WAKEMAN'S WANDERINGS

THE RAGGED SCHOOLS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

Their Outgrowth from the Compulsory Elementary School System—Children and Parents Forced, Hunted and Harried Until Long Hours Are Destroyed and Criminals Created.

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LONDON, Oct. 16.—Twenty-one years ago the British parliament enacted that all children of England and Wales between the ages of five and twelve years, if the "Education Act" had then been needed, should be compulsorily educated. At different times since it has seemed as if these children should receive this compulsory education either in various "voluntary" or public and church schools, or in "board" schools, under local and governmental supervision, and compulsorily paid for the same.

The Duke, in effect, said: "You, Tiny Tot, aged five years, are to attend such school as we may provide, or your parents must, every school day of your life until you are thirteen years of age, or we will slap you in a criminal institution. And you, Tiny Tot's father, must pay for what we compel your child to do, or we will fine you for every absence recorded against it, and tax you for the cost of the implacement wherever we finally shut it up; and then, if you can't pay its amount fine and fine and the accruing judgments against yourself, we will also distrain for it upon your goods, and if insufficient to satisfy the demand, we will then release you and some begin the same wholesome care of yourself and your offspring."

Out of this exquisite system has grown, naturally and in order, millions of school children and long thousands of thousands of juvenile lawbreakers before the local magistracy, tens of thousands of children criminals among the poor and the lower classes, an army of "visitors," inspectors and detectives, whose management and though universally exercised brutality among helpless children and distressed and impoverished mothers is inexpressibly intensive; and hundreds of so called industrial schools, or "Ragged" and "Truant" schools, as they are more popularly termed, which, whatever their merits of management on the line of their legitimate purpose, are an inevitable outcrop from the unfavorable environments of child life and home life in any civilized land.

The elementary schools are of two kinds—the board schools and the voluntary schools. The first are vastly supported by government allowances from taxation, though their support actually comes from the parents of scholars forced to attend school. Though a fee ranging from one penny, or two cents, to sixpence, or eight-cents cents, per week for each child. As the poor are notoriously none prolific, the fees taken from a family compelled to send four three to five children can hardly be their average because each per week, or from thirty to fifty cents for the whole number.

The voluntary schools are simply those schools established under hospices, the schools founded by associations and the parish schools of nearly every religious denomination in England. They all demand fees, in most cases exceeding those established by the board schools. There are seven standards or grades and a "special seventh," the latter nearly comprising a class receiving special attention for proficiency. Out of the latter the master chooses those who are to compete for an annual scholarship, and the scholarship winner is a collegiate school education of about three years' term.

The most effective commentary upon the inherent wrong in the British system of compulsory education with compulsory payment for the same is found in a few briefly enumerated facts. It is universally admitted by all board school "visitors," inspectors, detectives and officers, as well as by neighbors who know school boards' cases, that it has come to be the most desperate struggle of a large portion of the people of England, second only to their struggle for bread, to evade the registration of their children for school attendance. If that, to them, inherent misfortune be unavoidable, it is their most determined struggle to defeat by every expedient, evasion device, falsehood and downright perjury the enforcement of the law. It is habitually known, haven't and harbor them so long as they remain safe within the compulsory age, and I personally know of scores of families where my school friends have been persecuted to the grave and their children driven from home to especially by persecution and life.

This information is based on the statements of school visitors, inspectors and private people. But any one by reading in the fact that in London, for the week ending March 21, 1891, out of the parents of the compulsory age, 1,011 children were summoned before the police magistrates for nonattendance or irregular attendance, 59 had been previously subjected to severe school fines and imprisonment. Not only this, but, according to official returns, for every hundred scholars now provided with schools there is one person for one-tenth of all British children who are entitled to receive elementary education, but who, under the compulsory attendance and pay system, are in average attendance of only about 23 per cent. It is a fact that there is an attendance, found and enumerated, of only about 23 per cent. in the British elementary schools.

In other words, after an army of detectives have found a certain number of children with the law behind them to drive to school and pay paying for the schooling and the driving, the utmost force of 1891-in law—is enforced in a certain number of cases, by constables, detectives and "visitors," whose very existence depends upon their vigilance, and the endless dread of prison to both parents and children—can after all compel a second attendance of only one-fourth of the children under actual coaching according to law. It is, I wonder this, under such a system, the entire school attendance of the great city of Liverpool, for the month of July gave rise to such a result that, to provide for the detention of the rebellious among this number, its "Ragged school" prison in Park lane, Hunt, Hyacinth and Jackson streets were taken to hold 1,125 child prisoners, with their capacity quite overtaxed.

Children are got on the school lists in three ways—by house to house registration, when more than one-half of the poorer classes deny all knowledge of their children, life data to the most cunning mother and often little girls with the aid of sympathizing neighbors, by parents persuaded by their children for voluntary registration, and by spying them out in the streets and dragging their footsteps over the entrance of their homes, when an investigation which often amounts to a siege at most begins.

