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## Puero Reverentia

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## PUERO REVERENTIA

"Thereafter my rocks and crystals served me as a mirror wherein I might discern mankind and man's development and history."

FROEBEL.

"The kindergarten is no longer an experiment. Critics may say what they will about its being a waste of time, an opportunity to play under unnatural conditions; they may assert that the work done by the child there is purposeless, that the child is too old when he enters; in short, they may empty every chamber of their wrath; yet the fact still stands that children who have gone through the kindergarten in the normal way are better and stronger physically, mentally, and morally when they enter the grades than those who have had no such training. This has been proved true so often by actual experiment that it seems almost unnecessary to assert it before this body of teachers."

The reader of the paper made a slight gesture of emphasis as she turned to the next page. A number of young women who were sitting in the front of the room near the reader smiled and nodded their heads vigorously. It was a meeting of the Kindergarten Section of the city "Herbartian Society," or "Society for the Promotion of Pedagogical Novelties," as its detractors phrased it; and the room was crowded. I had missed the first part of the paper, and had stood at the door while this paragraph was read. Now that there was a slight interruption I stepped gingerly, between rows of frowns at my late coming, to the only empty desk on the opposite side of the room near a window. Besides, what right had I, a high-school teacher, and that, too, of English, in a meeting devoted to kindergarten ideals? But as I was passing the door I had spied my friend Mr. Nevius, a colleague, who was one of those selected to take part in the discussion; and I wanted to know what he might have to say on so remote a subject as education through play.

As I glanced at the reader, the kindergarten supervisor, I wondered if all who held that office were compelled to resemble poor Miss Havisham in *Great Expectations*, and if the child's whole-souled abandon in the game would follow her magic "play-

children." It was evident that I had much to learn. Many of the teachers were young girls just out of school; and their methods, at least, would have little in common with those of the celebrated Miss Havisham.

But the supervisor, Mrs. Schulseisepilger, waited for me to gain my seat, rustled the papers once or twice, smiled faintly a sour smile at the approving looks of her novices, and continued in the same dry, dispassionate voice:

"We have discussed the negative side of the subject only—the side which Froebel lays least stress upon—the value of the kindergarten in developing personality, or 'self-activity,' through co-operation in play, and the effect of this upon scholarship. In my last paragraph I alluded to a criticism that the *work* done in the kindergarten is useless and aimless. Let us take up this division of the subject. Do the little exercises we require of the kindergartners bring as a result any positive benefits?" She paused significantly, while all drew deep breaths.

"The greatest gift that God has given to man is that of Freedom. 'For,' says Froebel, 'the living thought, the eternal principle as such demands and requires free *self-activity* on the part of man, the being created for freedom in the image of God.' And where may we look, O friends, for a more exquisite, more pure manifestation of the beauty of the Absolute than in the vesture of sanctity adorning the innocence of Childhood; where, then, may we find a more perfect love and appreciation of Divine Freedom! Hence it is necessary not only that the child should be always active, but also that this activity should be *free*, and that it should be of his entire self in all the phases of his being. Thus the child should be encouraged to carry out all of his impulses (these will be good unless something foreign enters), and to act upon all of his decisions. Else we are resisting the spirit of God-given freedom, and stunting the nature of the child. It is necessary then that we remember these words of our master: The development of the child 'should be brought about, not in the way of dead imitation or mere copying, but in the way of living, spontaneous *self-activity*. . . . In every human being, as a member of humanity and as a child of God, there lies and lives humanity as a whole; but in each it is realised and expressed in a wholly particular, peculiar, personal, and unique manner, and it should be exhibited in each individual human being in this wholly peculiar, unique manner.'"

At these solemn words of the pedagogue of Marienthal the reader paused, laid aside her manuscript, wiped her glasses, and added with deep earnestness: "It is because we in the kindergarten realise more clearly than any this necessity for self-activity, creativeness, and objectiveness in education, that we are nearer the true methods of education than our colleagues in the grades, in the high schools, and even in the university."

