

THE GIRLS OF "A" ROOM.

The Way They Learned the Meaning of the Old Text, "Bear Ye One Another's Burdens."

By JULIA DARROW GOWLES.

I. It was recess, and there was the usual bevy of girls outside the Davenport High school.

The most animated group of all was that at the triangle of the yard. These were the girls of the A room. To watch them at a distance an observer would have thought that nothing less than a wholesale suspension of the A room students could have caused an animated conference. But it was not a case of suspension, it was a case of mourning.

"I declare," exclaimed Myrtle Faber, "she treats us as though we were in the primary department." Myrtle's voice was full of scorn, and there was a general expression of approval at her words.

Myrtle was a favorite with all her classmates, and when Miss Sterling had that morning called her to a seat at her side because of some trifling offense, the scholars all felt that matters had reached a climax. Myrtle obeyed the summons with her head held very erect and with flashing eyes.

Up to this year Miss Sterling had been a favorite with the pupils in her room, but now she seemed changed and none of her present year's scholars liked her. She was easily irritated, and as a consequence she fretted the pupils, the smallest offense brought reproach, and she seemed to have lost her power of distinguishing between intentional and unintentional misdemeanors.

As a consequence of all this the scholars had at first wondered, then became careless, and now were at the point of rebellion. "How the girls in the A room were in her room last year could any one understand," said Ethel Dean, in response to Myrtle's remark. "She may be mentally well-informed, but she certainly is not a good teacher."

"She probably has taught school so long that her nerves have become unstrung. I'm sure I wish she would get married, but I'd pity the man in the case." Hattie French shrugged her shoulders as she spoke, and the others laughed.

Then Myrtle Faber spoke again, and the girls listened, as they always did when Myrtle had anything to say. "She must be taught in some way that we cannot be treated as though we were 6 years old. We have all tried it since Miss Sterling, I am sure. Now it is time that we assume a new line of tactics. If she finds that it is within our power to make matters as unpleasant for her as she seems determined to make them for us, possibly the lesson may prove beneficial."

"How are we to do it?" asked Hattie. "I have noticed that there is nothing which so annoys her as to be kept after school for any reason. Suppose we each in turn commit some offense which will merit our being kept at least a half-hour. Of course we may not resist staying, but I will be the first to volunteer."

"I will do it," said Ethel. "And so will I," responded a chorus of voices, and when the bell rang all the girls had agreed to Myrtle's plan.

The next day it was plain to be seen that a different spirit prevailed in the A room. It was not so much because of any outward act of rebellion as it was the undefinable atmosphere of expectation which seemed to influence all in the room. When the hour of dismissal arrived Miss Sterling faced the scholars, as usual, but Myrtle Faber remained a half-hour," she said, "for careless recitation." Then she turned away like the scholars might not hear the quivering sigh which escaped her tightly drawn lips.

Myrtle's face betrayed no sign as she listened to Miss Sterling's announcement. "I have several calls to make on my way home, and I must go."

"Why, Myrtle," exclaimed Carrie, noticing for the first time the expression of her face, "you are not sick?" "No," answered Myrtle; "I was sorry to learn of Miss Sterling's trouble, but I hope, now that we know of it, that we may be able to make it easier for her at school."

"O, Ethel," interrupted Myrtle, "don't talk to me about sales now, please. Let me tell my errand first."

"What is it, Myrtle?" she asked. "I have a confession to make to you, and, indeed, to every girl in our room. I prompted you to treat Miss Sterling as unkindly as possible, and now I feel just leaping that her sister is very sick, and that she takes all the care of her, and that is the reason she never likes to be kept after school. And to think that while I sat there in school keeping Miss Sterling a half hour and feeling pleased with myself because I had done so, that her sick sister was at home alone, needing her and waiting. O, Ethel, I can never forgive myself, and I don't expect you to forgive me."

Ethel felt shocked at the news, but she was as genuinely sorry for Myrtle at this moment as for either Miss Sterling or her sister. "Myrtle, you goose," she exclaimed, "it was no more your fault than ours, not one bit, and I've nobody to forgive but myself." "Then, in a different tone, she added, "It is a shame, though, about Miss Sterling. How did you find it out?"

Then Myrtle told of her visit to Carrie, and of all that she had learned while there. "Now," said she, in conclusion, "I am going to call upon as many of the girls as I can today, and see if I can make a new agreement with them. I propose to see how much I can help Miss Sterling after this, and I am sure enough of the girls to know that they will all do the same when they know about this."

"If you will trust me," said Ethel, "I will see part of them. I am sure I want to make what reparation I can, too."

friend in a distant part of the city. They had visited in schoolgirl fashion for some time, when Carrie, Myrtle's friend, chanced to remark: "By the way, Myrtle, your teacher, Miss Sterling, is one of our near neighbors."

Myrtle raised her eyebrows slightly. "Is that so?" she replied. "Are you acquainted with her?"

