

## The Kindergarten in the Sunday-School

By Clifton Harby Levy

The feeling has been general among the superintendents of Sunday-schools that the methods of instruction in vogue are far from being effective. In no department has this been more keenly felt than in that devoted to the instruction of the youngest children. They attend the school with more or less (generally less) regularity, but what do they carry home with them? How little is only too evident to the teachers of the higher classes to which these children are sent later.

It was from a consciousness of this fatal weakness in religious instruction, at the very point at which it should be strongest, that I determined to find some sane and natural mode of operation. Surveying the field of pedagogy, I found not a little upon the subject of the psychology of childhood, but nothing was more striking than that little book by G. Stanley Hall on the contents of the child's mind. It seemed to suggest the cause of our failure in religious instruction, as clearly as it demonstrated the defects of our secular schools. The Sunday-school pupil is taught names and words, not thoughts. Every superintendent who is frank enough to tell himself the truth has been often discouraged by the lack of efficiency on the part of his teachers, even after he had devised the very best methods. The problem then became twofold. Wanted, teachers and methods by which the dawning consciousness of childhood should be properly dealt with. The teachers of public schools were not what was required, for they are apt to bring into the Sunday-school the dry-as-dust, mechanical methods so generally employed in their daily work. They have given as little attention to the study of childhood and the avenues by which to reach it as most of the very willing and gushing maidens who would "so love to teach the little darlings" what they don't know themselves. Only one class of teachers appeared to fill the requirements as to methods of instruction and understanding of the nature of children, and that was the "kindergartner." It is conceded by the most advanced of our pedagogues that Froebel was inspired by the true principles of teaching, and those trained according to his ideas are best equipped for instructing the very young. I was fortunate enough to find two trained kindergartners willing to attempt the work of applying their methods to religious teaching. Several young ladies of intelligence were secured as assistants, on account of the large number of children in the primary department. No attempt was made to transplant the "day kindergarten" into the Sunday-school room. These ladies had sufficient adaptability to utilize their mode of teaching upon newer material. Still, there was no great rupture between the secular and religious instruction. It was but another proof of the soundness of Froebel's method that it was just as good on Sunday as on Monday, and required only some very simple additions. A Miss Beard had contributed a series of articles upon the "Kindergarten Sunday-School" to the "Kindergarten Magazine" and republished the matter in book form, but this work was not found very helpful, attempting, as it appeared to us, to do too much. The announcement was made from the pulpit that a Sunday kindergarten would be opened, and a large number of children, ranging in age from four to six years, were registered upon the Sunday following. The teachers met together and arranged the lessons, the songs to be sung, the stories to be told, and the games to be played each week. It was thought best to retain the games as a very important element of the system, making the work attractive to the children. Such was proven to be the fact, for parents reported that whereas they had to use no little persuasion upon the older children to attend regularly, the little ones were eager to come and could hardly be kept at home in the stormiest winter weather. Thus the first obstacle to progress was overcome, and we had the class present with remarkable promptness and regularity.

Every one who has given the matter any serious thought will gladly admit the good influence in training accomplished by this simple device. Naturally, the quietest games