The one fine resorted to for segregating children from registration, are often skillfully grotesque. On one occasion when accompanying a "visitor" on his rounds, I saw a poor woman caught in the act of scrooching her boy into the overlaid bed, and seeing many quite as old strategems witnessed was one by a mother who stood in the open door, and after hastily denying maternity was finally forced to admit the ownership of two sleeping girls that had for the fifteen minutes pretending stiffed beneath the master's ever ample skirts, stuffed beneath hoop skirts of rich, heavily covered with cloth, which to enlarge them, had beneath them a quantity of spring steel, and clinging to the skirts of prior visits are returned humanity of children to school registration in subsequent visitations. In another that the registrant had evidently further become predominant in the estate of her first harassed.

We will explore for illustration, a boy has been hunted down and got within the school board jurisdiction. If a single attempt be made to secure another boy he comes under all the provisions of the law. The usual course is, in case he makes a little more than half time—that is, six out of ten attendances, two per day, or per week, during the enumerated—a "warning" is sent home, and if the school, in accordance before a prosecution. The "visitor" is immediately the pleasure for the most. He takes such in the "visitor" and "school inspector." If the officer answers the summons and enters a good defense, the boy may get off with a reprimand, but he is permanently thereafter under such supervision. If a family of attendance was secured, a second warning is sent home, and a fine—the fine of half a shilling—is never merged. At the same time the superintendent of the vacant school seats is present, who, when the boy is fined from a portion of board school, will recommend his commitment to an industrial school, and ever for a term of from three years. His commitment is a matter of course under conditions or grounds of absolute school prison life.

A To the Industrial school proper, for both sexes, under a term of years, is the last step in place to "reform" from the school, where, according to the report, "the good are not made to feel, but no matter, but, and another, the parents are compelled to pay for the same, and the same for the intermediate fact. They are not just one, they are merely from months but the latter are never limited until their discharge.

On sentence to the Truant school the child belongs to the law. Now, it is the morning until 8 at night. It consists one day practically the same home conditions that made its attendance at board school, but on some occasions, based on the report, The parental arrangement of the system is intensified, and in most cases the efforts of both the child and its parents to avoid its "visitors" discipline are redoubled. Any adequate description of the linguistic and logical arrangements adopted in the morning "school up" of these children from generally homes would fill every page of this paper. If the child now attends the Truant school regularly, without the loss of fees, in six months' time it is permitted to return to the elementary school during the remainder of its sentence, the school meeting regarding its conduct until it has reached the age of fourteen years. But a single infraction secures its return to the Truant school regime.

If the child becomes incorrigible under this treatment it is brought before a magistrate and sentenced direct to the "reformatory" Industrial school, placed in close confinement and is compelled to toiler like any other criminal, the boys as woodchopping and making brush and mats, and the girls at knitting coarse stockings and making coarse shirts. This is called "putting the child safely," and is regarded as an achievement by the school visitors and authorities. Occasionally a boy or girl is licensed out to service, but the authorities take the child back if good behavior, every three months, and they are revisable by the industrial school board committee instead of by a magistrate.

The food of these children is so nearly upon a starvation basis as was to elicit by expert keepers. It comprises a scanty ration of bread and treacle, or bread, milk and porridge; a dinner of pea soup and bread, and a supper of bread, or bread and treacle. They are also furnished with "prayers" from their cells.

A crack of the authorities is to discharge a child, whose term of sentence does not reach to the compulsory age limit, a month previous to expiration of sentence term. This throws it back into the compulsory elementary status under truant supervision. At the first attendance, it is sentenced to another three or five years' term. There is no escape from such a sentence, if the boy has been compelled to serve two prior terms before they were fourteen years of age. The boy is compelled to serve two terms before they were fourteen years of age, and if he is sent to the reformatory a second time, he is "incorrigible," can easily be accomplished.

In the meantime police magistrates are busy doing parents and guardians for nonpayment of fees and fines. Whatever the fees may have been in the elementary school, they are far larger after the child has become a prisoner. They are not paid, as a rule, because they cannot be paid. The poor are allowed to run up to a ten or three pounds' sum. Then the officers, who were due the parents and who "called" "collecting constables," serious "collecting constables," serious "collecting" the parents of about ten shillings in cash and ten shillings per week. When found, the father or mother now actually pay as per the court order or suffer a self remedies follows. They are locked up in jail until the amount is paid, or is sold out at the rate of one pound for each week's sojourn. I believe that the average fine relief more homes and hearts in England than ever was known. And a intelligent English second sometimes has to wonder why the lessen of this injury is gradually disappearing in the public mind.

