READING OF AMERICAN SCHOOLS.

The Girls' Own Paper.

Readers of American tales often form most erroneous ideas about American girls, and still more about the ideals which prevail in my country respecting education and training of the young amongst the more cultured portion of their teachers. There are many causes which tend to make the American girl, with all her faults and excellences, different from her English cousin in both, we think, but at the root of the American teachers' theories and practice lies the same old reverence for truc womanliness that inspires the English education the same ideal—the Anglo-Saxon one—is set before our girls in the States as is set before English maidens, and I do not think the result is widely different on the whole. American girls are seldom educated at home. The domestic governness is an almost unknown institution with us, as is also the small private school. The public schools in the States are so excellent that private enterprise can hardly compete with them, and thousands of girls get all their education without any cost whatever beside the cost of their board and books, so that young gentlemen send their daughters to them. The education is thorough and thorough, and the girls are trained for life in the best sense of the word. They are well read, well informed, and well trained for every useful walk in life. The effect of this education is wonderful. The girls are bright, lively, and intelligent, and they are trained to be good housewives and good mothers. The older girls are often as sharp and as quick as the boys, and they are often as clever and as quick as the boys. The younger girls are as bright and as lively as the boys, and they are as clever and as lively as the boys. The older girls are often as sharp and as quick as the boys, and they are often as clever and as quick as the boys. 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could receive them from three to five, and I never knew a blizzard bad enough to keep the dutiful young relatives away, never! Then, too, in later years, the last Thanksgiving Day in November, came our national festival, Thanksgiving Day, which we observed in orthodox fashion at St. Mary's, by going to church and eating a wonderful dinner, and amusing ourselves all the afternoon and evening. I call it a wonderful dinner because many of the things we had to eat were things I have never since seen again. I think, though, if I had to call them names, though they are very nice indeed, I can assure you. One year a very funny thing happened. It was Thanksgiving Day; we had a most kind and motherly lady, an English officer's widow, who had not long been over, and of course did not yet know all our dishes of the not-so-old country, a country so new could have cherished traditions. But it so happens that we have a few, and amongst them is one that on Thanksgiving Day we must eat turkey with cranberry-sauce, and both pumpkin and mince-pies, especially the latter. Well, this particular day found us feasting in the most approved manner we knew, and the cranberry-sauce, sweet potatoes, suet cake, and baked beans. Rumours had reached us that there were tins of tins of oysters thawing against our supper. So, for dessert, we had our cook, who made chocolate better than any I have ever tasted since, except once in a French restaurant at Brussels, as an introduction to what favourite delicacy to be served to us after dinner, instead of coffee. So we were all in great good humour when "dessert," as we called the "sweets" course at an English dinner, came on — apple-pie, custard-pie, lemon-pie, pumpkin-pie, all as it ought to be, so far, but where was the beauce bonche, the donate bonche, the mutton-chop? Alas, it never appeared at all. Now don't think us very greedy; I assure you it was the sentiment of the thing that touched us. What would English girls think of being put down on Christmas Day to all the delicacies of the season minus plum-pudding? All interest in the dinner was over after that fatal discovery; some murmured openly, and last of all, one small girl burst into tears, and had to leave the room. Another followed, and another — it was very ridiculous, but some of us bigger ones tried to soothe our feelings with a second help of lemon-pie, and we all said a very mournful " amen " to the Bishop's grace. Of course there were being hung from our friend, who passed out of the dining-room in mournful procession, but we were too miserable to care. After dinner our custom was to line the thinnest sides of the not-so-old country, and so wait for the teachers, who would soon come in and seat themselves on one of the forms in front of the principal's desk. Then Miss D., our lady principal, read the report, and also took that opportunity of delivering a little lecture, if cause had arisen for it, upon any minor matters affecting the behaviour of the boys. We always did these things with such a fully sacro-sane, not solemnly, as upon occasion, and we rather enjoyed our after-dinner five-minutes' harangue; even if we sometimes winced at Miss D.'s keen threats, they never left so nerveless behind in frank young hearts. To-day we were prepared to pay our respects, but Miss D. — was very merciful, on the whole, and when she said that she was the bearer of a message from Mrs. J ——, our matron, who was very sorry we were not, having been thoroughly coached as to the historic routine of a thanksgiving dinner, we laughed away the last traces of our disappointment.

You must not think a Minnesota winter all dreariness. There were sometimes weeks together of bright frosty weather, when a brisk walk over the crisp white snow was a daily enjoyment. Not every winter, but sometimes, we had skating on the river, or sometimes we would go to the "Bluff," which faced our school buildings. On the Bluffs were the colleges, and occasionally during the winter we girls were permitted to go to the meetings of the debating society, and great fun that was. The debates used to stimulate us to greater efforts in our own essays, which, in turn, the next day went to the boys to correct, and which would have to be corrected a year later.