were used, and those having a close connection with the lessons taught. The kindergarten work was not attempted in the Sunday-school, but perforated cards were distributed each Sunday, bearing upon some special topic of the day, and returned worked in worsted on the following Sunday. The first effort made was to rouse the intelligence of the child, to make it think—and not merely learn "golden texts." We wished to show it the golden texts of nature, that it might in later years be able to comprehend the words of the Bible. The regular kindergarten method of drawing out the child by question and answer was freely used, and we determined to teach it the first great law of religion, "God is love." It would have been very easy to have the words repeated so often that they became sounds "et prætera nihil," but we desired to make them instinct with meaning. First the teachers drew out of each child what it knew or had heard about God—where he was, what he did for man—until they had sounded the childish mind and had it eager for something more. Then the attempt was made to teach in the natural method, by induction. Seeds were brought, to show the origin of plants; winged seeds illustrating the wonderful device for their dissemination. A bean which had been planted and allowed to sprout was brought to illustrate the act of growth, and the wonderful provisions of nature were explained in the utmost detail. This received careful attention—the development of details. It is not true that a child cannot appreciate an abstract thought. It is true that it requires more details for grasping it than the adult, but once it is conceived, with all of its minutiae, it is implanted forever. The child can form a conception of God; it ought to form one, and can be led to form a correct one by gradually leading it through nature to nature's God. The idea that each child advances by the same steps as the race is by no means new, and the success of the natural method seems to substantiate its truth. Just as men have filled out their idea of God by the contemplation of his manifestations in his works, so the child may be helped to think, to love, and to reverence. Then the decorations used in the "House of Worship" for a harvest festival were transferred to the school-room, the beauties and uses of flower, fruit, vegetable, and grain being dwelt upon at length, but always with reference to the Creator. In this way the perfection of God's work, his wisdom and love, were practically illustrated. It required no special preaching to point to the natural conclusion of gratitude being a duty, and reverence flowed naturally from the consciousness of the many blessings enjoyed. Before each lesson the children and teachers sang a prayer beginning, "Father, we thank Thee," used in many secular kindergartens. Many lessons were required for the proper teaching of the ideas mentioned, but it was not time wasted by any means. We generally take all of these things for granted, which is unfortunate, as the result proves. Children would not be so much interested if they knew all this; and many of their elders even manifested their interest by coming week after week to listen to the lessons. The subject of God's love was handled from every possible point of view, as we preferred to teach this one fundamental principle well rather than spread superficially over a broader field. The important feature of such work must be concentration, as should be the case even in later instruction. But the concrete was always selected as the means of reaching the abstract, and therefore the natural festivals, with all of their symbols, were used as the different seasons passed. For instance, Passover was explained, with the story of the ancient deliverance, and its present mode of observance by the Jews. All of the articles used upon the Passover table were brought into the school-room, the significance of each being explained fully. It was remarkable, when the school term was drawing to a close, to note the amount of information and the religious spirit which had been implanted during the few hours of instruction. An hour and a half a week is a very short time, yet in the space of eight months these little children had grown to comprehend and realize more about nature and natural processes, the method of God's working in and for men, than many of their seniors. It was very easy, after the beginning had been made, and it

was delightful to see the eagerness with which teachers and pupils worked together. When a lesson was being given upon "A tree is known by its fruit," this statement was worked up to by a series of questions: "How do you know a fruit-tree?" "By what it bears," said one child. "How do you know an apple-tree from a pear-tree?" "One has apples on it, the other has pears on it," said another child. "How do you know a good child from a bad child?" One answers, "By his face." "Yes," says the teacher, "but suppose I can't see his face?" "By what he says," says another child; and thus gradually the teacher compels the children to understand that a good boy or girl is known by his or her works. Such instances might be multiplied indefinitely, but all could only point to one conclusion: the kindergarten method can be and should be applied to religious instruction. It is the natural method, and therefore must be effective. There are thousands of kindergartners scattered over our land who would be only too glad to be useful in the Sunday-schools if they were asked in. No one can do the work one-half as well as they.

Is it not our duty, then, to introduce this method into our religious schools, that our children may receive the best possible instruction? Let every superintendent and minister think the matter over, and he will soon have a Sunday kindergarten as the primary department of his Sunday-school.



## Among the Camp-Fires

By S. D. McCormick

Many thrilling achievements and escapades of the Civil War are picturesque side-lights which reveal its humor, the *élan* and spirit of adventure of its soldiery, and will long continue a charming diversion to American readers. The following incident, though it may read like a romance or recall some exploit of a knight of King Arthur and his Round Table, may be depended upon as absolutely true.

