitness of things. The social affairs of those of high school age appealed to her strongly, for as a girl previous to her teaching, she had had no social life.

In taking into a corps of high school teachers, young men and young women, college or university graduates, with no experience in the work of teaching, it is unpardonable in the principal or superintendent not to talk these things over with them so as to guard them or at least to make them aware of some of the dangers that they if forewarned, can all the more easily guard against. In my own work of later years, I made it a point always to talk very frankly with inexperienced young teachers coming into our school. In fact, before engaging them, I have talked of these things and have always had it understood that if they came to work with us they must expect the high school principal and the superintendent to advise or talk with them as freely about their work as they would with a high school scholar; that it would be their work to train them in the things that make for the best of high school teachers; that whatever criticism might be offered, whatever suggestion might be given, all would be done in the kindest spirit of helpfulness, for their interest and the school's interests would be one. It is a blessing to the young candidate and to the principal and superintendent as well, to have a clear understanding on these things before any engagement is entered into, as it makes possible a way of helpfulness on the part of the

supervising officers, and brings about a close relation that means strength to the young teacher. Supervising officers owe this to the young teacher.

In talking over what would be expected of young men teachers among many things, their attention was called to the fact that they would come to know many beautiful, attractive high school girls, but that there must be no keeping company with them; that while we did not wish to interfere with their social life, we knew the effect on the school of young men teachers' paying special attention to girls of the high school, so would ask them to keep free from any entanglement of this kind; that their usefulness and the school's best interests could be best served by their remembering this and conducting themselves accordingly.

Another request that was made of them, one that many might think uncalled-for, but that we knew from experience meant the good of all, was this, each young man teacher was asked not to detain any one of the high school girls alone for make-up work or for any purpose after the close of school, but in cases where some one of the girls had work to do, or where assistance was to be given her, to arrange to have someone else remain in the room until the girl was excused, or to ask her to pass with him to another recitation room where there was another teacher, or to the library.

In making this request of a young man, we said to him that it was not because we mistrusted him for if we mistrusted him he would not be considered for a teacher, nor was it because we lacked faith in the character of our high school girls; but that it reflected on no one to make all safe from the possibility of gossip so far as could be done.



This calls to mind the case of a young friend of mine. He entered high school work when but little more than a boy, still in the adolescent period. He lived the first year very closely in sympathy with his superintendent, in whom he confided, and whose advice he always followed, and he made a record of which all were proud. The following year he was under another superintendent with whom the relation was not so close, and who was slow to offer his help to the younger teachers. This second year mistakes were made that were very humiliating to this young teacher.

Some months later, he was visiting his first superintendent, and told him of the mistakes he had made, and when the superintendent, not in a condemning or fault-finding manner, asked, "Why *did* you do it?" the young man replied: "I did it because you were not there to help me." He was a splendid young man, and with a little guidance on the part of the principal and superintendent, an able, inspiring, high school teacher.

The time may come when the training given candidates for high school positions will enable them to understand, at least to a considerable extent, high school problems; but as I have already said, at the present time and for some time to come, principals and superintendents must do a large part of this training.

High-school principals and superintendents of schools must be careful in their selection of teachers that they may not bring into their corps young people whose ideals have been lowered by having come in contact with teachers of the wrong type in higher schools. It is of great importance to the principal and superintendent to know that the young man or woman who would enter the ranks of their school teachers has been under the inspiration of a really great teacher. I re-

member well a young man who was an applicant for a position as teacher in our high school. He and I called upon one of the members of the board of education who knew well the faculty of the school from which the young man came, and who knew, too, that in that faculty there was one man pre-eminent as a teacher and inspirer of youth. When this teacher's name was mentioned, the young man's face glowed with admiration. After the young man had passed out, the board member said, "I'm in favor of that young man, he has been inspired by a really great teacher." The years following proved that that great teacher's ideals implanted in the young man, made him a blessing to our school.

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The teacher of grammar grade and of high school scholars should be able to read many of these ordinarily fleeting peculiarities of youth and know how, without calling attention to them, to meet them as worthy only a passing notice, until they cease to appear. There is always great danger that the boy or girl may be greatly injured by having his attention directed to his own peculiarities, sometimes so injured that what otherwise might be of a fleeting character, is fixed as a lifelong trait, possibly by his own brooding over it and bringing it too strongly into his consciousness. To greatly humiliate an adolescent over the fact that he is not as many others at his age is a great wrong.

Miss M—— was teacher of a class in Algebra. It was not a beginning class. It was a class that had been poorly taught the year before. Miss M—— was studying the work of each member of the class very carefully to discover the weak points of each that she might help each one just at the point where he most needed

help. She was an inspiring, able teacher. She was given this poorly prepared class because the principal knew she was the most able of all his faculty to even up and lead forward such a class. She was succeeding splendidly and holding her class at a high point of interest. All but one large boy were responding to every effort. But Mack Vaney sat in the class making but little attempt to do the work. He said he never could "do Algebra" and there was no use in his trying. The teacher felt she must show him that he could "do Algebra," and that it was time for her to act.