In imitation of their societies some of us older girls, all eager students, formed ourselves into "secret societies," and though the mystic initials "L. W.," the meaning of which, even at this remote period, I feel bound not to divulge, a badge, and a Greek motto, chosen for us.

We always opened our meetings with our "L. W." song, the words of which the present writer is guilty of having produced and set to the convivial air, "Landlord Fill the Flowing Bowl!" Miss D., a governess, passing our secret chamber one day while we were singing it, was rather scandalised, I think it was, and I was presented to the Greek "matron" of our society, with the secret society badge, and the mystic initials "L. W.," the meaning of which, even at this remote period, I feel bound not to divulge, a badge, and a Greek motto, chosen for us.

The evening we assembled in the "L. W." room, with classic and college in solemn concave assembled, as Miss D. described it, with a twinkle in her bright dark eyes, I secretly thought it very jolly, and enjoyed my production immensely. We had a fortnight's publication, to which each member was bound to contribute, either tale, verses, essay, travels (some of our girls who had even been to Europe), but in a very different way, and more original than any of the parts of our continent to tell of, or sketch of some sort in regular turn. I remember the Desideratum, as we called the little paper, was read with interest, not only by our own staff of teachers, but by the professors at the colleges, who used to take a great interest in our welfare, and always attended our public entertainments. The one at Christmas, consisting only of essays by the best writers in each class, including the youngest, and with a very limited audience; one at Easter, in which the school expanded to town and city limits, with recitations and a little music; and the third, at the end of the school year, which was a sort of last fling, and one of the social events of F. Only the very foremost of our girls — the survival of the fittest after a year of keen competition — took part in our "closing exercises," and they were attended by a large and select audience of friends, relatives, and as many ladies and gentlemen of F. itself as could be made room for.

At Christmas a great many girls remained at the hall instead of returning to homes often very distant, and in weather that rendered travelling impossible for some. It was rather melancholy to watch the other girls off full of excitement at the prospect of home joys; but holidays at St. Mary's were very enjoyable too. Under certain restrictions we were all given the liberties of the place as soon as the last bus load had driven off. We could remain at our places sitting in our dormitories all day if we so pleased instead of entering them only at stated times, go into the town every day with a monstress and "shop," and the library was always open, the gymnasium available for any amusement we might devise, and special pains were taken to render our three weeks' vacation a happy one for our principal matron, and those teachers who stayed like ourselves. One great privilege we enjoyed was to help decorate the Cathedral for the Christmas services, and very bright and happy were the Christmas festivities altogether; but I have not time to describe events which were so splendid and memorable. We had a "watch" service on the last night of the year, which was, however, a special feature of St. Mary's. New Year's Eve was begun by some unusual provision for our amusement early in the evening. One year it was a lecture by the Bishop on his tour in Spain, another it was recitations by a lady electrolytist, another time we entertained ourselves in the most delightful manner amongst the toys, and invited the faculty to be amused in their turn. At ten o'clock we were summoned to supper in the great dining-hall, a supper of oyster-cake, delicous bread, and fragrant coffee, amongst other good things a specialty of our hot-tempered but skilful foreign matron, and when we wandered off in groups or sat apart with only a cherished friend, perhaps talking quietly over the past and making good resolutions for the coming year as the Bishop in a few gentle words had begged us to do. At a quarter to twelve the bell called us to chapel, and after a few collects and a hymn there was a solemn silence, broken only by the first stroke of the great bell. A song was sung to us, and yet sprang to our feet, sung "Gloria in Excelsis," the Bishop gave us his blessing, and then we exchanged New Year's greetings all round and fell to. When the clock struck midnight and the solemn "Ave Maria" began, the valediction of the day, I laid my head down on the pillow, and was in the slumber in the morning in luci of the beauty-sleep we had lost.