All American readers have probably heard of General John S. Mosby—the Francis Marion of the Confederacy—who, with an independent command, operated principally in the counties of Fauquier and Loudon, and in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. These troopers were not guerrillas in any ill sense, but were regularly enrolled in the Army of Northern Virginia, and contributed most valuable service, reporting movements of the Federals, interrupting lines of communication, capturing munitions of war, and sending many prisoners into the Confederate lines. As to personnel, the troop embraced representatives of many of the proudest families of the Old Dominion, and they were principally recruited in the territory they so well defended, and where their daring has cast a halo of historical interest and romance throughout this beautiful Valley of Virginia. It is perhaps allowable also to indulge the suspicion that the fair sex of the Valley were in full sympathy with their Cavaliers, if not at times of practical aid, as the adventure which we are about to relate may lead us to suspect.

The Lieutenant-Colonel under Mosby was Colonel W. H. Chapman, an officer full of the spirit of adventure, cool and calculating, always on guard against surprise, apparently incapable of fear, and who seemed to bear a charmed life, as he was never wounded, although so frequently under fire. It was a favorite pastime with Chapman, while personating a Federal officer, to execute some *coup de main*. During the spring of 1863, while Mosby's command was hanging upon the outskirts of the Federal army, Colonel Chapman with a detail of seven men penetrated behind the picket-lines with a view of capturing any careless stragglers. The evening was misty, a drizzling rain falling, and, enveloped in cloaks to conceal their uniforms, he and his escort ventured along the Federal front, keeping a respectful distance from the watch-fires which stretched away to the right and left, and succeeded in reaching the home of one of his troopers

situated within the lines, where it was known that Federal officers were frequent visitors.

Posting his man at the foot of a hill in a lane, Chapman rode forward to reconnoiter, and, finding the house lighted up, waited until the father of his trooper came to the door, when he signaled to him noiselessly, and ascertained there were nine Federal officers visiting within. To avoid suspicion he dismissed the old gentleman without detaining him unnecessarily, and was planning how to effect a capture of the whole party when two mounted officers unexpectedly rode around to the front of the house. With a cool effrontery Chapman called them to him, demanding their business, and questioning them as to their absence from camp.

It was a practice with Chapman on any extra-hazardous expedition to carry his revolver ready cocked between the left thigh and saddle, his cloak thrown carelessly forward, his horse held steady with the bridle-hand, and his right hand elevated to his whiskers so as not to excite suspicion that he was meditating any hostile movement. It was thus he kept the officers unsuspecting and diverted by conversation until they came near, when, in an instant and by one motion, he leaned forward in his saddle, and, covering them with his revolver, asked, "Did you ever hear of Mosby?" "Why, yes," they answered. "Then, gentlemen, you are my prisoners," and he marched them to the gate which opened into the lane, where his detail gave them the usual cordial reception. Returning to his place of observation, another officer in a short time rode up, who also was quietly captured and turned over to the detail. Still bent upon the capture of the party in the house, Chapman returned to again reconnoiter, when he saw the sister of his trooper, and signaled her to ascertain if the officers were still visiting, when she came forward and told him they had just left, as they had taken alarm at something—she believed because they had not been joined by two or three other officers who were due at their rendezvous, and whose mysterious absence at this time Chapman himself could best account for.

Waiting for some time with a view of capturing other stragglers, and hearing a relief-guard coming, he determined to withdraw his men, and had proceeded along the lane, as they judged, a safe distance and out of hearing of the patrol, when they came upon an army wagon, heavily laden with supplies and stuck fast in the mud; a driver belaboring the team, and an officer worrying over the situation, and occasionally swearing at the driver and the luck which kept him out of bed at such an hour. Both officer and driver were quietly taken in; the medicine-chest rifled; the haversacks of the men filled with greatly appreciated and much-needed rations; also the traces of the mules were cut (as it was determined to take these along); when, some one of the party having spoken too loud, suddenly, at some distance off, a sentry challenged, "Halt! who goes there?" Chapman, leaving his detail, rode up, and, assuming an indignant tone of voice, demanded of the sentry what command he represented, and who the men were just back of him on a mound. The sentinel, believing he was addressing at least a general of the army, said they were Colonel — and a party of officers *en route* to the Winchester races. Chapman continued to interrogate the picket, learning the number of officers, their rank, etc., and, ascertaining they were without an escort, he determined to effect their capture.

