

A SENIOR'S ALL-HALLOWS E'EN NIGHTMARE.

(*Student seated at a desk with a pile of books. Soliloquises.*)

Now, whichever *shall* I start on? Silvio Pellico, or Cæsar, or "Tuscy," or O.B., or my Crits, or my Drawing-room Evening, or Home Education? Let's have a shot at pagina vent'e tre. ... (Reads, and tries to translate.) Oh! that is all wrong. I think I'll have a change, and do some O.B. Let me see, was it Plato or Pestalozzi who wanted children to have holes in their boots? And I can't see any difference between Froebel and Mme. Montessori. Well, I must begin somewhere. (Reads a bit.) ... Do you know, I'm not taking in a word, perhaps I'll get on better with Cæsar. "Gallia est omnis divisa in partes tres." Oh! I've forgotten all about my Crits: and O.B. is coming on Monday. Let me see, Geometry to the III. The square on the right-angled triangle. I don't feel up to that to-night. How about Dispersion of Seeds to the IV.? No, on the whole, I think I'm almost sure to get History to the babes. The White Ship. Oh! dear, I'm sure I shan't ever smile again! I *know* I shall muddle them all up when the time comes, so it won't make much difference which one he chooses. I wonder if I've got enough brain left to "cut" a Shakespeare; my drawing-room evening is on Tuesday, and I

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haven't thought about it yet. ... Oh, dash! I'm cutting it all wrong—and I *must* do some Tuscy. Let me see now, I was at Michael Angelo. I *fish* I could wind the place. I mean, I wish I could find it. That was rather a good Spoonerism! I *should* like to have met that dear man, by the way. ... (Yawns.) ... Oh dear! I am so tired, and so sick of all this stuff ... and I've got such a "postessy" feeling. I wonder what I shall get? ... To think that it is All-Hallows E'en to-night. ... I should *love* to see some ghosts, though, of course, there aren't such things. ... (Yawns.) ... Oh dear! how sleepy I am ... and I *must* do Tuscy. ... No, O.B. ... The square on the hypotenuse ... seeds are dispersed ... pagina vent e tre. ... (She falls asleep.)

II.—THE DREAM.

POSTESS: So *you* are the governess they want me to have? Well, you aren't as nice-looking as you might be, but still. Well, you say you can teach German, Italian, French, Latin, Trigonometry, Hydrostatics, Philosophy, all kinds of Mathematics, including Music and Dancing? My child is 4 1/2 years old, and I shall want you to teach these subjects to her. How old are you?

STUDENT: I'm twenty-one to-day.

POSTESS: Well, I shall expect you to stay for twenty years you know, and you will teach from six in the morning to ten at night. I suppose you won't want any holidays?

STUDENT: Might I have an occasional half-holiday?

POSTESS: Good gracious, no! You're coming to my house to work, not to play. You'd have no objections to making my dresses and darning my husband's socks, I suppose?

STUDENT: Oh! not at all!

POSTESS: And salary, of course, we needn't discuss yet: it will be time enough to think of that in a year or two. We

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live at Timbuctoo—very healthy atmosphere—conducive to hard work. You might find dear little Maisie a little fractious at times. Her last governess made the most unreasonable objections to her clever way of defending herself with her teeth and nails. Oh! she'll be a fine

Suffragette one day—inherits her pugnacious disposition from me. Well I should like to hear you give a lesson before I engage you. Here comes Mr. Browning. I hear you have prepared some lessons to give before him. / shall criticize you to him afterwards. (Mr. Browning sits down and goes to sleep.)

STUDENT: But I haven't got any pupils.

POSTESS: Don't talk nonsense, they are all sitting at the table waiting for you.

(Student turns to table and sees three ghosts seated. She begins her lesson.)

STUDENT: Now, Pestalozzi, can you tell me what you were learning about in your last lesson?

PESTALOZZI: No, of course I can't, how can I?

STUDENT: Can you, Locke?

LOCKE: You seem to forget how long it is since I had my last lesson!

STUDENT: Can you, Mme. Montessori?

MONTESSORI: I think / was pointing out to *you* the importance of letting the child alone. I don't remember *my* learning anything at all.

STUDENT: Oh well! I'm sure I don't either. Never mind, I'll begin with the introduction. Now to-day we are going to learn about dispersion of seeds. Will you read the general enunciation please, Pestalozzi?

PESTALOZZI: I think you are forgetting that the pupil should never be *told* to do anything. He should find it out for himself.

STUDENT: Very good. Now you remember that Henry

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I.'s son was coming back from his summer holidays in France. What was his name, Locke?

LOCKE: If he had been hardened from childhood to heat and cold, and to having holes in his boots, he would never have needed to go on a holiday at all.

STUDENT: Yes, the wind *is* one way of dispersing seeds, but I want to know which is the hypothesis, and what we have to prove. Can you tell me Madame Montessori?

MONTESSORI: Given—A child of two years. Required—To prove that she will learn to read fluently in two days on *my* method.

STUDENT: Yes, but that isn't quite what I want. In the triangle A B C, which is the child?

PESTALOZZI: A C, a child, of course!

STUDENT: That's right. Now, Locke, suppose we have a dry, indehiscent many-celled, one-seeded, syncarpous, superior ovary, dehiscing by valves, by pores, by teeth, and by jaws, what construction shall we need to find out why Henry never smiled again?

LOCKE: I'm afraid I don't follow.

STUDENT: It *didn't* sound quite right somehow. What I meant was, if $A B^2 = A C^2$, what do we know about O.B.?

MR. BROWNING (waking up): Eh! What? ... lesson still going on, I see. Ah yes! (Goes to sleep again.)

LOCKE: You've made a mistake somewhere. That's the ghost of Euclid over there, and he's looking *awfully* angry.