Just steady work began to all upon the next day, and not only our students but also among ourselves the winners of the most coveted prizes, girls who were coming from the farthest out of the mass of ordinary students, and were spoken of in our speculations. It was well we found enjoyment in our work now, for the most disagreeable feature of the term was right upon us, early spring, which comes heralded not by primroses and violets, but by mud and floods caused by the sudden thaw of the heavy snow. It was a time of colds and catarrh, toothache and neuralgia, when few escaped a day or two in our pleasant "nursery" or sick ward, under merry little Miss P.'s autocratic, yet benevolent, rule. Indeed, it was sometimes that girls, dropping in to visit a sick friend, became enamoured of the place and "shammed" to get in themselves to partake of the stimulating and healthy atmosphere. Our little matron-nurse was not easily deceived, and nallingers were soon on the watch to catch her in their clutches, and firmly, hard-heartedly they, of course, thought. Lady-day brought round the annual fête day of our school, the anniversary of its inception, if not of its foundation. It was a whole holiday, and if weather permitted we spent it as much as possible out-of-doors, driving or walking, of course having first our service in chapel. In the evening we assembled in the school-room for the distribution of the ring-cake, our annual custom. The cake was a huge one, and contained a plain gold ring, which was to be a memento of school-life to the fortunate drawer of the lucky number. Each slice was numbered, and as it was laid upon a plate and the number announced, the youngest girl in the school drew a ticket from a vase on which was the name of that recipient. It was a time to be happy, for the happy one got the glimmer of gold as we sat before our plates, which honour forbade our touching until all were served. Then some one called out — "It is Miss —— " and we discovered, and then followed congratulations more or less hearty according to the popularity of the heroine of the day. And so spring came brightening up the clay-stained, and yielded to balmy delicious weather overhead and firm footing beneath.

(To be continued.)
one after another up the steep shelving beach like fiery horses urged on at the bottom of an hill, the better to mount the next. The foam and spray wetted her dress, but she took no heed as she poured out to the great waves words she dared not utter in the hearing of man.

Truly the heart knoweth its own bitterness, and the knowledge of the heart is no alleviation to the suffering. Poor Mara, may the future deal lightly with thee in the way of that punishment which always must follow disloyalty to God's most just commands.

And so, the tears were dried, and she felt strengthened by the keen beach air. Then she took a clip road to the mountain and reached home in time for tea.

Happily her father had sent word that she should be at home, as he had arrangements to make with Edwin and others for the conference. Mariana, and her maids had also been making preparations. There was to be open house at Tymynydd for as many of the preachers as chose to come, and Mariana had reason to feel vexed that they had not been very assiduous in their labours. This was an old grievance. While Mara wandered about, nursing her fantasies and worldly imaginations, Mariana toiled the livelong day, with little cheer for her to encourage which was, in truth, her joy and stay. But Mariana Vaughan is not to be described at the end of a chapter.

(To be continued.)

AMERICAN SCHOOLGIRL LIFE.

ENT brought us deepening spiritual life through the earnest efforts of our Bishop and other clergymen. Many of us can never forget the Sunday evening "talks" of our beloved Bishop, so simple and yet so penetrating, pervading the depths of our young hearts, but drawing us lovingly to love better and holier things than fun and frolic, or even our studies and our hope of excelling in the year's reports. The chaplain held a confirmation class, and Easter always saw some ten or a dozen white-robed "St. Mary's girls" among the candidates at the Cathedral service. A few days' respite, a few long happy rambles through the glad spring woods and fields, and we settled down to the final term. And now came the "tug of war" and the proof of endurance, as well as the reward of it in the added momentum gained by past good habits. If Easter were late, it was a short time then and the end of June in which to make up lost lessons, and the growing heat made industry difficult, even to those who were least inclined to yield to the temptation to be idle. We scarcely woke up now from choice long before the waking bell roused the heavier sleepers, and roll-call found us buried in the sorrows of Troy or pondering over the Association of Ideas in the coolest and shadiest nook of the garden. "We" were the graduating class, who during this last term were given special privileges both of work and recreation, exempt from several rules, and generally set on an enviable pinnacle of greatness for the few short weeks that remained of school-life. And we did work hard in return for our generous treatment, scarcely giving ourselves the full benefit of Thursday's holiday, but carrying work with us during the theatre, where we used to spend the hot afternoon in the shade of the frowning bluffs which stood like giants guarding the broad flowing stream at our feet. There in the stillness of our busy study, or the quiet of the Monday school, there was the boat-race at which we all appeared with the colours of our favourite boat, there was sometimes an unusually interesting debate on the convention, and always there were friends to show over our buildings or to go out with; and so much delightful anticipation and joyous realization from hour to hour in one way or another marked this week, that even the girls who did not like school-life confessed it was worth coming for. The climax of all our little selves was spent in a whirl of sights and sounds—carpenters hammering at the temporary platform and moving the two best pianos, hammer's blow in the corner of the room and ourselves, fuzions practising in all parts of the building, wherever there was a piano to be seized upon, eager appeals for teacher's permission to go after some forgotten purchase, and despair at finding them all closeted together for hours to come, deciding our several claims for the evening's awards, rapturous welcome of arriving parents, and lamentations over telegrams from some who could not come. Diener passed in a bustle and unchecked chatter of tongues, and tea scarcely touched at all, so excited had we become, especially the graduating class. And what a pretty sight it must have been when at last the eventful hour found us all in simple prayer for the convention, only ornament, seated in rows around the platform. The room was filled with guests, and numbers of young men yielded their places to ladies, and crowded the large windows which opened on the verandah, while on the verandah itself, and even about the grounds were many more who preferred the cool night breeze without, and were content to enjoy what they could hear of music and speeches borne upon the air.

