

worked up in such a way that the good fairy tales, now so few, will be materially added to.

I should be very glad if readers of this *Review* would send to me the names of any collections of fairy tales of which they or their children are especially fond.

NEMO.

Those of us who grew up upon "Joyce's Scientific Dialogues" will greet Mr. Steel's book* with the warm appreciation it deserves. One science at a time, and that learnt well, may be a sound dictum, but we who are thankful to the fat, stumpy, little "Joyce" of our childhood for placing before us many open doors will rejoice in an introduction of such marvellous lucidity to the whole circle of the natural sciences. If Mr. Steel is to be placed second to any for this quality of lucidity, it is only to Huxley himself; and to be named in the same breath with this master of the craft of teaching is to be accredited with the clearness of style and simplicity of arrangement that belong to thorough mastery of a subject. The mother who wants to give an answer up to date to her children's puzzling questions—Why are leaves green? Why does the echo repeat our words?—should get *The World of Science*. We hope that the succeeding volumes of the important Science Series which Mr. Steel is editing may not fall below the introductory volume.

By-the-Way—

ABDICATION.—Allow me to say a few words on the other side of the question in answer to the little essay bearing this title in your October number. In the first place I consider the term "Abdication" far too strong to express or describe any relinquishing of authority that ought to take place whilst daughters remain under the parental roof. "Abdication" is a far-reaching principle, and in this case implies the entire surrender of a mother's loving care, advice, and guidance, and installing on the ruins of all that has been trustful and affectionate during childhood, a life of reserve and independence, in which I believe few daughters, of whatever age, would find happiness or advantage. Instances of middle-aged unmarried daughters who have been brought up and kept in the narrow groove so strongly deprecated by your contributor "M.B.," must be very exceptional. The tendency of the present times as regards education, society, and general daily life, I strongly hold, fosters habits of independence. Your interesting contributor urges parents to entire "Abdication." I wish kindly to take exception to this. A partial surrender I cheerfully assent to, but in my view we mothers should recognise it as our simple duty not to abandon the position in regard to our children which, with the highest sanction, we

* *The World of Science* (2s. 6d.) by R. Eliot Steel, M.A., F.R.G.S., F.C.S., Senior Natural Science Master, Bradford Grammar School (Methuen & Co., London).

occupy. I have not found in the Grand Old Book of Inspiration any passages in which the relative duties of parents and children are limited to any particular age. The injunction "Honour thy father and thy mother," with all that this comprehends, is binding through life. When grown-up daughters develop an eager desire for definite work in "literature, art, or philanthropy," under such circumstances the mother usually assists her daughters to accomplish their wishes without any thought of her own need for their presence and help in her declining years. Most daughters, also, on their part act excellently and unselfishly; but there are exceptions, and I feel sure my friend "M.B." does not intend to counsel parents to abdicate their rightful authority to interfere in such cases. What a burlesque on philanthropy was depicted a few weeks ago in our leading comic serial, in which a daughter is declaring her intention of joining a Nurses' Institution, because it was so dull at home, her father being paralysed and her mother blind! It is impossible to lay down any special rules for our guidance in this matter of relinquishment. One thing I am convinced of, that we need more sympathy in our homes between parents and children, more identity of interests. We mothers almost always pass through a period of heart-breaking discipline before we arrive in the calm and peaceful waters, in which some of us hope to spend our last decade. Let us endeavour to cultivate in our families that spirit of love which suffereth long and is kind, which is not easily provoked, which hopeth all things, and which endureth all things. If we succeed in doing this, shall we not have found a solution of the difficulty under consideration?

Rawdon.

S. B.

Might I let Mrs. Epps know, through the *Parents' Review*, that her excellent paper on "French Kindergartens" has borne good fruit at least in one town? We have started through it a class of fifteen little ones, their ages ranging from three to eight. It is held every Tuesday and Friday, from 2.30 to 3.0, and presided over by a Parisienne, who is quite surprised at the way the children drink in the French. It has been in existence four weeks, and they know perfectly "Sur le pont," "Au clair de la lune," "Savez-vous qui plante le chou?" and "Il court, il court, le furet," and every child can count up to twenty. Both pupils and teacher thoroughly enjoy their hour's play, and we feel that we owe many thanks to Mrs. Epps for her suggestion.

GRATITUDE.

"THE BEST CURRICULUM."—Is it not a great exaggeration to say that "the Greek and Latin writers are a necessary part of education from the moral point of view?" Do classical scholars excel all others in moral vigour? Have not multitudes of men and women risen to sublime heights of goodness, who have been utterly ignorant of Latin and Greek? And where did the Greek philosophers get *their* high moral impulses? Cannot we go to the same source and obtain them at first-hand? "Natural science has little or nothing to do with the laws of conduct." But only consider, for example, how much ill-health is answerable for wrong-doing. And is not ill-health the result of breaking the physiological laws, and almost always through ignorance? Here, then,

is one science that has very much to do with right conduct. A test is offered which will settle the matter at once. It is said that a great leader writer is a well-educated man *par excellence*. Grant it for the sake of argument. But in the April number of the *Parents' Review*, Mr. Dawson, who, it must be admitted, *knows*, asserts that among the great leader writers of the Press, University men (*i.e.*, classical scholars) are conspicuous—by their absence. Therefore, the classical education is *not* the best.

G. H.

Parents' National Educational Union.

LONDON AND PROVINCIAL BRANCH SECRETARIES.

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Belgravia and Westminster.—Lady ISABEL MARGESSON, 63, St. George's Road, Warwick Square, S.W.

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Hampstead and St. John's Wood.—Mrs. E. C. ROBINS, 8, Marlborough Road, St. John's Wood, N.W.

N.B.—I hope to be able to announce shortly that a North West London Branch has been formed. A Secretary for West Kensington is greatly needed, as we have the nucleus of a Branch there. Several other London Branches are in the course of formation.

COUNTRY BRANCHES.

Bournemouth.—Mrs. NANKIVELL, Penmellyn.

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E. C. SHARLAND, London and Central Organising Hon. Secretary,
The School House, Uffculme, Devon.

The Editor begs to thank the numerous subscribers who have been good enough to send "Christmas Contributions." It is matter of regret that we have not space at our disposal for more of these.

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