The conversation up to this time had been carried on in a loud tone of voice, so as to carry out the deception that he was a Federal officer on his rounds. He now approached the sentinel, and in a whispered tone asked, "Did you ever hear of Mosby?" "Why, yes, of course," the sentinel replied, at the same time drawing back in surprise. "Then," said Chapman, covering him with a revolver, "you're my prisoner. Make no alarm, but ask Colonel — to come here." The latter approached, thinking he was about to be rebuked by a superior officer, when Chapman asked in an undertone, "Did you ever hear of Mosby?" "Yes," said the startled officer. "Then make yourself easy, sir; you're my prisoner. Please invite Major — to join us." As the second officer came near, again



came the whispered tones, "Did you ever hear of Mosby? You're a prisoner. Will you please call Captain —?"

As officer after officer came forward, in the order of their military rank, the same interrogatory and the same fate confronted each of them—Chapman's detail being drawn up in line and receiving each of the prisoners. After three or four of the officers had surrendered they were soon in a titter and seemed greatly to enjoy the surprise and confusion manifested by each one as he came up and carried on the well-known whispered conversation with Colonel Chapman. Altogether thirteen officers were taken in this batch, and thirteen thoroughbred horses which had been entered to run in the Winchester races. As the result of the evening's scout the next morning twenty officers were started under a safe escort to the Confederate headquarters. It should be noted that not a shot was fired nor a man hurt, and that a spirit of fun seemed to prevail after the momentary astonishment which followed the sudden question, "Did you ever hear of Mosby?"

It may be of interest to know that Colonel Chapman is at present employed in the secret service of the Government, with headquarters at Atlanta, Ga. He considers the Georgia moonshiner a better marksman than the bluecoats. This admission was drawn from him when some one remarked the now mutilated condition of his left hand, which has been wounded while in the employ of the Government.

## Curious Lamps

By C. F. Holder

Nearly all the jelly-fishes are luminous, and on dark nights the sight as one gazes down into the water is a marvelous one. Instead of darkness and gloom, the water appears to be filled with lights which move in every direction, with long tails like comets, others like mimic suns and moons. These remarkable creatures are so delicate that many can be seen but not felt, and nearly all are ninety-five per cent. water; so that when exposed to the sun they soon disappear, evaporating like water itself. They range in size from specimens just visible to monsters almost capable of stopping a boat, and with a maze of tentacles sufficient to drown a man or seriously poison him by the discharge of their batteries of lasso-cells.

One of the largest jelly-fishes ever seen in American waters was observed by Mrs. Louis Agassiz, who found it floating on the surface in Massachusetts Bay. An oar was used to measure it, and across the disc it was seven feet, while the mass of tentacles as they stretched away were over one hundred feet in length. Imagine this monster, this mass of solidified water luminous, a gigantic comet moving through the depths of the ocean, each individual tentacle standing out in high relief against the dark water, and some conception may be had of the sights to be seen beneath the sea.

The light emitted by these jelly-fishes is called phosphorescence, but what it is or how it is produced is more or less a mystery. In some it invests the entire animal; in others the umbrella of the jelly is the light-giving organ, while in others it is confined to certain portions of the body. The lights vary in color. The common tint is yellow or white, while blue, green, and red are seen, so that the jellies appear like gems in the sea scintillating with all the tints of the diamond.