One day, as they were taking up a new process in Algebra that required considerable practice to fix it so it could be used automatically, she invited all of the class who would like to go through the process with her after school to remain. To Mack she quietly gave a special invitation. A large part of the class at the close of school passed to Miss M——'s room, stepped to the blackboard, and under her guidance, solved problem after problem by the new process. In fact, some of them worked every problem of the next morning's lesson before leaving. But Mack sat looking like a thundercloud, until all but one or two others had left the room. Then Miss M—— asked him to try a problem on the blackboard where she could follow his work, step by step. He replied again that there was no use in his trying, that he could not do it. His eyes filled and the tears flowed freely. Mad, or angered? Yes, but not at the teacher, for he thought her ideal; but he had so thoroughly convinced himself that he could not "do Algebra," that he was just in an ugly spirit at himself, and was unwilling to try. The teacher felt it was then or never with him and was determined to prove to him that he could do the work. She in-

sisted that he try. He made the effort, still in the same mood. Step by step, she held him to the process, problem after problem, not speaking many words. Finally, he reached the point where all she said was: "Correct, take the next one." Every problem in the next day's lesson was correctly solved before Mack was permitted to leave the blackboard. Then, when excused, he quietly said, "Good-night!" and passed out on his way home.

From that day on, he was a leader in his class in Mathematics. I knew him through Geometry and Trigonometry. He never after that day called or accepted help from anyone, but led in all the work. No other teacher in that school could have done what Miss M—— did, for while he was a fine boy he was, if stirred a little, very stubborn, and no other teacher had that quiet, poised manner, that masterful power, that compelled action without irritation that Miss M—— possessed.

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Miss Martha Pollard was a graduate of a high school and of a state normal school, but had had no teaching experience other than the practice work in the normal school, when she was employed to teach in our city schools. She had made a record far above the ordinary in scholarship in both the schools; not only had she been well-trained for the work of a teacher, but she seemed possessed of qualities of heart and mind that gave promise of a fine teacher.

She was first given a fourth grade room. The pupils had been finely taught and the government had been almost ideal in the third grade room from which they were promoted. They, in fact, had never been in a room

where there was anything but the best of order, so knew nothing else. The fourth grade room was an ideal room for a young teacher. A room that gave her every opportunity to make a good beginning. But her work the first semester was very poor, so poor that our primary supervisor gave her much attention and help, hoping Miss Pollard would, after becoming accustomed to the school, be able to put into the work of teaching the power she seemed to possess.

During this first semester, she made some improvement, but it was not marked. The second semester, she had a class in fifth grade work, and did much better teaching than she had done in the fourth grade. Her teaching was much improved and her grip on the room was stronger. She was still far from the teacher we had hoped she would be, but as she had made some improvement, especially the second semester, and had always manifested a fine spirit, she was retained for the second year.

The second year, she was given fifth grade pupils, a fine class, but her work fell below what it had been the latter half of the first year. The supervisor, the principal, the superintendent, put forth every effort to help her, but she still failed to measure up. The second half of the year, the superintendent followed her work very closely and talked with her very frankly about it. He studied her, too, to learn her weakness, to see if it were possible to give her aid, to help her grow in power.

He finally decided she was afraid to assert herself, to make herself felt as head of her school. Her instruction was good, the lessons were well-planned, and while he was in the room the order was good, but when he was out of the room for a day, the school became disorderly, and the teacher stood helpless before the school.

At this time, in a private interview with the teacher, he told her that she must make a decided improvement in her work or she must drop out of the school at the close of the semester; that it was a great wrong to the pupils and a wrong to herself for her to continue in the work if she could do no better work as a teacher than she was then doing; that her room was the poorest taught school in the city; that it was for her to decide whether or not she would lose her place in the school.

She took this plain talk very much to heart, and began to cry. But the superintendent said there was no need to cry, that he was her friend and anxious to see her succeed, but that no one could teach her room for her, no one could make her room an orderly, studious room for her, she must do it herself; that she was well-trained and of good scholarship; but that it seemed to him she simply would not put forth the determined effort to control her room; that instead of standing up before that room with an air of authority about her, she stood looking as though she feared every one of the pupils; that instead of crying, she ought to "get busy," determined to make a success, to have an orderly, studious room, a room in which she and the pupils too would be happy. "But," said he, "if you will not exert yourself to be master of your school, I will not recommend you for a place for the coming year. You have the ability, the power to make a good teacher, if you will not do it this semester, your opportunity here ends. I hope you do what I know you can do if you but will do it."

It was now a case of sink or swim with her, and she swam. She put forth the effort of her life that semester and made great improvement. At the close of the semester, the superintendent said to her that she had

improved so much that she would be continued in the same position for the coming year; that while she had made great improvement, her school was far from the school he expected her to make it if she continued to teach. "You have the ability, but are only beginning to use it. Next year there must be still greater improvement."

She was pleased, but knew her work was still below what it must be to hold a permanent place in the school. She asked if she could not be given a room in some other building. The superintendent replied that she would not be transferred to any other building but must bring her work up where she was, that there was no easier place in the city schools. Then he added: "Go home, take your vacation *free from thoughts of school*. Don't think of school, but have a good time, then you will return with renewed nerve force and be able to put snap and vim into your work."

The superintendent saw no more of her until one day in midsummer she called at his office to talk with him. She said she had been worrying all summer about having that room and again asked for a change. The superintendent said that he would relieve the room of one boy for her, but would make no other change; that she must bring that room up to the standard of the best schools; that she had showed her ability to do it and that she must do it. Again he said to her to go home and quit worrying.

In September, she was in her place with a different look on her face. Nothing was said to her about her room, but a week had not passed before all knew that a complete change had come to the teacher and as a result the room was in good condition. The principal asked the superintendent if he had noted the change in

the room, saying, she is doing finely. The supervisors put the same question to the superintendent each one commenting on the fine room. The superintendent replied to each questioner that he had noted the change.