EUCLID: Young lady, it's enough to make Pythagoras turn in his grave to hear you, not to mention *my* feelings at hearing one of my pet propositions murdered! Now, let me explain: In the triangle A B C. ...

STUDENT (frightened): I'm so sorry, but I—I'm giving a Botany lesson—or a History lesson—really—I don't know how the Geometry got in. (To the class.) Well, so poor Henry's only son, the Black Prince, was drowned in trying
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to save his sister Mary Queen of Scots, and the only person left to tell the tale was Wat Tyler, and all he could say was, that there had been such a wind that all the seeds were dispersed. Will you begin to narrate please, Pestalozzi?

POSTESS: I consider that the lesson has lasted quite long enough. It's no good asking for your opinion on it, Mr. Browning, because you haven't been listening; but *I* consider that the teacher's manner was *most* unpleasant, and it would have been much better if she had used coloured chalk, and hadn't asked so many questions in the narration. What have you to say, Mr. Euclid?

EUCLID: Suppose the teacher to have any brains at all, then it follows, that as all my propositions are perfectly obvious, therefore she ought to have taught with absolute ease.

LOCKE: I quite agree with my friend Euclid. He has reasoned the point out with great accuracy, and, of course, reason is infallible. Therefore the teacher has no brains.

CHORUS: None whatever.

SHAKESPEARE: Yes! and she actually has the impudence to "*cut*" me!

POSTESS: That's your fault for being so long-winded.

O.B. (waking up): Ah yes! Very intelligent lesson. Several false quantities though. However, notes good. . . . Anyone else any remarks to make? Have you, Spooner?

SPOONER: It neally was a rice lesson; but I had warmed a fish, and that fish will never wade from my heart, that creatures wouldn't toss their pupils so much over those potty knoints that will crup op.

POSTESS: Who *are* those two ghosts over there talking in such an outlandish tongue?

SPOONER: Why, it's Selius Jusar and Pilvio Sellico!

SILVIO PELLICO (with a bow): Sono Silvio Pellico. Credo

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che la signorina non ha capito tutte le mie phrase. Allora repeto ancora una volta—

CÆSAR: Et sum Julius Cæsar, qui suas copias in Gallia duxit.

POSTESS: I don't know what you are talking about, but *I* should like to know whether this young person has got any brains for anything else. What else can you do?

STUDENT: I'm a D.M. Shall I give the Drill Crit. I've prepared to give the Juniors on Monday?

POSTESS: Juniors! Who are the Juniors?

GHOSTS: Who *are* the Juniors?

STUDENT: Well, there are such heaps and *heaps* of them, that I hardly know how to describe them. I know!—they are embryonic Seniors!

GHOSTS: But who are the Seniors?

STUDENT: Oh! *we* are the Seniors!

GHOSTS (impressed): Oh!!!!

POSTESS: Well, I should like to know what all this has to do with your drill class.

STUDENT (hastily): In two lines, fall in! distance forward place!—two! (Aside.) Let me see, jumping comes first. (Aloud.) Heels backward bend, and to the shoulders raise, with a deep breath, forward, and to the left, jump! 'Tention, halt, 1, 2! Euclid, why aren't you jumping?

EUCLID: Men of dignity do not jump. I am a man of dignity, therefore—I do *not* jump.

CHORUS OF GHOSTS: Q. E. D.!!!

STUDENT: No talking, please! Marching in C.P. time, counting to taa, tafa tefe tate taa—begin! Halt! Why aren't you taaing, Pestalozzi?

PESTALOZZI: Perhaps you wouldn't mind telling us what C.P. time is!

STUDENT: It's er—er—what we get up before breakfast on

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Mondays to learn. Well, we'll go on to something else. In one movement—lie down!

CHORUS: What for?

STUDENT: Oh! it's to exercise your digestive organs. Dear me! I forgot you were ghosts. I suppose you haven't got any. Never mind, arms—backward—bend—head—sink—taking—a—deep—breath—with—high—knee—bending—right—foot—upwards—place—and—forward—and—to—the—left—*March!*

POSTESS: It seems to me you aren't any good at giving a drill class either. I don't know how you've the impudence to offer yourself as a governess to anyone at all. *I shan't engage you! (Exit.)*

STUDENT: Thank goodness she's gone. How I wish I could get rid of the others!

LOCKE: Well, you certainly haven't trained your faculties properly.

STUDENT: No, because there aren't any!

LOCKE: How *dare* you contradict me! I say there are, therefore there must be. But we'll forgive you if you will tell me all the principles of my theory of education.

PESTALOZZI: No, mine!

MONTESSORI: No, they're all behind the times. Tell me mine.

EUCLID: Give the general enunciations of all my propositions.

SHAKESPEARE: Recite us King Henry V.

S. PELLICO: Translate pagina vent e tre.

CÆSAR: And Caput IV. of my 1st book of Gallic wars!

O.B.: Summarize the History of Education!

STUDENT: Yes, yes! I'll tell you all everything in a minute if you'll only give me time!

(Ghosts crowd round her, all asking questions together.)

STUDENT: Oh! what *shall* I do!

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LOCKE: Sit down! We are going to bury you in books! (They begin piling books on top of her.)

PESTALOZZI: Hark! ... footsteps!

(The ghosts all vanish.)

(Enter another student.)

SECOND STUDENT: Hullo! asleep? I thought you were swotting! Hi! wake up! You've got to come to the classroom at once, we're having such fun.

STUDENT: Oh, my *dear!* I've been having the most *ghastly* nightmare. I was interviewing a postess, and giving my crits; and then heaps of ghosts—

SECOND STUDENT: Oh yes! / know all about that. Come along, and be my partner for the next waltz. (Exeunt.)

Curtain.

B. MILLAR & M. GLADDING.