There was a vigorous nodding of heads and smiling with *Genügsamkeit* in the front seats. But she was impervious to the subtle flattery, and catching up the manuscript began again: "This ego, this transcendental unit, this manifestation of the divine synthesis of thesis and antithesis of the all-pervading and all-including Logos, this spark of the Divinity, this Noumenon in a world of phenomena, this soul, we must train to know its source, to know itself; and this we can do only by teaching it to be freely active in the world of things. And we proceed on the principle of *Objectivity*. The little stories which are dramatically acted out, like the stories of Little Red Riding Hood and Jack and the Bean Stalk, teach a great moral. Red Riding Hood is the human soul sent on an errand of unselfish devotion across the wilderness we call this world. The Wolf is the principle of evil which the soul meets but does not recognise. The Huntsman who slays the wolf is the Absolute, the Divinity, who waits at the end to aid human frailty. For evil is nothing final, it is here only to be destroyed, as ninepins are only to be knocked down. And Jack and the Bean Stalk is again only an allegory of the human soul in conflict with evil. The man who sold Jack the pretty beans for the useful cow is none other than the tricky principle of evil in a new guise. But evil turns out to be good in disguise. And, finally, when the human soul, Jack, has robbed evil, the giant, of all the good it possesses, it slays the evil, and we have the happy dawn of the millennium, when shall come the final synthesis, when there shall be no more thesis, no more antithesis, but all God, Freedom, and Immortality; and the Earth shall be robbed in garments of pure Beauty.

"The children act these little plays; and through them what insights they gain into the transcendent beauties of pure thought, pure philosophy! All is objectified. The Logos becomes a real being who at the opportune moment steps in and slays the Wolf and liberates the ego; evil vanishes like a puff of vapour. And the child comes to know his position in the world. It becomes

objectified. This is one form of encouraging self-activity and creativeness. Even stories like Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty, and Puss in Boots may thus become objectified and pregnant with the symbol of the soul's journey through this world of phenomena to the absolute Noumenon."

At this point one of the listeners who had been twitching with violent emotion in the front row could contain herself no longer, but broke out: "Oh, Mrs. Schultze, this is beautiful! beautiful! and I have done just this in my class, not knowing that I was teaching such exquisite thoughts. And—oh, I shall enjoy it so much more now! I have also used some of the pretty stories from the *Arabian Nights*. They can be acted so well, and are enjoyed by the children, for——" But she stopped, struck dumb with terror as the wintry smile on the supervisor's face slowly faded into an ominous, heavy frown.

"No, Miss Pearson," quickly came from under the storm cloud, "I should never even allude to the *Arabian Nights*. They are profane, an invention of evil-minded and coarse Semitics. They are eulogies of evil. There is no beauty, no good in them. They are preposterous, pernicious, perversions of all that we regard as holy in childhood. No, we should never encourage any reading of the *Arabian Nights*; and I am not a little surprised and pained that you——"

Miss Pearson wilted so completely that I was sorry for her. Gradually the frown vanished as the reader continued: "I should use only our beautiful German legends; for the Germans alone have ever had in their minds the close union of the human soul and the Absolute. The Hebrews may have been the chosen people of the Lord, but the Germans have been more: they have ever known that they were body and soul the Lord himself. The world's best art, best poetry, best philosophy, all true education, all true understanding of religion, have come from Germany."

"With the world's best guns, airships, conceit, and beer," muttered my friend Nevius, who is nothing if not consistent. Fortunately there were not many that overheard him. But there was a ripple of smiles. Mrs. Schultze looked puzzled, then smiled in acknowledgment of what she thought applause, and taking up her manuscript continued.

"But this activity and creativeness must go beyond self-appreciation and postures of the body. It must be further

objectified in the world of phenomena. As God created a cosmos to satisfy his self-activity, so the child must, in order to gain correct relationship with the cosmos, make a microcosmos of his own, and learn to see and study the things about him. For this we stimulate his instinctive love of Nature. We study her beauty in trees, rocks, birds, plants, animals, life, and not life. The child must perceive Nature and apperceive himself as an integral part of Nature. Then he draws what he sees, sings little songs about it, and at times acts that he is a bird, a tree, a grasshopper, or a stone. This makes him know himself to be a part and an intimate part of the great divine universe. This is imitativeness not of things trivial but of things divine.

“Again to teach him to create we have what Froebel called ‘gifts,’ the forms in which God moulds the world of space—cubes, cylinders, crystals, spheres, circles, triangles, squares. These have all of them a mystical significance which the child can readily comprehend, but which I need not discuss to-day. But in his drawing, his cardboard cutting, and pasting, the child learns to use these forms; and thus in a little world of objects of his own creating he models after the great world of the Creator. And we bring him to know all this. It is not an impossible feat, then, to show that all his little creativeness is but an allegory of the infinite creativeness which brings trees to grow into cones, flowers to bloom in corymbs, rocks to crystallise in hexagons, and the whole universe to revolve in one divine, harmonious sphere.”