Shortly after the close of the first month of the semester, Miss Pollard said to the superintendent that she believed she was doing the kind of work that he had said she must do, and that she greatly enjoyed her school.

"Yes," the superintendent replied, "you are doing good work. I knew all the time that you could do it, but I sometimes feared you might never be willing to put forth the effort to do it. I'm greatly pleased with what you are doing. Of course, you enjoy it."

In this case, it took time and effort on the part of supervising officers to make this young woman the good teacher that she finally became. The fine spirit in which she received all criticisms saved her to final success. No fault could be found with her training both in the normal school and in the high school. She was under excellent teachers.

Here is another beginning teacher. She too is a high school graduate and a normal school graduate. A young woman of fine character but just a little mistrustful of herself. This was the one thing that, at first, made me hesitate to give her a place as a primary teacher; but she was by far the best that could be secured at that time for the school and for this reason was taken into our corps of teachers.

But I need not have had any fears. When the first day she stood before the school, a bright smile lighting up her face, a face full of faith and trust in the boys and girls, coupled with a something that suggested absolute obedience to her wishes, and when I saw her



definite manner as she moved about her work, I knew that a young teacher of unusual worth had come among us, and that all we could do for her would be to give her opportunity to grow. And she grew and she grew to far better things as a teacher.

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At the opening of one fall term, we had a new man in the manual training shop to teach the seventh and the eighth grade boys who came from all the grammar schools to this center for shop-work. This new teacher had had some experience in teaching small boys, and had had a fine course in one of our best Mechanical Engineering schools, but he had had but little pedagogical training. We knew he was short in his pedagogical training although he had taken a "course of lectures" (?) on teaching manual training. However, he was the best-prepared man available for the place that we could secure for the money that could be paid that year.

I watched his work very closely and kept in close touch with him. He was a fine mechanic and his ability and equipment in mechanical drawing were of high order; but he was just as mechanical in handling seventh and eighth grade boys as he was skillful in handling mechanical drawing tools. I hoped he would improve in this part of the work, but with all my assistance, for quite a while, I almost despaired of his ever rising to an appreciation of what it means to be a teacher.

The principals who sent boys to him finally began to say that there must be something wrong with the teacher, as the boys did not care for their manual training as they had before this teacher came. I knew that the boys were tired of the dead mechanics of his work,

and that in some way I must get him to a higher plane of teaching, or he could not continue in the work with us, as the loss to the boys would be too great. One day, I was at a grammar building talking with the principal about the manual training work when she said that the feeling on the part of the boys against the manual training seemed to be growing worse all the time. I asked her to call to the office one class of the boys for me to talk with them.

When they came into the office, I greeted them, and said that I wished to talk with them about their manual training. I then said that I would like them to tell me just why they did not care for their manual training as they had cared for it the last year; that they should tell me anything they wished; that I knew the teacher was trying hard to help them and was willing to do anything to help them; but that I also knew they did not like to work under him; that I was anxious to find out the trouble so I could adjust it if possible, and everyone be happy again in the work.

At first, no one felt like speaking, but with a little more encouragement on my part, one of the boys said in a gentlemanly manner, "Mr. Stableton, we don't think he treats us right." "Well," I replied, "I'm sure he wishes to treat you right, and I'd like to know in just what way he does not treat you right." Then one of the boys said: "Mr. Stableton, do you think it was right for him to make me stay and clean up a part of the floor as a punishment?" I smiled and replied, "Why, John, you would clean up *the whole room* and never complain, if I were to ask you to do it." "Yes," he replied, "but you wouldn't ask me the *way* he does." I saw the trouble. The work was not interesting, and as a result, he was ruffling their feelings. It was more a matter of

their feelings than anything else. The teacher was calling forth the wrong response from the boys. My part was to bring about a different method of approach on the part of the teacher, and to help him to do away with the dead monotony of the work.

I next had a talk with the teacher. I explained that the boys were asking to be permitted to give up manual training, and finally told him of what I had learned of how they felt. He was very sorry, for he was honestly trying to do his part. I said further that the boys had the notion that he did not like them.

"But, Mr. Stableton," he replied, "I do like them and am trying so hard to be helpful."

"I believe every word you say," I answered, for I did, "but you and I together must bring about a better understanding so they will *feel* that you *are* interested in them as I know you are." It means everything to you to make a success with these boys and there is no reason why you cannot do it."

He said again that he was trying hard and that he thought he had pretty good order and attention to work, but that sometimes little things happened that he had to correct. John, he said had been somewhat inattentive, so he had told him to remain after school, and required him to clean up a part of the shop as a punishment. "And don't you think that was a good way to punish him? I've been trying to think out ways of punishing boys who are inattentive or do not do their work, and it seems to me to keep John in and require him to do that work was a good thing. What do you think?"

I replied that I feared he had hold of the wrong end of the situation; that I had studied how to *interest* and *direct* energy rather than how to punish offenders; and that I was sure we had found the source of his trouble.

“Why,” said he, “I’d like to have you read my notes on the lectures on school discipline given us at the university. They tell us just how to try to plan out certain punishments for certain offenses.”

I kindly said, “Look here, my dear sir, you burn up those notes and come here determined to live with these boys and to think how to interest them, how to direct their energy and at the same time make them *feel* that yours is a sincere interest in them, and the problem of punishment will largely cease to bother you. Whenever you have the right relation between yourself and them, John would be more than willing to clean up the whole room. No, I’d not recommend giving a boy a job of cleaning up a room as a punishment, I’d do nothing that he could feel degrades him. If John had littered up the floor, I’d have him clean it up, not as a punishment, but as a matter of right, taking it for granted that he would always wish to do the right thing, or as he might say, give him a square deal.”