By stirring small jellies violently the writer has produced a light by which the time was told at night by a watch; and one luminous jelly-fish placed in twenty-seven ounces of milk produced a light so vivid that ordinary newspaper print could be read several feet away. More remarkable yet was the experience of a naturalist in the equatorial Pacific, who stood on the shore of an island and read a book by the light of the breaking waves which were grinding up the fragile fire-bodies and making a line of fire or light that reached away for miles.

The writer has witnessed a similar phenomenon in extreme southern Florida, where the waves broke on a coral reef, at night making a gradual curve of white light that

could be distinguished a long distance on the darkest night. The water here was filled with jelly-fishes and other minute jelly-like forms, so that the slightest disturbance in the water created a blaze of light.

The light of jelly-fishes has a practical value. On the New England coast the mackerel fishermen take advantage of it by following the schools at night, relying upon the tell-tale jellies and other minute light-givers to expose the situation of the fish, which they really do by a very simple process. The mackerel, by swimming along in a vast body, disturb the jellies, irritating them so that the entire school looks like a patch of fire on the water and can be seen from the topmast of the mackerel-men a long distance off. Toward it the vessel is directed, the large net thrown about the fiery spot, and enormous hauls of fish made.

If a single school of fish can change the water for acres into a mass of seeming fire, we can imagine the appearance of the ocean in a storm where phosphorescent animals abound. The effect in such cases is often remarkable. Ahead of the ship will be a mass of foam blazing like fire, and so brilliant that the sails, masts, and rigging are illumined by it. In such a sea one of the most remarkable of all phenomena was observed—a luminous water-spout. The spout was large and seemed lost in the clouds, a literal pillar of fire traveling by night, and so appalling a spectacle that it terrified mariners; yet the simple phosphorescent jelly-fishes, diatoms, noctiluca, and others, were the cause; whirled about, torn apart by the rushing waters, the light was augmented until the entire monster column appeared to blaze with light and stand out against the sky like a pillar of fire. Such a sight might well excite the superstitious fears of the sailors and augment the terrors of the sea.

One of the most remarkable of the jelly-like luminous animals is known as the pyrosoma, or "fire-body." It resembles a cylinder, open at one end, from six inches to four or five feet in length, and is in reality a community of animals, better known as an ascidian. A ship once sailed through a sea of these creatures, with a result that was awe-inspiring. The water had a milky appearance, and looked, upon examination, as though it were filled with red-hot cylinders. The sea when it broke gave a spectral glare to everything, so that the sails and rigging cast dark shadows on the deck.

Some of these fire-bodies were nearly five feet in length, and presented a most singular spectacle when brought on deck, great waves of fire sweeping over the surface, which seemed to be studded with bolts, or to have the appearance of hammered brass. The naturalist Bibra took one of these fire-bodies and placed it in a jar of water which he suspended from the ceiling, when it emitted so brilliant a light that he actually wrote a description of the animal by its own light.

The animals which constitute these cylinders each draw in water from the outside and eject it into the interior, and the volume, rushing out or forced out of the larger end, forces the animal along, after the manner of some of the steamers used in canals, in which water is simply forced out of a pipe in the stern, thus pushing them along.

These lights have their uses in the economy of nature; they are signals and warnings, and undoubtedly aid the illumination of the submarine world. The light is well known in every sea, familiar to every one who has crossed the ocean or sailed upon it, and there is hardly a branch of the animal kingdom that does not contain a light-giver; yet no one, so far, has given a satisfactory explanation of the cause of the light—the same light, apparently, that is seen in living animals, in decayed wood and animal matter, in minerals and under conditions in which ordinary light cannot exist or combustion continue.

## Answers to Puzzles, September 5

- I. Riddle.—Main, mane.
- II. Beheadings.—S-h-ark. S-c-ore. F-l-ute. W-h-eel.
- III. Puzzle.—Holly. Marc'h, October, April, July.
- IV. Puzzle.—Frost.
- V. Charade.—Fur-fir-bee-low.
- VI. Anagram.—Families feasting together.