Such a Gladsome Day!

By Josephine Cunnington Edwards

Jennifer gritted her teeth. She could hardly stand it. She had to sit there and watch the teacher beat poor Chester's thin hands and see his lips trembling, and tears streaking down his cheeks. She felt murderous.

"I t-t-tried so hard, Miss Daniels," he sobbed. "I did; I did; I did." Jennifer saw his fingers trembling, as he tried to wipe his nose with his crunched, dirty handkerchief.

"And you would let your little sister get ahead of you, you big lazy boy," the teacher continued stridently, glaring at the trembling little boy. "If she can do it, you can, if you half try! You don't have to be so dumb." And she shoved the little boy into his seat. The whole room was uncomfortable.

The winter before that, Chester had gotten very sick with a nervous disease the doctor called St. Vitus’ dance. Today it would probably be called a nervous breakdown. His hands would tremble so, he would accidentally knock dishes off the table. Jennifer loved her mother dearly for her kindness at every accident. She was so understanding.

"Bless you, darling, that old plate doesn't amount to a hill of beans," she declared in her rich voice when she scooped Chester's broken plate onto the dust pan. "We just want you to get well, that is all, and no plate is worth one of your tears, dear child."

It was almost time for school to let out that terrible day, and Jennifer was glad. She looked up at the oyster gray walls. The sun was slanting through the slatted shades on the tired, huddled children of room three in Jackson school.

"Wait.... wait.... wait...." she gritted to herself. "Wait till I tell father and mother... they'll...." Just then, to her relief, the closing bell shrilled through the littered hallways.

The children streamed out, sighing with relief that another hard day was over. Jennifer's tidy little soul could not help noticing an apple core on the steps and part of an unsavory sandwich mashed underfoot with curls of dust and clumps of dirt. She streaked across the street to father's big, neat food store. The big warm porches of the house held out welcoming arms, but she felt she just must see father, if he had time. She knew that he and the clerks were likely waiting on the supper trade, but if he had time, he always gave her his attention.

Her brother and sister, Charlie and Ethel, were there helping now, home from school, too, so he did have time. She opened the screen and glanced back. Chester was coming, but she knew he would stop and wash his hands and face at the pump—a ten-year-old boy hates to be caught crying.

Jennifer went up to her father then. He was just finishing checking Mrs. Hansard's groceries. He went back in the corner and listened gravely as Jennifer poured out the ugly story. His forehead wrinkled, and his kind eyes were concerned. He never sympathized with his children against teachers if the children were bad. Jennifer knew that, but this time....

"This cannot go on," he said quietly. "Mother and I will decide about it after supper. Now, you run and help Mother, Jenny. Be sure and help Johnny get into his play clothes. You know what to do, dear."

Jennifer loved Mom's kitchen. The linoleum was bright with red blocks, and touches of bright blue and green. The big cookstove made the kitchen a (To page 44)
school should include the mandated areas, and Adventist schools should go far beyond the required minimum. Probably the area in which there is the weakest educational effort is related to sex education. This area should receive attention.

**Sex education is greatly needed.**

from Home and School discussion and from the school health committee. An increasing number of pregnancies are occurring in academies and colleges. Though not mandated, except in some places, under the euphemism of family-life education, sex education is greatly needed. It can be a joint project of the family and school.

In conclusion, Seventh-day Adventist administrators and teachers must stay abreast or ahead of the health requirements of their State or country so that their school may be representative, and so that they may uphold the teachings of the church in matters of health.

---

**FOOTNOTES**


---

**Such a Gladsome Day!**

*(Continued from page 13)*

bit warm on this September day, but cornbread was baking, and the aroma of creamed potatoes and buttered squash and chili beans made her stomach aware that it was mealtime. Three raspberry pies were cooling on the kitchen cabinet.

"Hello, Jenny, dear." Mother smiled, pushing the potatoes to the back of the stove so they could simmer. "Do you want to run out to the garden for some lettuce and green onions?"

While Jenny was putting the forks and knives by the plates, father came in and she heard snatches of their talk from the big clean pantry where Mom was cutting the pies.

"I think it is a sign from the Lord... for us to send the children to that church school..." she heard her father say. It was all so new... there were so many things to learn, since they had joined the Sabbathkeeping church. She heard her mother say something about Miss Daniels' temper. "She did the same thing to Ethel and Annie. And Ethel had a boil on her finger."

Chester was quiet the whole meal, but he did not seem to be so nervous. He knew he was in the midst of those who loved and understood him.

The next morning, father hitched up old Billy to the two-seated carriage, leaving the store in the care of his clerks, while he took the children the half mile from the grocery to the new church school. Instead of the big brick and marble public school, Jennifer, Chester, Charlie, Bill, and Mary would now go to the one-room church school in the back of the church auditorium.

Instead of drinking fountains, there was a waterbucket, and children had their own drinking cups set on their desks. There were eighteen boys and girls, with all eight grades in the care of one teacher. Jennifer and Chester were amazed. How could one teacher do all that work in one day? They were soon to learn, and they were happier than they had ever been in any school before.