“These boys come to you expecting to do the right thing, but when you put a mechanical rein on them and keep a suspicious look-out for someone to brace against it, you suggest to them the very thing you would not have them do. Quit looking for offenses. Expect them to do right. Greet them cordially when they come into the shop and keep the work spinning and keep your mind on what you and they are going to accomplish, and before you know it, you will have a common interest and be pulling together.

“Then I’d make a little change in the work. I’d give more freedom to individuals and get away from the monotony of trying to hold everyone to work on the same thing at the same time. I think I’d have as many projects as boys, so each one would be following out

something of interest to him. This, together with your own changed attitude, ought soon to make a very different situation from what you now have. There is no reason why you cannot make a successful teacher, your education, your fine mechanical skill, and your willingness to work, and work hard, are great assets. Now cultivate the spirit of a teacher and you *will succeed*. *I'm sure you will do it*. I'll give you every assistance in my power. You *must succeed*, you are too good a young man to fail."

After this, from time to time, we talked together of his work and it was not long until there was a marked change for the better. There was a pleasant atmosphere in the room, there was just as close attention to business, but the boys were happy and the teacher was too.

The latter part of the semester he said to me: "Mr. Stableton, I now know what you meant when you talked to me of getting hold of the boys and directing them instead of studying how to punish them." And I replied: "You don't need to tell me, I know the change that has come to you, and I'm wonderfully pleased."

He was with us two years, and we were all sorry to lose him, but an opening paying him \$700 more than we could possibly pay came to him and called him from us. Two years later I received a letter from him saying that he wished to thank me for the help I had given him when he first came to our school; that that year's training had made it possible for him to hold the position he then held in one of our state normal schools.

\* \* \* \* \*

Young people at this age are very sensitive to the shades of honesty that the teacher manifests from day to day in the conduct of the work in his classroom; and

the class estimate of the teacher's honesty of character is not far from right. A small minority may hold a different view, but this does not affect the class estimate.

In a few instances, I have known teachers who counted themselves strictly honest, and prided themselves on being teachers of morality, but who because of their unkind attitude toward some of their fellow-teachers, were actually teaching their scholars to be dishonest. These teachers have permitted themselves from day to day to criticize some of their fellow teachers' classroom work. I do not mean that they speak openly unkindly, but they speak disparagingly of the work done in other classrooms, not so much for the purpose of injuring the other teachers, oh no! they would not do aught against fellow teachers, but rather with the intent of making their own work stand out as something superior when compared with that of other teachers. Some otherwise good teachers fall into this selfish habit and so unfit themselves for the work of developing character.

The scholars recognize this as an unfair blow at fellow teachers and usually ascribe it to jealousy. Boys and girls of these grades recognize the fact that a teacher to be honest should devote herself during the class periods to the work of teaching and give no unkind attention to the work done by other teachers. They may in many ways admire this teacher who is given to this unkind work, but when they analyze her character, they always say that she is lacking in honesty, in fairness.

It might be thought that if these scholars so clearly analyze the character of teachers of this class, that they would receive no harm from being under their teaching; but this is not the case, they do receive harm from these

teachers. "Vice is a monster of so fearful mien as to be hated needs but to be seen, yet seen too oft, familiar with her face, we first endure, then pity, then embrace." Nowhere is this more true than in the case of adolescent boys and girls under a teacher of this type. The teacher's weakness becomes unto them an excuse for their own weaknesses; whereas the character of the teacher should be a constant inspiration to higher ideals on the part of scholars. Teachers who permit themselves to do these things, are, unconsciously it may be, teachers of dishonesty.

\* \* \* \* \*

A short time ago, in conversation with a friend of mine, a principal of a large elementary school in one of our great cities, he remarked that he had been greatly depressed for the past week; in fact, he said that their whole corps of city teachers had been somewhat under a depressing cloud of feeling ever since Professor X had lectured to them the week before on the Immorality of Grammar Grade and High School Scholars.

And then he continued: "If the situation is as he depicted it to us, it is appalling, but I cannot bring myself to believe his words, still I have been greatly disturbed and depressed."

I felt quite a little provoked with my friend that he should even be disturbed by Prof. X's talk. I said that even if the data the Professor had collected were made up of facts, still his interpretation was at fault. I had lived too many years in close association with boys and girls, scholars in these grades of school, and had given too much thought and study to them, to their physical, and their moral development as well as to their intellectual, to be even slightly disturbed by anything

Prof. X might say. I knew then and I know now that they constitute the finest body of youth, intellectually and morally, in our land.

I was pleased to hear the words of Dr. —— at the National Educational Association, July, 1921, when he said that the morals of high school scholars are fully up to the standard of morals of the community in which a high school is located. I would say *above* the standard of the community of the school.

Someone has said the intelligent teacher, the one who knows that youth brings the unexpected, the extravagant, the contradictory, yet honest, the concealed yet open, the silly, the grinny, and the what not, in all the make-up of the outcroppings of a thousand generations; the teacher who knows that his work is the living with these, the working with them, and more than all else, the so entering into their feelings and ideals that he can cultivate that within himself which appeals to them in so masterly a way that he, even against their own desires, moves them to act, to form new and higher ideals, is a most powerful agent for good in their education. But that teacher who knows not these things, whose soul is not in harmony with youth; who sees only the unexpected, the extravagant, the contradictory, the concealed, the silly, the grinny, and the what not that are disagreeable and unreliable in all the outcroppings of a thousand generations; who knows not that his work is to live with these youth, to work with them, so to enter their lives and feelings that his ideals may become their ideals, that he who knows not these things, calls the good, bad; and the righteous, unrighteous, and does injury that none may repair. And, alas! too often not even the teacher himself knows of the great wrong he has done.