The valedictory essay, the only one of the evening, and the coveted reward of honours, had been of course awarded weeks ago, but intense suspense was always felt at the last moment about the medals. The first and most valued of these was given for conduct and scholarship combined; no merely clever girl could get it, only the best representative of what St. Mary's could do for the culture of girlhood in qualities of heart as well as head could carry off the prize, and the award was received as a rule with enthusiastic assent by the girls themselves. There were no disappointed hearts, that could not be possible, but in the anxious deliberations of the faculty the school-feeling was always taken into account, and had great weight in the decisions as to honours depending, wholly or partly, upon character and conduct. The diplomas and certificates distributed, the last act of our school-life was over. There remained now but to receive our Bishop's blessing, and the partings after the last night had been spent in our little white-curtained alcoves. But we could not be allowed to go out into the world after years of anxious love and care without a final word of advice from our beloved head. The most cherished, the best-remembered event of this eventful evening was the Bishop's address. He, who has held spellbound great meetings at Exeter Hall, who delivered his famous address at the pan-Anglican Synod, whose personality won him a grand reception at Oxford, on the occasion of that university conferring upon him an honorary degree, remained a mystic as he is, never be more so than when meeting for the last time, as he must each year, a class of girls as his own special charge, and addressing upon their growth, to use his words, "O thou child of many prayers, Life hath quicksands, life hath cares, Care and age come unawares." "Bear through sorrow, wrong and ruth, In thy heart the dey of youth, On thy lips the smile of truth."
THE GIRL’S OWN PAPER.

These lines of the poet seemed to embody what I recall of those last words. “It has been the day-dream of my life and my daily prayer that those whom we lovingly call our daughters may bring gladness to hearts and homes, and blessings on the world.” Such is his ideal of woman’s mission, private and public, the old Anglo-Saxon ideal, which our race on both sides of the Atlantic—aye, and beyond further seas, have never ceased to cherish, and never will. It is the ideal which is wrought into our language, in which the wife is the “woof” of the home where the husband is “house-band,” in which the lady is the merciful “loaf-giver,” by her just, order-preserving lord or “law-word.” And so, with all the little differences inseparable from different circumstances and environment, the American girl is trained on the old lines, to aim, like her English cousin, at becoming “A perfect woman, noble planned, To warn, to comfort and command, And yet a spirit still, and bright With something of an angel light.”

It was several years before I had an opportunity of revisiting Alma Mater, and when I did all was the same, yet not the same, in that sad way which is worse than any change. It was commencement week; and my heart beat fast as I drew near the familiar white building, with its shady verandahs and expanses of lawn. There were girls all about, just as usual, and pianos sounding through the open windows with much the same old strains. But the faces were strange and only one, after a curious look at me like the rest, brightened into a smile. The owner, a tall slip of a maiden, then ran towards me with open arms, to my wonderment, and called me by my Christian name. It was the school baby of my time, developed into a “sweet girl graduate,” the only one amongst all the bevy who knew me or any trials for the generations are brief in the world of school. It was very sad, and made my visit a disappointment. But here, in my English home, the old times seem always as they seemed before I went back to risk the spoiling of my recollections; and I think as I grow old and the present becomes the dream, the past the reality, as they tell us is always the case with aged folks, the dear old days at St. Mary’s will return to comfort me for many a sad day since, and perhaps to come and be “The most blessed memory of mine age.”

M. B. BYRDE.

OUR PUZZLE POEM: RONDO.—EXAMINERS’ REPORT.

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Our puzzle poems;

But cease we can’t—we’re as in trance—
And come whatever may, perseverance,
We’ll let opponents vent their spleen
On us and Mister Arnold Green,
Concocting with his arrogance
Our puzzle poems!

AWARD (English and Foreign).

PRIZE WINNERS.
1. Amy Briand, 47, Hanley Road, Finsbury Park, N.
2. A. Phillips, 29, Eversley Road, West Hampstead, N.W.
3. Helen Janette Simpson, 32, Brighton Place, Aberdeen.
5. Mrs. Robertson, Bank of Scotland, Blairgowrie, N.B.