At this point Miss Pearson who had somewhat recovered her composure asked innocently: “And what ‘gift’ should we call the little raffia baskets we have them weave, and the red string lines?”

Mrs. Schulleisepilger paid her no attention, but looked around the room with the smile of satisfied power of a philosopher who has solved the problem of life, or of a creator who rests from his labours. Into this rarefied atmosphere no puff of doubting or inquisitive vapour might ascend. It was the ozone of the mountain peaks, the afflatus of the Absolute. It was a moment of triumph.

“This might be called the philosophical use of the kindergarten, a use that Pestalozzi and Froebel as well as Herbart would extend to all education; and which, fortunately for us, is slowly gaining ground beyond the kindergarten.

"But there are other uses. The child knows that he is in essence a free soul, partaking in the infinite freedom of the Absolute. His decisions, his emotions, his thoughts, all his various psychic activities he learns to carry out immediately into physical activity, just as God's psychic activities are physically manifest in the phenomenal universe. This is the nucleus also of the Montessori system. How different this from the repression and discipline of the old, formal education where the chief ideal was physical and intellectual subordination. The worth of the individual soul, the worth of emotion, the utter worth of divine passion, have we got in exchange for the narrow, formal submission to stultifying tradition. What a beautiful heritage, this, for innocent childhood! How the great Rousseau would have rejoiced had he once seen the great dreams of his *Émile* now at last coming true!" She looked around with expectancy.

"But the child, if he is a god, is still a very young god and inexperienced," broke in a sharp voice from the rear of the room. All looked around at the interruption. Mr. Brown, the speaker, had grown old in service as a grade-school principal, and was now retired. He was considered one of the best disciplinarians in the city; and yet no one was able to say that his pupils had ever come to the high school any the worse prepared. "May I ask a question or two at this point? We are on an exceedingly important topic, one that has bearing on almost every phase of our education and civilisation. Granted that the child is a god, he is still a very young god, and must still pass through his nonage. Are all the potentialities of glorious manhood secreted in the germ of his soul, from which, through the exercise of his own powers, they shall spring forth like flower from bud and fruit from flower? If so, is there not yet a place for discipline and a bending, even at times a harsh bending, of his will? We prune trees and tie up rose bushes, and no one can say that pruning and tying are the natural means for the egos in rose bushes and trees to be realised. Nature seems to have in her as much of positive evil as of positive good; and discipline is the means we adopt to strengthen the child to overcome the evil. Do we think that deep in the hidden recesses of the child's soul lies hid the germ that shall one day blossom out in multiplication tables and trigonometric formulæ? Is the love of grammatical forms and graphs innate and imbedded in a child's nature? Can we call out the resolute will to face stern duty by morning romps over castles of cardboard?"

"But to be specific, is it not true that there is a little too much of this rule of divine passion and godlike caprice in our country to-day? How can we teach a child who, petted by indulgent parents, regards his every wish as law, that there are rights and duties which he must fulfil, if we do not introduce the spirit of firmness into our school world? Otherwise shall we blame the neurasthenic who shoots down in cold blood the man that crosses his caprice? Who can blame the possessor of wealth from piling up yet more that he may further indulge his fancy and trample his less fortunate brother? America has run amuck with this same gospel of divine passion, this passion undirected by intelligence or reason. We will ride this unbroken horse until our whole nation——"

"It is the resistance a man feels to his will that makes him run amuck," interrupted Mrs. Schulleisepilger. "It is the curb-bit or the tight saddle-girth that galls the unbroken horse. Put no restriction on either man or horse and the danger of unruliness vanishes. It is our false condition, half-free, half-enslaved, that irks and makes us mad. Discipline—what discipline is worth while save that imposed voluntarily by the free ego?"