I do not believe the ability to interest, control and inspire adolescent boys and girls is all a gift. Natural aptitude there no doubt is, but he who is skillful in the work has become so by a careful study of boys and girls and by a close training of himself. And there are those both men and women who seem possessed of a power over youth which to an ordinary observer is almost wonderful. Could we secure for grammar grade and for high school teachers those who possess this ability in so marked a degree, one of the most difficult problems of these schools would be solved.

It is not a difficult thing to come into the confidence of scholars at this period of their life, and it is an enjoyable companionship to live near them. In fact, to know them is but to enjoy them. A number of years ago I heard Edward Everett Hale preach a sermon; his theme was The Enjoyment of God. He said that the answer to the first question in the old catechism had never been improved upon: "What is the chief end of Man?" Answer—"To glorify God and to enjoy him forever," and then he added, "And especially to enjoy Him." Here is much of the secret of dealing with adolescents, it is not only to know them physically, mentally, spiritually, and in their environment; but it is for teachers to cultivate that within themselves which will enable them to *enjoy* boys and girls of this age.



## APPENDIX



## APPENDIX

### OBSERVATIONS AND QUESTIONS THAT ARE SUGGESTED IN THE STUDY OF INDIVIDUAL CASES

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#### On Chapter One

I have given this story of Ned R. that teachers may see how easy it is to deal with a scholar when the teacher knows him as the scholar does not know himself, physically, mentally and emotionally, morally or spiritually; in his home, and to some extent in his birth inheritance.

Ten years of observation and study had revealed Ned to me. The ever to be expected unexpected bursting forth of the ferment of youth was plainly to be seen as the cause of his trouble so I cared little for the form in which it manifested itself.

His attitude when he came into the room made it possible for me to say, "Go and sin no more," but I couched the same thought in somewhat different phraseology.

A strong sense of regained self control was evident in Ned's attitude when he came into the room. How was that control strengthened by our interview?

What should be the object in view in the adjustment of all school offenses?

Why was it important for Ned to see that with us a good record for years outweighed one serious mistake?

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In the second story in this chapter the strong points of the teacher are only indicated. She yet needed to be guided through some experiences to ripen her intellectual grasp into full understanding.

Wherein did this teacher fall short?

Is her weakness a common weakness with young teachers in the grammar grades and high schools?

Does the reader know of a better way for the superintendent to aid a teacher of this type?

In the next teacher's similar experience what were the strong points as brought out in her story?

## THE MAN WHO WAS ATTRACTIVE TO YOUTH

Does the reader believe that some persons are born with dispositions or personalities that are less attractive to youth than others?

Does the story imply that this man depended wholly on his natural attractiveness to youth to hold their interest in him, or did he put forth effort to cultivate their acquaintance, to make himself attractive to them?

If the reader believes he was born with a disposition that is not attractive to boys and girls at the stage of youth, what should he do if he is to be a teacher of youth?

What should all teachers of youth do if they are to continue to teach boys and girls in the critical, sensitive period of youth?

## SAM AND DICK

When I was a boy, a neighbor boy took a trip to New Orleans on a steamboat. New Orleans was far, far away in those times. When the boy returned home he told how lonesome he was while in New Orleans, and that one day while wandering about the city he happened to meet a "roust-about," a freight handler who worked on the deck of an Ohio river steamboat that had just come down to New Orleans. This roust-about was from Manchester but he and the boy did not know each other in Manchester; they had nothing in common; "but," said the boy, "I was never in my life so glad to see anybody else as I was to see him, and *we just felt like we were kin; and my! didn't we talk about Manchester!*"

What common interest or experience brought the superintendent near to Sam, and gave something to talk about?

In what way could this friendly feeling be helpful to Sam?

What would the reader do with a sixteen year old boy under like conditions of scholarship if the boy were in his school?

What should the school try to give every boy and every girl?

Is it better sometimes to make use of corporal punishment to hold a boy to orderly, obedient conduct in school, rather than to set him adrift on the street, or to send him to some state institution for incorrigibles where with all his associates of his own class, or worse, there is little hope for his developing the best things that are in him?

Why was it necessary for the good of Dick that he be made to recognize authority?

Why was it not best for the pupils to talk about Dick's affair on the playground or on the way to and from school?

#### RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR FRESHMEN AND SOPHOMORES

How could such mistakes as this teacher made be foreseen and avoided by young teachers fresh from colleges and universities?

Should the influence every active teacher has with scholars be directed in common to support good ends for all student-controlled affairs of the school?

What made it possible to adjust a situation, that could so easily have developed into a rowdy school affair, with no publicity?

Was the manner in which the affair was settled fair to all? Why or why not?

#### WAS THIS A CASE OF PREVENTION OR OF CORRECTION?

What does the football case indicate as to the superintendent's faith and trust in the athletic boys that they would do right when the situation was placed before them in a clear light?

Why was his visual plan of showing the middle of the week a good one?

Why did he first place the whole situation before each of the two most interested boys?

Did the superintendent make any demands of the boys when all met together to consider the affair?