"O, yes, indeed," Carrie answered promptly. "She and her sister live alone. Her sister has been an invalid for several years, but during the last few months she has been very much worse. I feel so sorry for Miss Sterling, for she gives every minute out of school to her care and she worries all the time that she is away from her, I believe."

Myrtle felt a strange tightening of the muscles of her throat, as though a hand had grasped it. "It has told on Miss Sterling, too," Carrie went on. "Mamma goes over to see them



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often and she says she does not see how she keeps up at all."

"Who does she leave her sister with when she is gone?" Myrtle asked with an effort.

"She leaves her alone, except when some of the neighbors run in to see her. It seems too bad, but her sister's doctor bills have been something dreadful, and then, too, I believe Miss Sterling has an aunt somewhere in the country who is quite old, and whom she has helped whenever it has been possible to do so."

Myrtle had heard all that Carrie said, but even while she had listened there had been a current of thought which ran as an accompaniment to Carrie's words. "And we have thought her cross; we have kept her after school because that annoyed her most. O, Myrtle Faber, and you were the one who suggested it!"

"Carrie," said Myrtle, rising suddenly, "I have several calls to make on my way home, and I must go."

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stead each scholar did his best, and when the closing hour arrived, and Miss Sterling dismissed them all, it was with a heart lighter than she had known for many weeks.

As she was locking up her desk ready to leave the room, she saw Myrtle Faber's familiar voice close beside her. "Miss Sterling," she said, "how is your sister today? I am so sorry we did not know before about her?"

It was the voice more than the words that touched the heart of the woman who had struggled so long alone. She tried to answer, but her voice shook, and before Myrtle realized what she was doing she had thrown her arms about her and repeated once more, "I am so sorry about it all."

On the following Friday Mr. Spencer, the superintendent, sat in his office, mentally reviewing the work of the different rooms. "Matters seem to have adjusted themselves in the A room," he said. "I wonder how it all came about?"

When Christmas day arrived there proved to be a surprise in store for Miss Sterling. The girls of A room called to see her and left a package which proved to contain many tokens of their debt, handwork and a warm, soft wrapper for her sister.

The boys were not to be outdone, and after much planning and many consultations decided that their best gift would be a telephone, which could be placed within easy reach of the invalid, and connected with the rooms of the other girls.

In pursuance to this policy naval attaches were sent to most of the foreign courts with instructions to send in information about foreign navies. At the time the war with Spain began, there were naval representatives at Paris, Vienna, London, Rome, St. Petersburg and Madrid. Most of these have since been recalled for active service.

These naval attaches sent to the department printed reports as well as written observations of naval operations and experiments. The written reports were always secret and have been seen today only by an order from Secretary Long. They cannot be seen at all except by some officer of the department having the secretary's authority.

From Many Sources. Another source of information was the intelligence officer aboard ships. Every captain of an American vessel on foreign station designated one of his junior officers to make observations and report to the department and the other officers were asked to give him the benefit of any information they might pick up. Even the petty officer and the sailor cannot be seen today without an order from Secretary Long.

These were the words that it bore: "Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ."

PRATTLE OF THE YOUNGSTERS. "Teacher, I bought a pound of raisins yesterday and counted 'em. Can you guess how many there are?"

"Four hundred and fifty." "None. There ain't any. I tell 'em."

"Minnie," said a mother to her naughty 5-year-old daughter, "what's the reason you and your little brother Harry can't get along without quarreling?"

"I don't know," was the reply, "unless it's because I take after you and Harry takes after papa."

"Well, Tommie, did you have a glorious Fourth?" "Well, I should guess yes. We got a French cook at our house and we just bombarded her for keeps until she spanned that a Yankee pig could lick a Spaniard with all four hoofs tied behind his back."

"Why," asks the teacher, "did the Romans call their emperor Augustus?" "Clearly, it is the opportunity of the bad boy, who is some day to be admiral or a secretary of the treasury or something."

"They didn't dare to call him Gus!" he shouts, dissonantly.

Willie and Nellie are twins, aged 6, and one Sunday they were discussing the services at the church where they attended. "I don't see what they have sermons for," said Willie.

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The Bureau Which Collects and Supplies Knowledge of Spain's Forces.

ITS VARIOUS SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Has Existed for Sixteen Years and Now Reports the First Time the Actual Status—Will Report the Present War.

When the war with Spain threatened and before the actual beginning of hostilities, the secretary of the navy was able to learn from his subordinates on a few minutes' notice just what the strength of the Spanish navy was, the character of the vessels, the style of their armament—in fact every particular of information necessary to a comparison of the navies of the two countries and a forecast of the probable results of an encounter between them. He found out the character and extent of the permanent defenses of Cuba and Porto Rico and the Philippines. In fact, he was able to assemble facts, the knowledge of which enabled him to take in the whole situation at a glance.

The information about the Spanish navy which Secretary Long was able to call and which he is now using every day, is locked up, with facts about all the navies of the world, in the secret archives of the department kept by the office of naval intelligence. At Washington this office is an attachment of the secretary's office. It has existed for sixteen years and in all that time until this year it has never had an official status. The clerks employed in it hitherto have been assigned from other bureaus.