The so called "Ragged" industrial schools, the last Dickens "reformation" proved high encomiums, furthermore with such cities. The Ragged schools for five years have given a great deal of good, and of prevention of crime. Children's per capita cost of maintenance, and of "reformation" made simple as "an" cents in the matter of cost. And it cost, per per week paid, as to the three additional fees, as the school that, the be furnishing, under 10d. And it is turning among soldiers or to the child protection of persons, and in many degree supplies the institution's deficiency, and make possible or necessary the so called "Ragged Schools." Edgar L. Wakeman.

A Month's Few Hours Make.

There is a young married woman in my acquaintance whose first wifely experience with the needle resulted in a great deal of trouble, this fiend what appeared to two immense rips on the inside of the back of her husband's frock coat, and little had was down upon the carefully sewed them up. When the young man came home to lunch his wife met him, cool to hand.

"I've just mended that 'ole," said she, very two awful rips in the tails of it."

"Let me see," said the husband of the dutiness young woman. "I didn't know there was a tear in it."

"Yes, there was, right there."

"But does not the—"

The young man caught the look of interest doubt on his wife's face and stopped.

"Yes, there were awful rips. Things were getting in them all the time."

And the young man went down to the office and pocked out the thread in order to get at his back book and a few letters that he had in those tail pockets.—Kansas City Times.

Not for Herself.

If the same woman a deep and intensely appreciative sense of responsibility to be intrusted with the management of a pair of gloves or a yard of ribbon for another woman. "If back for myself," said to another young customer at the ribbon counter of a large dry goods store one day, "I don't know what I would do. I don't know what I would do if I ever—

"Have to buy ribbon for myself."

"Well, I hardly know. It seems a little hard to me, and yet maybe it wouldn't be. I don't know just what I would do if I ever had to make the most for all the same occasions."

"Have what did you want to?"

"Why, I don't know, and I don't know whether to get color or gingham or new bead pins, or a new bonnet, or a place, sewed or pink, edge or what. Everything is so indefinite about it. If I knew what she wanted it for, or had some idea what it is for, or if it was for myself—what a pity it is, I'm entirely in the dark.

"I think, on the whole, I'd better write and get more definite information before selecting anything. Yes, that's what I'll do, and then I'll not make any mistake."—Traveler's Companion.

A Thought Measuring Machine.

Dr. J. K. McKarnell has constructed an ingenious apparatus by which he can determine, with a considerable degree of accuracy, the time it takes to think, and has experimented with many interesting results. He has shown that to see a piece of white paper and be conscious of the fact takes one-twentieth of a second; to see a picture takes one-tenth of a second; to see a letter of common print, one-fifth of a second; to see a full word, one-sixth of a second; to be able to judge between red and blue, one-thirteenth of a second.

He has also proved that to see some words and letters requires more time than others. By this same machine, with some added pieces of mechanism, the time of remembering can also be accurately measured. According to the learned M. D. and his curious little machine, it takes much less time to remember the name of a familiar word than it does the name of a letter, and we are all supposed to be very well acquainted with the names of the letters of the alphabet. This seems strange, especially when we take into consideration the fact that we can see the letter in less time than we can the word.

The time of the next month to come can be thought of in less time than that of the last. This machine also shows that sensations travel by the nerves to the brain at the rate of one hundred feet per minute, much slower than has been supposed.—St. Louis Republic.

Lincoln's Face and the Artists.

Lincoln's features were the despair of every artist who undertook his portrait. The writer saw nearly a dozen, one after another, soon after the first nomination to the presidency, attempt the task. They put into their pictures the large, rugged features, and strong, prominent lines; they made measurements to delicate exact proportions; they "polished" some single feature, but the picture remained hard and cold. Even before these paintings were finished it was plain to see that they were unsatisfactory to the artists themselves, and much more so to the intimate friends of the man—this was not he who smiled, spoke, laughed, charmed. The painter was to the man as the grain of sand to the mountain, as the dull to the living.

Daguerre, the inventor of the art, was a man that moved through a thousand delicate gradations of line and contour, light and shade, sparkle of the eye and curve of the lip, in the long gamut of expression from the deep, solid humor again from the sickening jollity of laughter to that serious, far away look that with prophetic intuitions beheld the awful panorama of war.—J. G. Nicolay in Century.

Cruelty to Lobsters.

It is singular how the cruel practice of boiling lobsters still continues. Our forefathers—and, indeed, our parents—let solves bled shorts to death on the theory that to no other way could white meat be secured, and later on eaters have held that it was the only way to kill them. Now every one knows that a calf can be killed in a humane manner and the veal made just as good. Hogs are largely killed by electricity instead of by the old barbarous method, and, generally speaking, animals killed for food have been put out of the way in a much more humane manner than formerly. But lobsters are still tortured out of existence, the only difference being that, while formerly they were exclusively boiled to death, now some are boiled and some broiled. Which process causes the most agony no one can say.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

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