Why would it not have been a better way for the superintendent to have said that Jack could not play, and that it would be useless to talk any more about it?

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#### On Chapter Two

Teachers of high schools and grammar grades should have at least a fair knowledge of the physical and mental characteristics of youth. How to apply this as working knowledge is the problem upon which help is often needed.

What is the meaning of the word adolescence, and the word pubescence as used in this book?

What ordinarily are the years when boys pass through the changes of pubescence, and what are the years for the same changes in the girls?

What are some of the outward evidences that the boy or girl is in the stage of pubescence?

Which usually grows first, bones or muscles?

What effect may a great growth of bones before a corresponding growth of muscles have on the youth?

In childhood, how did the bones and the muscles grow?

What characteristic of many a youth does the case of Theodore illustrate?

Why are not all tall boys awkward at the time of making their rapid growth?

Why do boys and girls when passing through pubescence lose some of their power to write well, or to read or sing well?

How should a teacher deal with scholars who, in the stage of pubescence, lose for a time the power to do form work and oral work as well as formerly?

### On Chapter Three

To gain power for helpfulness to the youth under their charge is the purpose and spirit of teachers in studying the most fundamental change of this period.

If there is any retardation in this fundamental change, how does it manifest itself?

How much do teachers know of the causes of retardation in the fundamental change of this period?

What can the school do for a boy like the one who was three years in our high school retarded physically and mentally? Can sufficient responsibility for results in social and constructive projects be required in the school to arouse latent physical and mental energies?

To what specialists must teachers look for light on these physically and mentally retarded cases?

How do the mental and spiritual transformations compare with the physical?



How do these changes sometimes affect the emotions?

What sometimes causes bashfulness or the opposite on the part of boys and girls of this age?

Does the story of Ben M. illustrate all the teacher and school might do for such a case?

Does the story of the boy who had a date with the dentist call for further treatment after the principal's quick reprimand had completely changed the situation?

The case of Daniel is given to show a slow and extremely nervous development that in the end terminated well.

What does the reader think of the great care exercised by the boy's parents, doctor and school?

How does a youth differ from a child in play, in physical exercise, in reading, in friendship, in his relations to the opposite sex?

Is it natural that boys and girls "fall in love" as we so often state it?

At about what time in adolescence is it that the philosophy of things appeals strongly to youth?

Can we use world wide problems that are yet unsettled to stimulate greatly the study of economic and social problems by high school scholars? How?

For what purpose is the story of the development of intellectual power in the children from the two families given?

Generally how does the advent of pubescence when normally reached affect the individual?

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#### On Chapter Four

Why is youth the most opportune time for religious teaching and training?

From a faith based on *what* to a faith on *what else* does a youth pass in his religious development?

How lasting are the religious impressions made at this time of life apt to be?

What is the greatest danger religiously at this time of life?

What is recommended to lessen this danger?

In what ways do churches take advantage of this psychologically important time for religious teaching and training?

Does the reader think the first boy's experience as given in the story is the experience that comes to many although modified in details?

What did this boy's questioning and seeking after evidence of the firm foundation of his faith do for him?

The second boy's deeply disturbed religious state was more out of the ordinary.

For what reason did his parents have cause to be anxious about him?

What does the reader think of the school's consideration for the boy?

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#### On Chapter Five

Two brothers are referred to as illustrations, one to represent the on-coming of the flood-tide of youthful life of the milder type; the other of the deeply emotional, demonstrative type.

For which type of youth are friends usually most concerned? Why?

Is either type the more normal?

I have given but two boy stories of any length in this chapter. Both boys under ordinary conditions were of the milder type, but one of whom proved to be quite violent in his demonstrations when moved by great excitement in the dark. The other was always true to his type.

Someone asks why more severe punishment was not given the boy who was anxious for "lime-light" notice.

Was it not sufficient that the boy knew that we knew?

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#### On Chapter Six

The unwise advice and help of his business friend brought the first boy's dream to a partial realization. Only after a few years did he understand that it was a dream and that its too early realization had blocked his advancement in his chosen work.

In the case of the second boy whose dreams were "blue" his school friends made him feel that others were interested in

him and in what he was doing. Is not the teacher bound to urge education as the essential requirement for making real the visions of an active life?

What should the reading of the stories of the third and fourth boys lead teachers to do?

What does this dreaming, even listless day-dreaming, indicate?

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#### On Chapter Seven

In the first of this chapter I have given the story of a school board member whose zealous interest in the education of the youth of his town and the surrounding rural district, was an inspiration to me at a time when I needed the inspiring touch of a great-souled man. I have told it hoping that even the story simply told may be helpful to some young teacher in widening his vision of his work. Were the boys and girls for whom he so zealously worked, worth being interested in?

Was the high school principal who was proud of the fact that they "crowded" all scholars of low scholarship out of his school, a wise principal? Why, or why not?

What should be said of the high school teacher who was happy to be where all the requirements laid on him were to hear recitations, mark the grades; if they made good grades, pass them; if poor grades, fail them; and where, as he said, he did not have to give them any attention outside of the class, not even to know them?

What should be said of the third teacher?

With which one of the three teachers does the teacher who reads this chapter class himself?

How will the teacher who reads this chapter measure the worth of other boys like the ones whose stories are told in this chapter, and what will he do to aid them?

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#### On Chapter Eight

What responsibility comes to the coach whom the first boy chose for his confidential friend during the time he was seemingly estranged from his father?

How did this coach measure up to his responsibility?

In what respect does the boy in the second story differ from the boy in the first?