Collecting Facts for Years. The office was established in Secretary Chandler's time. Its business was to collect all the information obtainable concerning foreign navies with a view to utilizing it in the building of the American navy, which was being planned. Uncle Sam has been a pioneer in invention, but seldom in experiment in naval matters. He has chosen to go slowly and surely forward, waiting until the costly experiments of other nations had developed the value of a device before adopting it.

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manter Goodrich on the operations of the English in Egypt and the bombardment of Alexandria. More than one officer present on our ships at the time of the bombardment contributed to this report. In fact on an occasion of this kind every officer becomes an avenue of intelligence for the department. The bulletin also issued in 1883 a report on the French operations in Tunis and a report by Lieutenant T. B. M. Mason of the operations of the navy of Chile, Peru and Bolivia in the war between Chile and the allied republics.

Lieutenant James H. Sears and Ensign B. H. Wells, Jr. prepared a report on the naval operations in the Chilean revolution. A report on the Brazilian revolution followed, and then came a very complete report of the operations in the war between Japan and China, the first taste of international naval warfare since the perfection of armor and big guns.

The next report to be published will be on the operations of the navy in our war with Spain. There are several intelligence officers with Dewey's fleet and more with Sampson's. They will issue a technical account of the work of the United States battle ships, as soon as the excitement is over and peace reigns once more in the Caribbean.

The reports of the war with Spain will doubtless be printed in a large edition for general distribution. The reports have been printed in limited edition for the use of the navy, for exchange with other nations and for libraries. The demand for them has far exceeded the supply, and the early publications are worth a large price today.

LABOR AND INDUSTRY. The diamond mines of the Kimberley district produced last year diamonds of the aggregate weight of 2,717,785 carats.

Hamilton, Canada, is the latest place to be taken with the idea that a municipal council can profitably buy a fire insurance department to the machinery it looks after.

Exports of corn and cornmeal last year went up to the unprecedented figure of 17,262,267, an increase of \$20,000,000 over any preceding year. The corn exported exceeded its value in a single year, about 50 per cent more in value than the value of all American exports to Japan during 1893-94.

Slam offers a tremendous opportunity for cotton growers in the United States. The Bureau of Cotton Inquiries, which has been organized, estimates that the United States produces nearly 3,000,000 bales of cotton annually. The United States produces nearly 3,000,000 bales of cotton annually. The United States produces nearly 3,000,000 bales of cotton annually.

Japan is now building a great steel plant. The works will cost \$10,000,000 and will be put into operation within three years. The product of the plant for the first year will be almost exclusively steel rails, and probably some steel plates for ships.

The mechanical genius of the American people is freshly illustrated in the remarkable increase of the foreign demand for our locomotives. The Railroad Gazette of New York has brought together the figures for the number of our exports of locomotives since 1885, and they show an increase in the number of locomotives shipped abroad during that time—from fifty-two in 1885, valued at \$237,360, to 338 in 1897, valued at \$3,258,831. And

during the first half of the present year no less than 270 American locomotives have been exported.

The farmers of the United States have obtained from other parts of the world more money for their crops than in any preceding year in the history of the country. In 1902 American exports of agricultural products amounted to \$2,252,122, but this will be surpassed by the record of the year which closed with the month of June. The preliminary reports of the May exportation statistics have reached the bureau of statistics show that the agricultural exports will exceed \$300,000,000, and the total may reach \$350,000,000. Never before has the Scientific American, have the exports of the agricultural products reached the \$300,000,000 mark, and never but twice have they passed the \$200,000,000 line, the fortunate years being 1891 and 1892.

OUT OF THE ORDINARY. Mrs. Edward Harris of Richmond, Mo., 53 years old, has given birth to twins for the seventh time. They are all living.

Two hundred babies of Oriental parentage recently displayed in a baby show in San Francisco. The boys had their heads shaved, while the girls had their hair stiffened with beads and paper flowers.

A 400-pound bear walked into a hardware in Probst, Wash., and carried off a live calf. The citizens organized a posse and after a long chase captured him, who had hugged the calf to death.

Reversing a judgment for damages in a suit against a railroad the supreme court of California said that a steam railroad track itself is a public danger, and one should insure himself if he attempts to cross the track before making the attempt.

Let Faces Come First. If you use Wool Soap for but one purpose, let it be for the face rather than for wool.

When wool shrinks, it means only a spoiled garment. When a soap harms the face, it means a spoiled complexion. There is a particular ingredient in Wool Soap that prevents it from shrinking wool. That quality makes it especially desirable for toilet and bath.

Wool Soap is a white, swimming soap. In washing woollens it is a necessity. In any other use it is a luxury, and it is so cheap that it makes luxury economical. It is an absolutely pure soap. It is the only soap so pure that it won't shrink wool.

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CURE YOURSELF. PENNYROYAL PILLS. Guaranteed to cure speedily and reliably all NERVOUS, CHRONIC AND PRIVATE diseases of Men and women.