The pause was broken by another voice from the rear of the room. It was Miss Laidlaw, a teacher in my own school, speaking calmly. "All that Mr. Brown means is that there must be a place in our kindergartens for formal discipline, which should extend up through the grades, high school, and university. As a country we are rudely undisciplined; and it is largely because we have abandoned discipline in our schools with the mistaken notion that when we make school more easy we make it more attractive and more democratic." She spoke easily. "As natural and necessary as the principle of action is the principle of inhibition; and this power we are losing. Probably our Puritan forefathers exercised it a little too freely; but we shall not make our lives any the more attractive by throwing it away entirely."

Miss Laidlaw had come from Scotland. When warm with her subject the Scotch burr was clearly evident. "We owe Mrs. Schulleisepilger an apology," she went on, "for interrupting her paper. But it is opportune I am sure. Froebel may have been philosophically right in his principles—personally I do not agree with his transcendentalism. It is very beautiful, almost naïvely so; but it fails to admit the gross facts that each child has a

divided nature, that this world is a cold, hard place to live in, and that a constant warfare must be maintained between soul and the world, and between the good and the evil in each soul. This life is more like an armed camp than a sweet-scented flower slowly maturing its full beauty. The kindergarten, had Froebel experimented further, might have allowed more for the disagreeable in life; but as we have developed it we have petted and mollycoddled all semblance of true virtue out of it. Its obvious result has been—not its result alone, but also that of the fearful optimism of our age, for it is true that Americans refuse to consider unpleasant things—its obvious result has been that our education is often an orgy of capriciousness, elective courses, neglect of disagreeable tasks, attempts by the so-called laboratory method and the like to make the disagreeable pleasant, petting children to induce them to work. It has become a Sunday-school with perennial rewards of coloured picture cards and candy boxes. There is too little spur and too much sugar-plum in our education; and this ideal has come up from the kindergarten.”

Miss Laidlaw was a comely middle-aged woman with a winning smile which at first gave little hint of the inflexible honesty of spirit behind it. Children adored her, notwithstanding the fact that she made them work hard at their French and German. From her smile as she spoke now one would think that she and not the vinegar-visaged kindergarten supervisor were the natural advocate of Froebelian and Pestalozzian child training. The voice in which she spoke was so gentle, so unassuming, so devoid of all offence, that its effect on the audience was immediate. Miss Pearson glanced with a puzzled look first at Miss Laidlaw, then at her supervisor, wondering where and how much offence was to be taken. Some smiled their approval. Still, more than a few frowned at the unexpectedness and the vigour of the attack. The supervisor merely waited patiently, nodded, and said quietly: “This is a well-known criticism, and one referred to earlier. We are here not to attack the system on theoretical or philosophical grounds. We answer all such objections with the final answer, that the children who have gone through the kindergarten do better work in the grades than those who have not.”

“But is that quite a fair test?” broke in my friend Mr. Nevius. “Does it not rather mean that they have been in school one year longer, and are in consequence more used to school ways? Besides,

there may be an essential similarity, notwithstanding the paper's assertion to the contrary, between the kindergarten and the elementary school. If the kindergarten is a deliquescence of the intellect and the will, so may also be the elementary and the grade school. Much the same joyous, carefree, listless abandon may reign in both. But, Mrs. Schudreisepilger, please continue your paper. This discussion is capital. It may become a true combat, and I want all of your words before we go farther into the discussion. So please pardon our interruption."

Mrs. Schudreisepilger smiled again. "I am afraid there is at least one verse from Scripture that admits of only partial application: 'No prophet is without honour save in his own country.' It is the high school that has attacked the kindergarten; and is that quite a generous battle? But to turn to the last topic of the paper, the other value of the kindergarten method:

"Quite as important as the blessing of freedom is the blessing of an education according to Nature, the process of establishing personal relations with Nature. I shall treat this very briefly, far more briefly than its importance deserves.

"We have all at times felt the passionate appeal in Rousseau's cry for a return to Nature. And though in a literal sense this is far more nearly impossible for us to-day than it was for him when he took up his residence at the Hermitage, yet in a fuller sense we can get that for which his soul hungered. For it is not as though Nature were a thing afar off. She is all about us, permeating our lives with a thousand of her subtle manifestations. Can we refuse to give her the due which is hers by right; and which she claims by appeal to our divine essence and hers? Shall we refuse to train our powers of action and observation, and fail to perceive this intimate relationship with her in her protean character whether in the country or in the city? For only by learning to be objective, by sharpening the emotions and the senses, by keeping them ever keen and alert, may we ever hope to gain the true education, the primitive education, the education according to Nature. For is it not obvious that powers which the race has been developing for countless thousands of years are potent far more than those purely subjective, intellectual faculties which have only lately been discovered and utilised?"