What do you think of the third father's dealing with his son?

Which is better for the boy for the father to be able to say "Do as I once did," or, "*Do as I do now*," when he talks with his boy about better conduct?

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### On Chapter Nine

I would like to ask a few questions of each teacher who reads this chapter that I would like each one to answer for himself.

—Does the teacher carry a spirit of honesty about him that creates an atmosphere of honesty in his schoolroom?

—Does the teacher tempt his pupil or scholars to be dishonest by refusing to make the conditions of his school conducive to honesty, lest someone may think he is not trusted?

—Or, putting this last question in another form, does the teacher protect the honest pupils or scholars by making the conditions under which the school work is done in his school as free from opportunities for cheating as he can make them?

—Does the teacher give his close attention to those engaged in a test in order that he may know just what each one does and just how each one does?

—What things important for a teacher to know can he learn by giving close attention to those writing a test or written lesson?

—In the case of the two college students, were they guilty of dishonesty or was it a good joke, played on a professor who should have more honestly, on his part, examined the students?

Let each one who reads this chapter, re-read carefully the story of Morris R., the last story in the chapter, and after having reread it, say to himself whether or not he approves of the disposition made of Morris's case.

Which prayer in the last paragraph in this chapter would be the reader's to pray?

## On Chapter Ten

Of what is this chapter really a study?

Why is it important that teachers in the grammar grades and in the high schools should study this subject?

When the superintendent wished the business man to give a place in his store to Omar M., why did he tell the business man Omar's one act of dishonesty at school?

What is the superintendent's view of protecting boys in their honesty as brought out in the three boy stories of this chapter?

Does making the conditions under which boys handle money safe for *all* boys reflect on those who *need* no protection? Why?

It is possible in the case of Nellie that her unsatisfied craving for beautiful things led her to taking things when but a child, and that this grew into a habit, a habit that held her with a grip at high school age.

What help can the school give to one of her class?

How careful should a superintendent, principal, or teacher be in recommending scholars or youth who have been scholars to positions of responsibility and trust?

Is it possible that the manual training boy who took the drawing board is a moral delinquent because of some physical defect?

The last three stories need no comment.

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On Chapter Eleven

Some times it is well for teachers to see that *all* responsibility for the conduct of pupils or scholars whom they teach is not theirs; that there are parts of each day, some whole days each week, Christmas vacation week, spring vacation week, and the summer vacation of two or three months, when the homes and the town or city government must be held responsible whether or not they assume the burden.

Who are responsible for the boys and the girls each day after they have arrived home from school at four o'clock until they start on the way to school the next morning?

Who were responsible for the boys who took the cigars from the stores after eight o'clock p. m.?

Who are responsible for the teaching and training of children up to six years of age?

What does the reader think of the wisdom of the principal who refused to assume responsibility for Henry Smith's conduct during Thanksgiving vacation?

The story of Henry Smith may seem overdrawn but truly it falls short in its coloring.

How does a teacher exert his greatest influence on the side of right living?

What are the rightful duties or responsibilities of a town or city superintendent of schools?

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### On Chapter Twelve

As the period of pubescence is past, it sometimes requires something a little out of the ordinary routine to cause the youth to become conscious of his increased mental power. Often for a part of the period of pubescence the vital forces seem so centered on developing the physical that the mental power is weak. This leads the youth to mistrust his mental ability so that when the vital forces turn their attention to the strengthening of the thinking centers of the brain thus giving renewed energy and increased power to his thinking, the youth fails to avail himself of this increased mental ability until something out of the ordinary causes him to put forth an effort to use his mental powers and makes him conscious of his mental strength. It means every thing to a boy or girl to be awakened to consciousness of mental power.

What two things did the declamation contest do for the boy Myers?

Why did the superintendent have sufficient faith in Frank K. to encourage him to try to complete his work for graduation?

What did the father's persistency in holding Harmon C. to his school work and the school's interest in the boy, finally do for Harmon?

The story of Amelia is the story of one of the most interesting developments I have known. A girl freshman of most unpromising type; a second year student evidencing but little mental power except that her teachers had come to know that that for-

lorn looking little body was faithfulness personified. Then came the wonderful transformation and the accomplishing of the almost impossible.

What did the school do for Amelia?

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#### On Chapter Thirteen

What authority is claimed for the school on the way to and from school?

Under what conditions are the parents held directly responsible for the conduct of their children on the way to and from school?

Who should hold authority for conduct at all parties, or gatherings held by high school scholars or grammar grade pupils in the name of the high school, the grammar school, or in the name of any organizations of these schools?

Does a teacher owe it to his school to deprive himself of some social privileges in order that he may the better serve his school if occasion seems so to demand?

Why should the school social life of high school scholars be considered a vital high school interest, and be given as thoughtful attention in the organization of the school work as other departments of high school work?

Is successful cooperation of scholars and teachers in conducting the social affairs of the high school possible in all high schools?

Can you use the story of the development of the social life of the Bloomington High School to aid other school officers and teachers?

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#### On Chapter Fourteen

Since the attraction of the opposite sex is one of the indications of healthy, normal development in boys and girls of the adolescent period of life, and since the greater number of the boys and the girls in the advance grammar grades, and in the high school, are adolescents, in what spirit should teachers, principals, and superintendents, meet some situations that come as a result of having to deal with adolescent boys and girls?

Are adolescent boys and girls in our schools today more silly, and given to infatuation than their parents were at the dawn of early manhood and womanhood in their day?

