

THE SPIRIT OF THE OLD SCHOOL HOUSE

The Whimsical Narrative of a Home-Weak Vision by Albert St. Clair

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The old Brick School House where we sought The knowledge patient teachers taught, The Class Rooms where we slowly earned

Whatever wisdom that we learned, That school is gone, without a trace Of anything to mark its place.

The Hill of Wintergreen is leveled, That mound where scholars romped and roamed; Where spicy, high red berries grow With green leaves aromatic, too; Not here, but yonder, moved away That Mountain where we used to play!

Yet it is only fifty years, As time is measured by the spars; Just fifty distant years has run In lonely twilight round the tower, And now the School is hushed and dead To all of us, has disappeared!

We mildly recall the rustic scenes For change in these progressive days; With legends of William an' Mark, Or like some other of them, In all our happiest recollections, That landmarks which we loved so dearly.

I sought the "Graded School" and found

All that remains of it — the ground! The interesting old building would have served its purpose well, I think, No doubt, but yonder, moved away To yonder, yonder, yonder!

I thought the "Graded School" was dead, When I saw the "Graded School" again, A Century ago, in the "Graded School" again, The "Graded School" again, The "Graded School" again,

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I lingered at the old School site Till day verged slowly into night; The brilliant student and the teacher Had thronged those classic precincts

Our School had taught them in its day, A guiding factor on the way; The pilot of a generation Which shaped a future for the Nation:

Its work well done, at last it must Be scattered on the desert dust! Its teachers were among the pages Who formulate the lore of ages; They made the history which others Teach children of the modern moth-

But now the School is as a page Torn from the archives of the Age! As teachers illustrate their words With diagrams of nouns and verbs, Or figures sketched in chalk to show What scholars chiefly need to know; As students cipher their tasks, Until the proper answer comes, On boards of black with crayons white,

To show the methods that are right, Exemplifying to the School. Then rub the figures out — and find The precepts graven on the mind: Much as the figures were erased, Our Village School House was effaced!

And so affairs of mankind move, All in their own peculiar groove: The workers when the work is thru, Give way, the old ones for the new; The elder man completes his part, And Age leaves off for Youth to start. So Destiny prefigures all, As on the Common School House wall, The future of the coming race That soon assumes commanding place To own and operate the Earth Thru all the surface of its girth! The problem solved and then wiped out,

Development is brought about: Old Schools are all eradicated And Progress is accelerated! The teachers with their solemn faces Suppressing good and gentle graces: (As in the absolute didactic That ruled by stern, repressive tac-

Are gone, but in the lessons taught They left a legacy of thought! That essence of their labor clings To us, for that is vital things! All that exists was first divined And shaped in God's creative mind: So all the handwork of man Must be constructed from a plan Devised and fashioned forth in that

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The elements that form the world, By unseen powers, changes, Creates, destroys and rearranges: All things must serve a purpose; tho' The purpose of it none may know!

Our Village School was swept away, Yet there are replicas to-day; By memory they are enshrined In cherished niches of the mind; Grandfathers and grandmothers too, Look back to it in fond review; Where any of us still exist The "Graded School House" will be missed.

About the old, familiar place, I mused with melancholy grace: I felt the touch of youth once more As fragrance from the years of yore: A thirst for good old-fashioned ways, The ebb and flow of moods and tenses, As strong emotions stirred my senses:

A hunger for the olden times, The aching sadness that hennubs, Yet, as nepenthe, fills the brain; But hurts the heart with subtle pain: Departed, in the twilight cool I lingered near the vanished School The children of my schoolmates

With voices that I heard me call: "Come, come, my little boy, Grow up with children growing!"

As in another world, I stood, A stranger, in a vanished school, The things were different, tho' the school, The things were different, tho' the school, The things were different, tho' the school,

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Perfected by an unseen hand: Four square, two-stories, there stood A cloud that grew more dark and dense

A counterfeit of brick and wood With outer buildings, sheds and fence! The tocan in the tower pealed, (The warning bell of long ago) And groups of scholars were revealed, The most of whom I used to know!

I looked again in laughing faces Of those I loved to recognize: They played their pranks and ran their races, And romped in wholesome exercise!

The moment that the last bell chimed: The lower room engulfed the small, Upstairs the larger children climbed.

(The higher education meant Just rising up to reach it: To-day the sons of studious bent Must climb to those who teach it.)

I balled them as they passed along By nick-names we had known; But wondered why the jolly throng Ignored me, all alone!

I saw a lad I thought I knew Much more than all the rest: But he disdain'd my greetings, too And could not be impressed;

I studied when the boy could be, Quite certain I had known him; And then remembered — it was you, And I had just outgrown him!

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ROCKWELL BROS. & Co. "THE BIG STORE" 86-90 Main St. Wellsville, N. Y.

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READY-TO-WEAR DEPARTMENT DRESSES: Lot Silk Dresses in Brown, Navy and Grey, Lot Silk Dresses, values up to \$22.50 @ \$17.95, All \$25.00 Silk Dresses \$21.95, All \$39.50 Silk Dresses \$31.95, Lot Wool Dresses \$11.95, Lot Wool Dresses, worth up to \$22.50 \$15.95. FLANNEL MIDDIES: Including the famous "Jack Tar," Been \$5.19, Choice \$4.69, Been \$7.69, Choice \$6.29, Been \$8.40, Choice \$6.59. Red, Navy, Green Wool Flannel Bramley Blouses, been \$5.95, Choice \$3.95. WAISTS: One lot Silk Waists, all shades, been up to \$18.00, Choice \$5.00, One lot Cotton Waists, nicely trimmed, worth \$1.50, Choice \$1.00, All other Silk and Cotton Waists at 20 Per Cent Reduction. FALL AND WINTER SUITS: Balance of our stock of Fall and Winter Suits at 1/2 Price, Suits been from \$19.95 to \$79.00, now \$8.97 to \$39.50, Small charge for alterations on coats, suits and dresses during sale. OUTING GOWNS: One lot Silk Waists, all shades, been up to \$18.00, Choice \$5.00, One lot Cotton Waists, nicely trimmed, worth \$1.50, Choice \$1.00, All other Silk and Cotton Waists at 20 Per Cent Reduction.

FURNITURE: One Kitchen Cabinet, been \$11.00, Sale \$8.00, Seller's Oak Cabinet, white enamel top, been \$28.00, Sale \$22.00, Queen's Oak Table, been \$14.00, Sale \$11.00. RUGS: Seamless Brussels Rugs, 6-8 x 10-6, were \$40.00, Sale \$27.50, Seamless Velvet Rugs, 6-8 x 10-6, were \$30.00, Sale \$22.50.

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