"Eat with our fingers," grunted Mr. Brown.

"To develop these primitive powers we have our nature study, our watching the growth of seeds, flowers, fruits; then our animal

stories, which are acted out, give the child a close sympathy with that other life not so different from ours. Every morning the child is asked what he saw at home or on his way to school, and in the telling of it is asked often to reproduce it in appropriate action. It is by such intimate observations of all forms of animate and inanimate nature that the child learns to feel himself not only a unique soul but also a part of the divine universe. Yes, we can carry this still farther. A story if only read remains to the end but an exercise of the intellect, bringing in only secondarily the sympathetic emotions of the hearer or reader. But if the child act the story, at once the primary sympathies are awakened, the imagination catches fire; for the moment the child forgets that he is John Smith or Lucy Jones, and becomes in an instant Cinderella or Jack the Giant Killer. It is necessary thus to catch the imagination or emotion of the child directly and make him apprehend rather than comprehend the object. He then more than perceives, he apperceives. (It is for this reason that we have led in the movement for what we consider ideal books for children, books written in simple, concrete words, words of one syllable.) The 'meddling intellect' which insists upon coming between the observer and the object is banished, the object is caught into the very soul, and becomes a part and parcel of the child's personality. It was this that led savages to personify nature and to see their own powers in all about them. This is the secret of all great art and poetry, the establishing of intimate, personal relations with all Nature; this is the return to Nature. And this is the ideal of the kindergarten, as it should be of all true education."

The spell which had been for a moment threatened by the high-school attack again asserted itself. The front seats were wrapped in silence until Mrs. *Schulreisepilger* slowly folded the manuscript, snapped open her large reticule, and slipping it in sat down. Then they broke into loud applause.

"Mrs. *Schulreisepilger*," broke in a neighbour of Miss Pearson, "I have been having my children draw leaves and flowers only; now I shall bring to school little animals for them to admire and perhaps to draw, caterpillars, cocoons, and even perhaps spiders and grasshoppers. And there were some lovely crickets in our cellar. The children ought to know those harmless little creatures that most people so despise. I am sure my children ought to be able to act crickets."

Mr. Nevius sniffed audibly as he rose. "There is something in the last topic that deserves careful consideration. There is such a thing possible as a training away from intellect and toward pure imagination and emotion. I fancy that such a one-sided development accounts for aberrations like Oscar Wilde and George Moore. My objection to the kindergarten method is that it does not stop where it should, where the imagination may safely be stimulated to the neglect of the intellect, but the method climbs even through the high school and the university. Our whole scheme of study has been falsely objectified, either scientifically or artistically, which latter process Mrs. Schulreispilger has so well described in her last paragraph. Let me illustrate. Science as taught in our schools is not a synthetic study, where the powers of intellectual generalisation are called into use, as Poincaré has so well shown, but is purely an observation of isolated facts. Such is biology, chemistry, physics. The pupil observes so many experiments and makes a record of what takes place. Mathematics more and more is becoming an observational science, with its problems performed on real cubes, spheres, or string-constructed squares and circles; or it is drifting to applied mathematics in mechanics and engineering. The languages, which one would think would remain almost purely intellectual exercises, are likewise slowly giving way. Grammar is being kicked out of court because it has formal logic in its foundation, and hence is hard. English is a fine art with its emotional side uppermost, or is a visualisation of the history or meaning of certain words and figures. The foreign languages are objectified by means of charts and pictures. Their words thus stand for no concepts but merely percepts reminiscent of the charts. History is taught by stories and novels and pictures. Sociology, ethics, economics, no longer generalise, but live only in concrete instances. We live in a picture-writing age.

"Besides in most of these studies the ground of the appeal is almost purely emotional. The child must be made to enjoy his studies; so as much emotional content as possible is given even to the most abstract of the studies. There is always a great deal of the spectacular in all school science, with its crackling of Hertzian waves or its magic of mirrors, lights, and spectra. The dramatic is nearly always to the front in language study as well as in history and the social sciences, where the appeal is to their 'human interest.' Even mathematics has given a new

meaning to the term 'personal equation,' the children in algebra and geometry being amused by constructing with cardboard and strings or with wood and plaster the figures they are studying. Now within reasonable limits all this is very well. The child should enjoy his work. But we have forgotten the work in the sugar-coating.