While boys and girls are experiencing their first attack of this all-absorbing instinct before judgment has come to their aid, *at school* whose good judgment and common sense should guide until their own powers are developed?

How can the freest possible mingling of the sexes in the social affairs of the school be made wholesome and thus safe for all?

What care should be taken in regard to opening the school building for the reception of grammar grade pupils and high school scholars, and what with regard to closing when the day's work is done?

How can a kindly guarding and directing of the movements in the social mingling of these adolescents be kept on a high friendly plane that has nothing of disagreeable spying in it?

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#### On Chapter Fifteen

What would the reader of this chapter do with John King if he had him in his school?

What would the principal of whom I have written in another chapter who would have none but high grade scholars in his school do with John King?

What is the work of the public school?

Could Jane Moore have been treated more justly than she was when she was given the opportunity to get out of the school all the good she could?

Was Julius Clark receiving anything more than was rightly his when, after getting all it seemed possible for him to get out of the elementary school, he was given the opportunity of the high school?

How wise is it to recognize the fact that adolescent boys and girls are living in a very different world from what they were a few months before and give them the high school studies that are of the new life interests and hence better adapted to them?

How fair is it to the scholar and the teacher, and financially how fair is it to the school district, to keep scholars marking



time in a part of their studies because they are not regular in the grade work?

How can most of the loss of time that comes to irregular scholars in some schools be avoided?

Let the reader of this chapter answer for himself what he would do with these the stories of whom are told in this chapter.

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#### On Chapter Sixteen

Why are athletics a necessity to youth?—How deep seated?

In what way do athletics benefit a school, a community, and in final analysis, the whole country?

Explain the way in which practically all scholars of a school receive some good from athletic games by school teams?

What good could come from a half-day's celebration of the school basketball team's winning the state championship?—A celebration such as I have described.

Why should the coach be a man of high ideals, and, if possible, a member of the school faculty?

Why does a coach have an unusual influence over the team members?

What are some of the possible evils attendant on athletics?

How can they be guarded against?

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#### On Chapter Seventeen

What care should be taken to prevent possible injury to girls of this age from wet clothing or wet feet, or a chill from coming to school in rain or snow?

Has the reader ever known girls who in their development at this time of life were somewhat similar to the two cases "managed by the parents and teacher" whose stories I have told? Were those the reader has known wisely cared for?

What kind of teachers are safest for the extremely nervous girl at this period of her life whether she is in the grammar grade or the high school?

What was wrong in the cuttingly sarcastic teacher's making scholars so discouraged in their work that a number of girls went

home to spend the next half-hour in crying hysterically from the nervous strain?

How should the simpering, silly, giggling, boy-struck girl be treated?

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#### On Chapter Eighteen

Possibly no one today could tell why the rapid growth of the body should seem for a time to lower mental power as in the first two boys in this chapter, while in others, as the third boy, it should seem to give increased mental brilliancy.

What is necessary on the part of the teacher in order that he may deal justly with the many different types of development common at this period of life?

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#### On Chapter Nineteen

In what way was the first teacher whose story is given in this chapter more than the ordinary rural teacher?

What was the greatest thing she did for the youth and younger pupils of her school?

What was radically wrong with the young man in the second story?

How would he measure in value to *his district* compared with the teacher in the first story to *her district*?

What was it worth to be under the teaching of the teacher in the last story in the chapter, even though she taught in a one room rural school?

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#### On Chapter Twenty

Should parents be found fault with if they prefer for their daughter only a fair standing in her school work that she may have more time to gain culture and ease that come from mingling socially with cultivated people?

Is it well for the coming voters, the high school boys and girls, to learn from the able political campaign speakers who present the leading questions of the day?

In times of great religious awakening in a community ought not those most susceptible to religious impressions be given op-

portunity for religious teaching and training? What if the time is taken from school work or school lesson study hours?

What is possible for the best teachers to accomplish when the religious outside influences make heavy demands on the members of their school classes?

What does the community gain when for weeks the attention of the people is centered on the thought of better living, and higher appreciation of their responsibility to their God?

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### On Chapter Twenty-one

How does the attitude of the *teacher* toward the scholars affect the attitude of the scholars *toward* the school?

What is meant by giving the scholars an "*intelligent confidence*?"

Why is self-control on the part of those in authority an important quality?

Observe the plan of talking frankly with young teachers coming into the high school faculty, observe the plan, not that any one would necessarily follow it, but as suggestive that each principal or superintendent should have his own plan for this important work.

Read a second time the story of Miss M- and Mack Vaney. Should a superintendent or principal be thoughtful in assigning some scholars to certain teachers? If such consideration of the personalities of the teachers and the personalities of the scholars leaves some teacher of the subject with fewer pupils than other teachers have do not the best interests of the pupils control the way adjustment is made?

The case of Martha Pollard is given as showing how much time and effort it sometimes takes to make a teacher; and the story of the other beginning teacher is told to show how sometimes a young teacher asks nothing but the opportunity to grow. Of course, this young teacher learned from her supervisors but she learned so easily that her supervisors were almost unconscious that they were teaching her.

Let the reader in his own mind make a list of the good qualities of the young manual training teacher.

What qualities in him made it possible for him to grow as a teacher?

To whose class-room work alone should a teacher confine his criticisms?

If the teacher who reads this book is a believer in the gross immorality of grammar grade pupils and high school scholars, he should seek other employment; for no teacher who reads immorality in the ordinary outcroppings of the physical and the mental developments of youth, has that faith in youth that makes him a wise and inspiring leader.