It was a buzzing, busy, happy school. For the first time they had morning worship in school. They were encouraged to reply to the roll call with a new Bible verse every day. Miss Murphy, an Irish girl with black hair and blue, blue eyes, was the teacher. Her voice was gentle, and she seemed to be smiling all the time. The first day, when arithmetic time came, Chester began to tremble and cry as he used to at school. But Miss Murphy, with a puzzled look on her face, went over and put her arm around his thin shoulders. She assured him she would help him, and that he need not cry in this school, ever. Someone would always be there to help him. Jennifer's heart simply poured out with love that day. She made up her mind, if she was ever a teacher, to be as nearly like Miss Murphy as she could.

That was the beginning of great and wonderful times in the lives of the new converts.

One noon, an ominous knock sounded at the door. Then it became thunderous, and the door opened before dainty Miss Murphy could gather up her plum-colored skirts and get to the door. Everyone's eyes practically bugged out! There stood nearly all the church ladies, and some of the men, every one laden with big baskets. Each of these baskets emitted tantalizing odors. Sister Hinton plopped a generous pot of her famous potato-noodle dish on the stove to keep hot. Then she went swiftly around and put one of her blue willow plates and bowls on every desk, and one on the teacher's desk. Ada Akers was busy cutting cakes over on the kindergarten table while Sister Boyd poured rich cream into a huge bowl of cottage cheese fresh from their dairy farm. Mother was there, too, with loaves of her wonderful homemade bread, and there were several big round slices of butter Maud Stivers had brought, and was busy spreading on slices. Other church ladies had brought macaroni, crusty and good, great pans of...
baked beans, still bubbling with onion and tomato. Maggie McDonald had made a roast out of something made in Battle Creek that tasted a little like meat.

The children looked back on that day with pleasure. And there were other days of outings and picnics.

"It doesn't seem possible that school could be so much fun," Chester confided to Jennifer, one day after he had gotten a hundred in arithmetic. "I am not scared anymore. Seems like I can think better."

"Course you can," Jennifer agreed. "No one can think when you are afraid. Miss Murphy doesn't get mad. She talks kind even when kids are bad."

"I know. Ain't no fun bein' bad when it makes Miss Murphy look at you kind of sad-like. I sure was mad at Rakie when he sassed her the other day."

"Yeah. An' Bill told him at recess he'd better cut it out if he knew what good for him."

And such was a slice of life from our family, after our father and mother decided to send us to church school. No wonder we decided to go all the way with Jesus, for we learned that happiness is found in kindness, and obedience, and love.

Descriptive articles and poetry that illustrate principles of Christian education are welcome from time to time. We invite our readers to submit such materials.

Those Terrible "Turned-Off" Teens
(Continued from page 11)

energies and a source of fulfillment in this new, more diversified program. Though this type of student could not excel in English or math, he found his outlet in bell choir or student aiding.

Seeing the Teacher in a New Way

Often a school program provides only one picture of the teacher—that of science or history instructor—but with a greater variety of experiences, the integration of faith and learning is increased. The informal atmosphere of these minicourses helped the students to see their teachers in a new light. These courses provided an excellent milieu for the student to see the teacher as a Christian in ordinary, everyday experiences. Here was the English teacher teaching macramé from a seventh-grade student who had been taught the craft by the math teacher. The English teacher's Christianity was displayed in the manner with which she coped with the same frustrations the student had met.

Due to an improvement in school spirit which resulted from the changed school program, there was a dramatic reduction in vandalism. A student who formerly had vented his frustrations with failure by smashing classroom windows now was unwilling to mar or deface the place where he found fulfilling enjoyment.

Typically, this age level is indifferent to the challenge of learning. However, the minicourses aroused the adolescents' potential for self-motivation. Not only was their enthusiasm for the minicourses obvious, but the carryover was evident in improved school attendance, better home relations, enthusiasm for academic subjects, personality development, and tolerance for the individuality of fellow students as each person found his unique skill in a variety of projects. The girl who in the past had delighted in leading her group in degrading and shaming her fellow students now found happiness in bringing joy to the sick and the disadvantaged. She has even decided to pursue a career in which she can serve the unfortunate and the handicapped.

Encouraging Self-Confidence

Generally speaking, an early adolescent's self-concept is not easily reinforced within the scope of the typical school curriculum. Many students lacked self-worth and were a heartache to the teacher, particularly in Bible class. The student-aiding minicourse, which helped the older student value himself as a teacher of younger students, encouraged the development of a new self-perspective. Students participating in this area subsequently felt self-confident enough to share constructive thoughts and valuable contributions in Bible class.

Obviouosly this curriculum change has provided an appropriate answer to our original question of the problem of the academically apathetic early adolescent. It has shown that in the invigoration of mind and body, the fostering of an unselfish spirit, and the binding together of pupil and teacher by the ties of common interest and friendly association, the expenditure of time and effort will be repaid a hundredfold. A blessed outlet will be afforded for that restless energy which is so often a source of danger to the young. As a safeguard against evil, the preoccupation of the mind with good is worth more than unnumbered barriers of law and discipline."

FOOTNOTES


3 Counsels to Teachers, p. 200.

4 Ibid., pp. 545, 546.

5 Education, p. 213.

Saving Energy—and Money—in Schools
(Continued from page 6)

work equally well as long as the “R” rating is maintained. (The “R” rating is a standard numbering system that rates the

VOL. 43, NO. 2, DECEMBER, 1980-JANUARY, 1981 45