"As a result our young people learn to think in pictures, in percepts, or memories of percepts and in the emotions these carry with them. The ability to generalise is being gradually lost; and with it will go the power of abstract thought. Let us take a petty and a serious illustration. Compare our humorous papers with, say, *Punch* or *Figaro* or even *Fliegende Blätter*. The latter usually demand a little thought before the humour is understood. They require a distinct stroke of the power of drawing generalisations or conclusions. I recall a picture in one of these: it was of a music-box from which were pouring a dozen of our popular songs and under it were the words, 'Let me write the songs of a people and I care not who writes the laws.' Compare with this the humour of Dingbat, Mutt and Jeff, or Rhino the Monk. Notice, too, in this connection the rapid advance in the influence of the 'movie,' which is due directly to the fact that it requires no thought only perception and accompanying emotion. In a higher realm read almost any editorial or leading article in our daily press. Its appeal is always purely to the direct percepts and emotions of the readers. It is almost as obvious as the 'movie.' This short paragraph from the editorial columns of a well know metropolitan daily carries its own comment: 'From being the purveyors of news and opinions in due perspective for the public, the daily and periodical press have become very largely the muckrakers of the universe, the distorters of fact, and the debauchers of thought for the masses, in whom eventually abides the fate of the republic.' This demand for highly seasoned and moving instances is not confined merely to periodical literature. By Kipling, De Maupassant, O. Henry, Masefield, and others, it has spread to the realm of pure literature; but to discuss this problem would require hours. Emotional concreteness, elementary concreteness often, is what we are demanding, and that is, I believe, due in no small measure to the picture-writing habits of our education. We are returning to primitive nature with a vengeance."

"But life itself," interrupted Mrs. Schulreisepilger, "is all

concrete, the philosophers tell us. Do we not falsify life when we turn from it to the generalisations which our intellects conventionally set up?"

"Hardly," answered Mr. Nevius, dryly. "Without the other faculty, the power of synthesising percepts into concepts, generalising with these, and with them thinking abstractly—without this faculty we should be in a bad way. Much as I admire Emerson, I believe he has done as much harm as good to our intellectual powers. He it was who, copying the vices of the German romantic poets, like a roman candle shot star after star of the first magnitude of beautiful poetic imagery and insight, but never grouped these into constellations. His thinking was done by fits of inspiration gathered from natural objects. But he never resolved these into a system, never generalised upon them. True, his thoughts were all lofty and worthy; but we have copied his vicious method and lost his fine ideals.

"Nowscience itself is for the scientist a huge mass of generalisations. Language is the means of arriving at judgments. History and the social sciences are a series of syntheses. Mathematics, besides being a related series of logical judgments, is an excellent mould for other thought. How comes it that we pick these to pieces, and throw the *disjecta membra* for children, like chickens, to scratch out and pick up, unless it is that we have become hypnotised by the unrelated object, and hasten to establish relationships between that object and ourselves, like the chicken and the grain of corn, instead of being truly objective and establishing relationships between the objects themselves? Our kindergarten method, with its itching desire to carry every suggestion at once into action, which is also the cry of the Montessori system, is like the chicken that gobbles down the corn, rather than like the careful farmer that plants it in the ground to grow and bring forth an hundredfold. Even chickens can have indigestion if they gobble too many grains, so children who carry into action every suggestion, every perceived object, will as surely have intellectual and emotional 'tummy ache.'

"The difficulty with the kindergarten is not with the kindergarten itself, except in its fanciful philosophy. It is rather with its boast, which it has made good, that it is the universal method of education. There comes a time, and that earlier than most of us suspect, when the child must turn inward as well as outward. The baby is probably right in regarding itself as the centre of the

universe, but age should learn better, that there is a universe without as well as one within, and that these two must be understood, the objects in each brought into relation, and the two as far as possible harmonised."

"And can you do this in your school—that is, require the intellectual effort in study it would involve on the part of the pupils, and still keep your rolls full, your pupils happy, and parents and teachers satisfied, let alone the superintendent and board?" gently inquired Mrs. Schulreisepilger.

But Mr. Nevius had already taken his coat and hat and was noisily on his way to the door.

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